SECOND LIFE – YOUR VIRTUAL WORLD

LEARNING IN AND FROM SECOND LIFE

OR

SECOND LIFE RULES, TIPS AND ETIQUETTE
(these pages are not about building technique in Second Life)

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1. History

It is fair to say that the ideology and the roots of SL can be found in the novel "Snow Crash" written by Neal Stephenson in 1992. In this novel, the virtual world is called the Metaverse. Second Life is now often referred to as Metaverse.

The words "rez" or "de-rez" come from the 1982 film "Tron". Roots can also be found in Star Trek show with for instance Teleportation technique.

So a strong link to science-fiction can be drawn.

2. What is SL?

What about answering: A platform and A community

I personally like *Ansel Gasparini's statement about SL.*

"The SL platform is an internet-based, multiuser, 3D world construction set that emphasizes creativity, collaboration, socializing and self-government. The SL community is a semi-self-governing group of residents who collaboratively create, live and interact in a 3D online world owned and operated by Linden Lab."

I will also add that SL is somehow a 3 D wiki.
A SL user is called a resident.

3. SL, a game?

SL resembles a game but it is NOT a game because there are
- No players
- No levels
- No points
- You will never been hit by the deadly sentence "Game Over"
- You create your own content, your own environment
- You decide where you go, what to do, what to create.

4. SL geography

4.1 General

SL's land is divided into Estates which are divided into Regions also referred to as Sims (sim=simulator=server)

Regions can be divided into smaller blocks of land called parcels.

An island is also called a private region.

The hierarchy is consequently: Estate>Region>parcel.

At the moment, Second Life world comprises of:

3 continents

Around 15000 private islands have already been set up by residents.

Altitude can differ from mainland: +/- 4 m to an island: +/- 100 m

4.2 Salpaus Further Education presence in SL
Salpaus Further Education private region (i.e island) is called
Paijat-Hame Edu Island. The estate is called Salpauksen Areena.
The grid coordinates are: 1139, 1183.
These coordinates are useful if you wish to find the island through SL Land Portal.
Go to http://www.secondlife.com and then click on Land Portal.
Be aware that if you search the island via SL viewer then write Paijat-Hame or Lahti in the Search button (top right of the viewer).
Salpaus Further Education also owns a *homestead* called Salpaus Nature.
Homestead regions are for quiet residential or light commercial use. They are not intended for events, malls, or other high-impact uses. They support 3750 prims and 20 avatars, and have script limits.
The grid coordinates are: 1138, 1183.
The estate is called Salpaus Nature.
It is possible to merge two or more estates into one if necessary.
Then all settings for one estate will apply for all regions included in that merged estate.

SL World Map is updated every 24 hours

5. What do I do here?
www.secondseeker.com
http://secondtourist.blogspot.com/index.html
- Exploring the landscape → top place: Spaceport Alpha
- visiting museums, memorials and art galleries
- skydiving, horseback riding, sailing, surfing, flying, racing…
- gambling, gaming
- meeting other people, discussion groups
- having dates: dinner, dancing
- going out and enjoy night life and music
- attending events (birthdays, weddings…)
- shopping
- making money
- designing houses, vehicles, animations, hair, avatar shapes, clothes…
- chilling
- getting jobs (animator, builder, business owner, camping, dancer, DJ, escort, event host, fashion designer, gambler, landlord, model, musician, real estate broker, scripter, shop staff, texture artist…)
- learning and teaching

6. Learning and teaching

I was amazed to notice that like in RL, with SL we learn in it but we also talk about the world itself for instance what we do, where we have been to, the places we have seen etc. vs. to an e-learning platform where we just learn in it. This was often reported by other teachers or instructors worldwide.

6.1 Pedagogy and learning processes in SL

6.1.1 Pre-requisites to become a "SL" teacher
(As SL teacher, I mean a teacher using SL as a platform to deliver curriculum.)
- Very high motivation for new teaching methods and tools and strong will to bring those new processes to students
- Computer literacy
- Willing to have a closer interaction with students
- Being able to be an animator and a moderator rather than a teacher
- Good knowledge of English (yet in 2009) because the platform default language is English although we can now switch to German or French languages.
- Good ability to use blogs and comment-built systems as in SL, chats and discussions are somehow more chaotic at first glance. One does not have to feel intimated and a bit of practice is needed in order to manage SL chats.
- Being well acquainted to other e-learning platforms like eLSa / Moodle in Salpaus Further Education as assignments can also be given via this media.

Then the School organisation needs to organise SL trainings
- A 20-hour training on SL technique seems to be a good amount of hours before launching a course in-world.
- Following up with 2-hour training sessions once a month.
- Strong commitments of teacher's supervisors

So that teachers can concentrate on how to teach in SL and not on how to survive in-world.

6.1.2 SL will surely give the learner:
- Information
- Open space to develop close co-operation with others
- Different and new immersive environments plus flexibility of space
- Real time and direct interaction. Interaction also with visitors who can enter the class (other instructors for instance).
- Socialization
- Face to face virtual meetings
- Ability to more spontaneous responses to assignments
- Better awareness to one's surroundings consequently better awareness in RL.
- Feeling to belong to a community, presence, sense of class community, high level of engagement, strong bond between students.
- Simulation, role playing, discussion group possibilities.
- Participation to social events, conferences and seminars.
- Data visualization
- Activities based on socio-constructivism
- Physical representation of learner's "self" and consequently higher capability to express much more easily his/her own personality.

- Closer relationships (students talk also about their dressing, look like in a casual conversation in RL…)
- Unrestrained environment violating the laws of physics.
- For shy, discrete, intimated, emotional, sensitive or less talkative students, SL acts as an icebreaker as for instance nobody stears at your avatar when you talk or write to others.
- For young students
  a. they will have their instructor speaking their own language. The gap instructor-student diminishes.
  b. A platform with familiar tools they use during their spare time so learning becomes more natural.

6.1.3 First Impressions from learners when brought to SL
THE FIRST HOUR SPENT IN SL IS CRITICAL!!!
Be ready to face the following challenges

- Culture shock
- Finding difficult to getting acclimated
- Disorientating chats, no threads
- Need for new norms at the beginning of the studies
- Pre-established and negative thoughts of what SL is (a game, a strange thing, a thing for kids…)
- Too much information at a time

6.1.4 Learning processes (yet to develop)
A rule to remember for all teachers
1 student = 1 avatar → students use their own avatar all the time and do not use alternative avatars also called alts.

6.1.4.1 Level A
A teacher initiating classes in SL could implement easy learning processes to start with:
- Break the class up into smaller groups for better fluidity and effectiveness
- Retrieve chat history and put threads to organise conversation
- Conference, interviews with outsiders. Very easy to organise.
  You will always find fine and experienced SL residents to come to your classes. They will share their experience free of charge and interact with your own students.
- In addition use some e-learning platform (eLSa Moodle in Salpaus) to represent the whole learning process.

6.1.4.2 Level B
More experienced teachers in addition to above mentioned tools will also want to use:
- Strong interaction with other tools with external links from SL to the web
- Video screen and discussion, feedback, assignments, reports
- Audio streaming and discussion, feedback, assignments, reports
- Notecards for questionning, reporting, interacting with a lot of text
- Slide projector i.e. slide screen and discussion, feedback, assignments, reports
- Free-form blackboard to inform

6.2 SL support for teachers
- Get acquainted to the Second Life Educators mailing list.
- Get acquainted to the Second Life Researchers mailing list.
  Teachers and institutions from all around the world show the way to make education *fun and interactive.*
  Teachers and instructors will find a helpful community with those mailing lists. They will be able to connect with other faculties and create new relationships with other instructors or teachers.
- Get acquainted to Second Life blogs and wikis (links can be found at http://2ndhy.blogspot.com

6.3 Top educational spaces in SL
- Ohio University
- Glidden, Northern Illinois University
- Literature Alive
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
- Angel Learning Isle
- Info Island
- New Media Consortium (NMC Campus)

6.4 The phenomenon SLOODLE
What is Sloodle?
The definition of http://slisweb.sjsu.edu/sl/index.php/Sloodle_Home_Page is self explanatory.
"Sloodle is an Open Source project, the aim of which is to bring together the learning support and management features of web-based LMS (Learning Management Systems, a.k.a. VLE or Virtual Learning Environment) with rich interactive game-technology based 3D Multi-User Virtual Environments (MUVE). Currently all Sloodle development is based on integrating Moodle and Second Life."
And much more information from Sloodle site about it:
http://www.sloodle.org/moodle/whitepaper.pdf
Salpaus Further Education together with Lahti University of Applied Sciences has set up a work group whose purpose is to explore those new possibilities given by Sloodle.
Sloodle has been set up on one of our servers and Sloodle tools have been rezzed in-world on Paijat-Hame Edu Island.
The direct link to this place in-world is:
http://slurl.com/secondlife/Paijat-Hame%20Edu%20Island/9/58/24
(mind that SL viewer must be installed onto your computer for the link to work)
When writing those lines (Jan 2009), the work group had just started to get acquainted to Sloodle.

The last word about this section 6:
According to Gavin Dudeney, Consultant for The Consultants-E and a very active resident in SL:
"Second Life associated to Moodle is the killer application for a creative teacher".

7. Communication, Culture, Social Networking and Relationships

7.1 Media
- Chat
- IM
- Group IM
- Calls

7.2 Differences between Chat and IM

Chat	IM
Public	Private
One to One or Many to Many	One to One or Many to Many
Broadcast locally	Transmitted anywhere in-world
Saved locally on computer	Saved locally on computer
	Sent to email if wished when resident is offline

Group communicating is a good way to isolate your groups from others via IM /group

7.3 Tips when communicating
- If you want to send a long IM to someone, create a notecard instead. Search his/her profile and drop the notecard into the space allowed to it "Drop inventory item here"
- Only skilled SL residents can carry on multiple conversations. It is considered rude to keep someone waiting for your answer.
- If another resident wants to talk to you while you are chatting or IMing: It is polite to say to your co-chatters or IMers if you wish to answer: "Sorry I have to handle an IM for a sec" before breaking away
- Never write in capital as it is considered as being angry unless you really want it of course.
- Shout only if you really need to: Ctrl – Enter. Avatars in a 100 m radius will be able to hear you (vs. 20 m normally).
- Never forget the person/avatar in front of you if you have started a conversation with him/her.
- Never record/film (video) a conversation without asking first.
- Remember that like email, what you type may come back to bite you so be sure of what you want to share publically.

7.4 Tips for making good presentations and give professional lectures in SL
- Spend time in-world before starting making presentations. Experienced residents can detect at a glance inexperienced residents.
- Get a decent avatar and get rid of the standard avatar you have got when you first registered to Second Life
- Get acquainted to SL vocabulary like:
  + rez (bring an object in-world)
  + lag (time for things to appear or happen, a lot of lag often means a poor internet connection or many avatars at the same place)
  + inventory (resident's own storage)
  + furry (animal-avatar)
  + tp (teleport)
  + HUD (Heads-up display – basically an in-world tool visible only by its owner)
  + etc.
- Master the basics of SL, camera controls…
- Before starting with your own presentations, you should attend other events and see other residents' presentations to get an idea of what a presentation can be like in SL.
- Get dressed for your presentation
- Get your gestures ready
- Practice a lot of before presenting
- Prepare "biologically" for long presentations
- Watch yourself with another computer. Very handy to see what you don't see when you are presenting
- Make a great entrance for instance with your vehicle.
- Ask the audience to use chat if they want to express questions.
- Be ready to be able to face 2 or even more chats simultaneously while presenting.
- Getting somebody to help you if needed (especially to answer questions via chat)

7.5 Offering relationship
7.5.1 Offering friendship
Always ask before offering friendship

7.5.2 Offering acquaintance
Offering friendship can be seen as an intrusion in others lives, you always can offer acquaintance instead with Calling Cards.
You can still organise group IMing with a group of Calling Cards.

7.6 Slang and acronyms to use in Chats or IMs

afk	away from keyboard
np	no problem
avie	avatar
cya	see you
brb	be right back
LM	landmark
HUD	Heads-up display
imo	in my humble opinion
jk	just kidding
k or kk	ok
imao	laughing my ass off
LOL	laughing out loud
newb, newbie, noob	new resident
rez	bring an object into existence
tp	teleport
wb	welcome back
aka	as known as

7.7 SL Culture

Few things users should remember when wandering in SL
- Remember there is always a human being behind each avatar.
- In SL like in RL, you can encounter good and bad people. Remember this when you interact with others.
- The impact on your RL can be significant after hanging around in SL. "Second Life can get under your skin" *Julia Hathor*
- Be aware of what you want to reveal about yourself in SL.
- Prejudices are reduced in SL.
- Be aware that in SL "we believe easily that other people are both who and what we want them to be" *Ansel Gasparini*
- The good thing about SL is that there are no consequences and no real commitments.

8. Business in SL

SL is a great place for trading.
Please have a look at the figures for 2008 November: (Linden Lab sources)

Resident Transactions by Amount (2008 November)

Transaction Size	Volume
1L$	7,048,303
2 - 19 L$	4,760,514
20 - 49 L$	2,129,888
50 - 199 L$	3,573,490
200 - 499 L$	1,831,145
500 - 999 L$	696,032
1,000 - 4,999 L$	671,318
5,000 - 19,999 L$	162,917
20,000 - 99,999 L$	37,192
100,000 - 499,999 L$	3,938
>= 500,000 L$	304
Total Transaction Count	20,915,041

8.1 SL and RL
- It is undeniable that SL can help you create reliable clientele for your RL business.
- SL is an excellent marketing tool as you can create a community around your products for very little investment.
- You can create for instance reproductions of your real-world products into SL. Big Japanese car manufacturers already did it.
  Another example is to create virtual clothes from your real-world products and organise fashion events in SL.

8.2 SL
- It is a mistake to think that big investment is needed to be successful. You can establish nice shops for very little money.
- Not all the businesses are successful. It is understandable that if your scope of activities is aiming at elderly people, then you may have real challenges to get your customers to your virtual shops even if this cannot be generalised of course.
- Remember also that you often deal with pennies so don't get to much enthusiastic after selling 100 of 100 LS pants; After all, this is only 100x100 = 10 000 LS i.e. 35 Euros.

8.3 Marketing tips for SL
- The web works as One-to-many or Many-to-one, SL works as Many-to-Many
- It is important to understand that we are dealing with much more than an e-learning platform. SL is another world.
- One has to be ready to be inventive, swift and competitive
- Because we are dealing with a new world, think BIG when planning business activities.
- Working in SL is like working abroad. Learn the habits (culture, language…)
- It is crucial to get acquainted to the business branch you want to trade in before starting your own business
- Always when feasible, bring the products to your clients instead of bringing them (the clients) to you.
- Market, market and market! Use all tools at your fingertips to achieve that task (SL events, blogs, www…)
- Remember when creating products or services in SL that those could be reproduced in RL if needed.
- Finally but not less important, it is crucial to clearly define your target groups.

9. Avatars

9.1 Visual or Virtual?
- An avatar represents your **VISUAL** self <u>not</u> your virtual self. Your VIRTUAL self says, creates, flies or interacts with others.
- "Whatever you do, do not stick with your first avatar for long. It is like walking around with an -I am new here- billboard over your head". *Ansel Gasparini*

9.2 Editing your clothing meaning… yourself
- Remember editing your clothes or your avatar appearance in that order
    1. Underpants and undershirts
    2. Pants and shirts
    3. Shoes and socks
    4. Jackets
    5. Other accessories like gloves
- Very often, you only can get pieces of clothes you CANNOT modify.
- In order to get a professional look, buy the services of relooking Specialists. Prepare 1000-2000 LS to pay the service and few more thousands to get a new shape, skin, hair, tip top clothes etc.

10. Building in SL
As this summary is about rules, etiquette and learning in Second Life, we will skip this section ☺

11. And yet…

"Anyone who tries to make a distinction between education and entertainment doesn't know the first thing about either"
Marshall McLuhan

"We mostly learn from each other in Second Life" *Anika Davison*

12. Finally, a bit or reading
A comprehensive list of good books about Second Life can be found at:
http://www.worldcat.org/profiles/srharris19/lists/273349