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# Using Comment Moderation to Evaluate and Reply to Your Students

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## Using Comment Moderation to *Evaluate* and *Reply* to Your Students

In my online and f2f business information courses, I use VoiceThread for a variety of assignments. This includes an “ice breaker” (<http://tinyurl.com/VTIceBreaker>), transforming discussion boards (<http://tinyurl.com/TexttoVT>), group PowerPoint (<http://tinyurl.com/GroupVT>) and using individual research assignments to be shared for the entire class to learn from (<http://tinyurl.com/VTSharingResearch>).

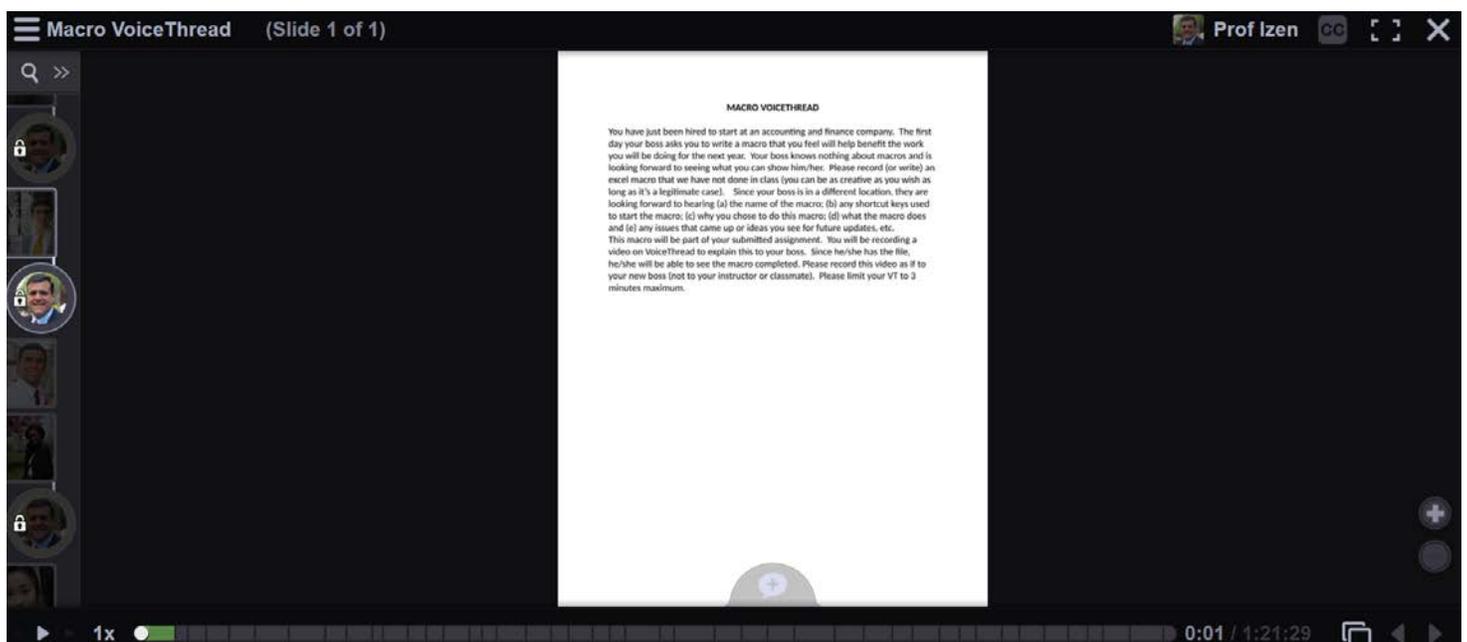
This semester, I wanted to try an assignment utilizing a feature in VoiceThread that I have yet to explore. In the assignment I created, students were tasked with completing an MS Excel assignment. Although the completed assignment were delivered to me via Blackboard, there was one component where I incorporated VoiceThread. Part of the task was for students to create a macro (series of repetitive commands that could be invoked using only the keyboard). Each student was to create a macro they felt could be implemented if they were recently hired in a finance or accounting firm. Once they completed their excel macro, they had to use VoiceThread to present their accomplishments to their boss. They needed to state why they chose the macro, what the macro does, what obstacles they overcame and how they could possibly move their final creation to the next level. I had set a limit of 3 minutes for them to present. The feature I incorporated was comment moderation. This prevents other students from seeing their classmate’s comments. Students had to create their own ideas and couldn’t be swayed by their peers. The end results were excellent. I had 25 unique assignments that worked.

I followed the student’s suggested comments on my own excel computer program. I was impressed by some of the creativity that was produced. Requiring the students to speak in front of the camera made them feel assertive with the material. It was as if their actual boss was on the other end. Some students went as far as dressing up. I subsequently made a private voice comment to each student explaining my assessment of the video they produced. I soon realized I could use VoiceThread to not only analyze that component, but the complete assignment. I no longer need to write back my observations. I found it more

effective and efficient explaining how certain tasks could have been accomplished verbally than anything I could have written.

The one caveat is to review your VoiceThread replies and be sure that they have a line connecting the commenter to yours as well as a lock. If you find your comment is not locked, that comment will be visible to everyone.

If you are looking for ways to engage your students, a VoiceThread assignment may be the solution.



*Curtis Izen is a senior information associate and VoiceThread Certified Educator. Curtis adjuncts online and face to face courses at Baruch College and the School of Professional Studies at the City University of New York. Curtis is passionate on bringing new philosophies and technology into the curriculum. He is a 2 time recipient of the Presidential Excellence Award for Distinguished Teaching and Pedagogy at Baruch College.*