

TeacherLINK TechBytes

Newsletter for September 2015
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PHOTOSHOP & Graphic Design

Free Access to Online Beginning and Advanced Photoshop and Graphic Design Courses

by Nathan Smith

At Utah State University, I teach the ITLS 5230/6230 - Instructional Graphics Production I - Beginning Photoshop and Graphic Design course each fall semester. During spring semesters I teach the ITLS 5240/6240 - Instructional Graphics Production II - Advanced Photoshop and Graphic Design. These are blended courses, meaning I teach both face-to-face students on campus, and also online students at a distance. For my distant students, all the course materials need to be available to them online.

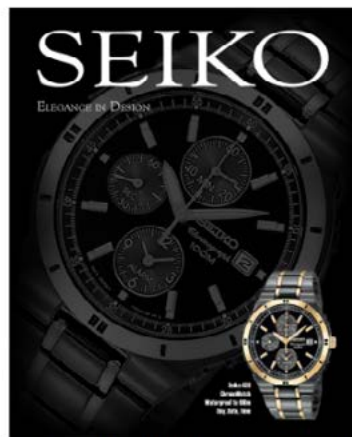
One of the benefits of the online courses is that it has the potential to be a resource and a blessing to a worldwide audience. I think it's safe to say that all of us have taken advantage of great internet resources - especially our students. We are - in a sense - net plunderers (see the TED founder Chris Anderson's talk - "[How Web Video Powers Global Innovation](#)").

I strongly believe that we need to teach our students to connect, to produce, and become net contributors. We, as educators, ought to be an example for them.

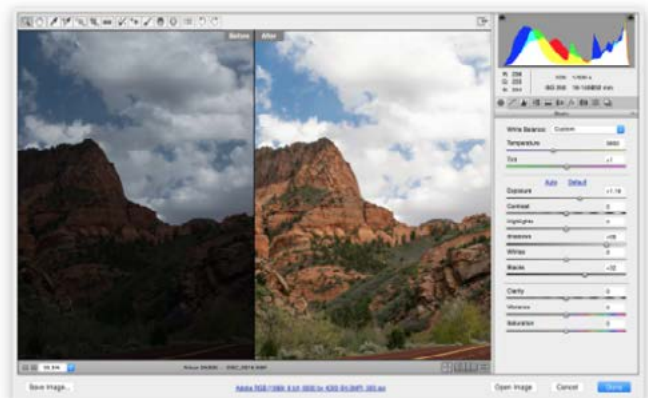
So I'm making my Photoshop and Graphic Design courses freely available to any who would like to learn that skill. Everything is available online except for a few readings that are protected by username and password. There are only a couple things I ask of you in return...

1) If you need to contact me about something - please use the contact form on the website and specify that you are not one of my USU students. I'll get back with you as I have time available, but my students get top priority - the ones who are officially taking the course for Utah State University credit. Fair enough?

2) I am open to, and appreciate, feedback. If something doesn't make sense, let me know - I'll rethink how I present it. If you wish to contribute to the content of the class through YouTube instruction, step-by-step tutorials, etc., please contact me. I want this to be a clear, professional, easy to follow course for any user. I appreciate the effort it takes to become a net contributor. *(continued on the next page)*



Learn graphic design principles and put them into practice



Learn how to bring out the best in your photos!

3) You must not use these materials for your own personal monetary gain! (In other words, you can't sell it, you can't repackage it as part of a paid program of study, it must remain freely available!)

I have put well over a thousand hours of work into curating together freely available web content from YouTube and websites, and adding my own YouTube videos and content into these structured courses. I express my deep appreciation to all the other net contributors that have made their materials available online!

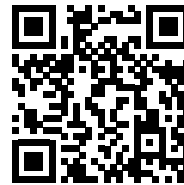
I am almost finished with the beginning course (just little tweaks now), and am currently restructuring the advanced course (but my earlier version is still available there). I want to go even deeper into the advanced course than I have previously.

So, here are the links for you - my friends - with my blessing...

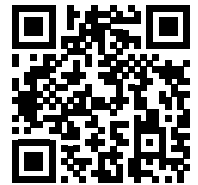
Beginning Photoshop & Graphic Design -
<http://nmsmithphotoshop1.weebly.com>

Advanced Photoshop & Graphic Design -
<http://nmsmithphotoshop.weebly.com>

Sincerely,
Nathan Smith
Director of Technology Integration - College of Education &
Human Service - Utah State University



Learn how to use Photoshop masks in new and unique ways! Use either QR code or the links at left.



Teach Engineering - Free Educator Resource

<https://www.teachengineering.org>

The TeachEngineering digital library is a collaborative project between faculty, students and teachers associated with five founding partner universities, with National Science Foundation funding. The collection continues to grow and evolve with new additions submitted from more than 50 additional contributor organizations, a cadre of volunteer teacher and engineer reviewers, and feedback from teachers who use the curricula in their classrooms.

TeachEngineering is a searchable, web-based digital library collection populated with standards-based engineering curricula for use by K-12 teachers and engineering faculty to make applied science and math come alive through engineering design in K-12 settings. The TeachEngineering collection provides educators with *free* access to a growing curricular resource of activities, lessons, units and living labs.

Formation of the TeachEngineering collection was funded primarily under the NSF National Science Digital Library program, aiming to establish a national digital library that constitutes an online network of learning environments and resources for science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education at all levels. Many other generous sponsors and web partners have enabled its ongoing development and promotion.

What does it cost? Is there a fee? Use of TeachEngineering curriculum is free to teachers for use in their classrooms. There is no fee; there is no membership requirement; and there are no special kits or materials to buy.

Is membership required? No. An optional MyTE workspace allows you to keep track of your favorite lessons and activities, or to share your experiences, but that's up to you to use or not.



Mystery Science

<http://mysteryscience.com>

Mystery Science is free to use. It focuses on Elementary Science education. They will eventually add premium content and features for which we will charge a subscription fee.

Watch the video at left to learn more about this elementary school resource!

Newton Launches a Free, Adaptive Learning Platform!

<https://www.knewton.com>

NEW YORK—August 26, 2015—Knewton, the global leader in adaptive learning, today announced the launch of its free, open personalized learning platform. For the first time, any individual can create or use state-of-the-art supplemental lessons to provide students with unique learning paths in real-time. Knewton's adaptive-learning platform transforms any content into the best data-rich version of itself, then bundles together those pieces of content that are best for each student based on exactly what she knows and how she learns best.

Knewton will host open content and free supplemental lessons on a wide variety of subjects and grade levels, starting with K-12 math, English, science, and history. "Think of it as a friendly robot-tutor in the sky," said Jose Ferreira, Knewton founder and CEO. "Knewton plucks the perfect bits of content for you from the cloud and assembles them according to the ideal learning strategy for you, as determined by the combined data-power of millions of other students."

A student who wants to learn algebra can select the corresponding assignments and start using her own free, personalized learning application comprising all algebra. Or, to improve her skills at particular algebra concepts, she can create her own lesson for just those concepts. Knewton's open platform is as broad as the content that users upload. Once enough users add content on a given subject it automatically springs to life and becomes adaptive.

Knewton is the world's most widely used adaptive learning engine. Dozens of the largest education companies use Knewton to make their products adaptive. To date, Knewton has delivered over 15 billion personalized recommendations to 10 million students on 6 continents.

Knewton is dedicated to protecting student privacy and is a signatory to the Student Privacy Pledge. Knewton only collects

WeLearnIt - Free iOS App

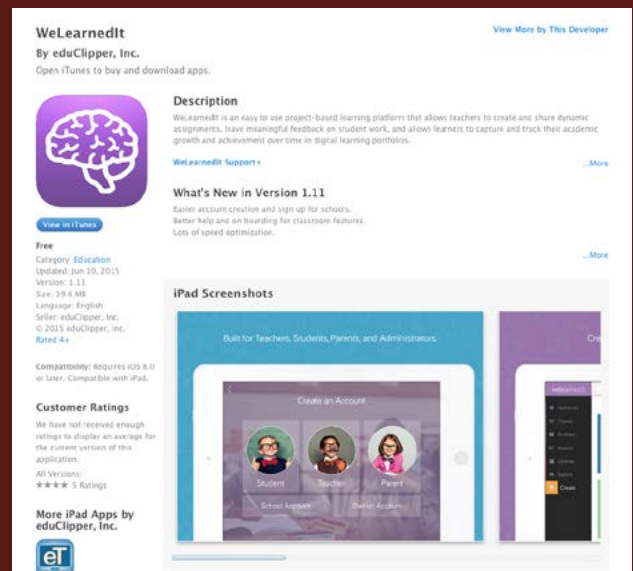
<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/welearnit/id906780940?mt=8&ign-mpt=uo%3D4>

WeLearnIt is an easy to use project-based learning platform that allows teachers to create and share dynamic assignments, leave meaningful feedback on student work, and allows learners to capture and track their academic growth and achievement over time in digital learning portfolios.

We are a perfect companion to schools and classrooms embracing project based learning or for teachers who want their students to "think outside the bubble".

Some of our users' favorite features are...

- Rubric and Assignment Library
- Incredibly Easy to Set Up Classes
- Progress Reporting
- Annotation Feature on Created Content
- Digital Learning Portfolios



and analyzes student data that Knewton believes can improve learning outcomes, and only the student (or her parent) controls with whom Knewton shares those data. Knewton does not sell student personal data.

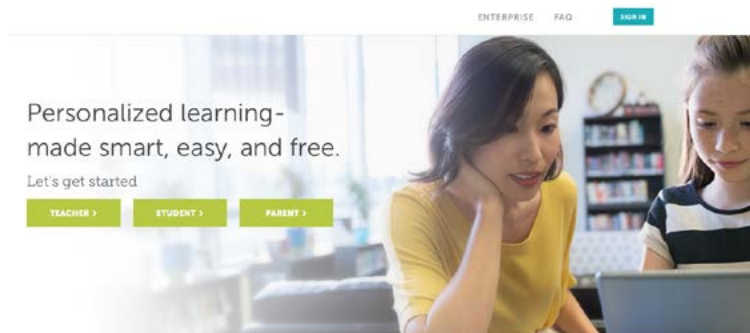
For students, Knewton is a breakthrough in personalized tutoring. Rather than waste metadata about students' learning proclivities, Knewton captures it and stores it in students' private profiles. Every time a student uses Knewton, lessons become even more personalized and effective for her in particular and for others similar to her. Over time, the compounding effect of each student's activity makes learning new concepts easier for every student.

"Educators have created unfathomable quantities of high-quality learning materials," said Knewton COO David Liu. "Until now, much of this content has been trapped on teacher's PCs, meaning some of the world's best materials are only used by handfuls of students. Knewton finds the best pieces of content for students and teachers based on learning outcomes to improve efficacy and save time."

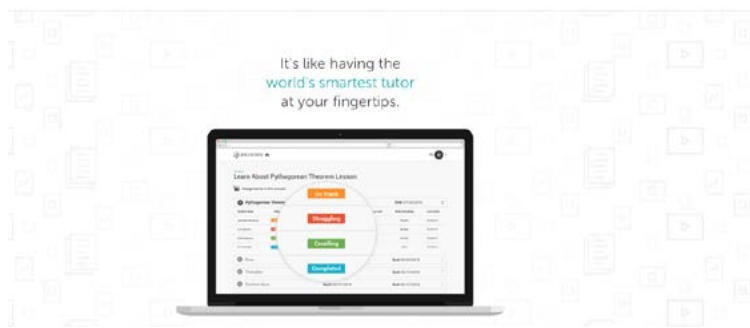
Early user reviews are positive. Olivier, a rising ninth-grader at a private school in New Jersey, said, "It knows what you need in three seconds or less." José Aguiar, an adult learner in Guadalajara, Mexico, said, "Well, first of all, it completely blew my mind!!! It took me a couple of hours to complete a course and I just wanted to keep going and learning."

About Knewton

Knewton's mission is to personalize learning for the world. Teachers, schools, and education companies around the globe use Knewton to power digital course materials that dynamically adapt to each student's unique needs. Knewton provides students with tailored recommendations for exactly what to study, teachers with analytics to better support each student, and publishers with content insights to develop better products. Founded in 2008, Knewton has offices in New York City, London, São Paulo, and Tokyo. www.knewton.com



Why Study with Knewton?



6 only-for-iPad gestures you need to know (MacWorld)

http://www.macworld.com/article/2975857/ios/6-only-for-ipad-gestures-you-need-to-know.html#tk.nl_mwbest

The link above will take you to the MacWorld post - 6 only-for-iPad gestures you need to know. To summarize, below are the 6 gestures.

Swipe up with 4 or 5 fingers: Lets you see all the open applications on your iPad. From there, you can quit an application by flipping up on its window thumbnail. Or you can switch to any open app by touching its window thumbnail.

Swipe left or right with 4 or 5 fingers: Let's you quickly flip through open apps.

Pinch the screen with 5 fingers: Works the same as clicking the Home button on your iPad.

In Mail - a short swipe to the right in the middle of any message viewed in portrait mode where you can't see the InBox messages: Shows the InBox pane. A short swipe the other direction makes it disappear again.

Pull the onscreen keyboard apart with your thumbs: To split the keyboard into two sections that's easier to do "thumb-typing" with, place both thumbs on the keyboard and pull it apart. To bring them back together again, just use your thumbs to push them together again.

Tap, Hold, and Swipe your Safari Tabs: On an iPad, you can drag your Safari tabs to re-order them.

Bonus...

Drag More Apps to Your iPad Dock: Did you know your iPad dock can hold up to six apps? Just touch and hold on an app until the all "jiggle." Then drag the app(s) you want to your iPad dock. Press the Home button when finished to make them stop "jiggling."



Registration is now open for fall MOOC-ED courses

All courses start September 28th

Coaching Digital Learning: Cultivating a Culture of Change

Coaching educators to create digital learning environments is a challenging, important, and highly collaborative role. Individuals who play this role are instrumental in cultivating a digital learning culture within their school, district and/or state. This course allows you to learn along with your colleagues from other schools and districts to enhance your digital learning content knowledge and further develop coaching strategies.

<https://place.fi.ncsu.edu/course/view.php?id=10>

Digital Learning Transition: Creating Future Ready Schools The DLT MOOC-Ed will help you understand the potential of digital learning in K-12 schools, assess progress and set future goals for your school or district, and plan to achieve those goals. This course is organized around the Future Ready Schools Digital Learning Framework. This framework shows the Digital Learning Transition Vision-Plan-Implement-Assess cycle around the seven DLT planning elements, which are all centered on improving student learning. It also emphasizes that leadership is critical throughout the transition process.

<https://place.fi.ncsu.edu/course/view.php?id=11>

Learning Differences All of us, children and adults alike, have different strengths and weaknesses in our learning. Historically, however, schools have approached student learning with a one-size-fits-all mentality and have struggled to adapt to changing student needs. That ends now. In order to help you change the way your students learn, this course will expand your knowledge related to learning differences, provide actionable strategies to impact the learning experience of your students, and cultivate a growth mindset related to learning differences.

<https://place.fi.ncsu.edu/course/view.php?id=14>

Teaching Statistics Through Data Investigations Our world is rich with data sources, and technology makes data more accessible than ever before! To help ensure students are future ready to use data for making informed decisions, many countries around the world have increased the emphasis on statistics and data analysis in school curriculum—from elementary/primary grades through college. This course allows you to learn, along with colleagues from other schools, an investigation cycle to teach statistics and to help students explore data to make evidence-based claims.

<https://place.fi.ncsu.edu/course/view.php?id=9>

MOOC-Ed is a project by the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation. Learn more about the Friday Institute at fi.ncsu.edu

Free NASA Educator Professional Development Webinars

The NASA STEM Educator Professional Development Collaborative at Texas State University is presenting a series of free webinars open to all educators. Join NASA education specialists to learn about activities, lesson plans, educator guides and resources that bring NASA into your classroom. Registration is required to participate. Simply click on the link provided beneath the webinar description to register.

Mission to Mars Series: Destination Mars -- Looking for Life

Event Date: Sept. 2, 2015, at 6 p.m. EDT

Is there life beyond Earth? If so, how can we verify its existence? The webinar will feature a NASA STEM activity that tasks students with using a developed definition of “life” to determine whether there is anything alive in three different simulated Mars soil samples. Participants will experiment, record observations and draw pictures as they collect data from the samples to determine if life may exist in any of the samples. Register online to participate. <https://www.etches.com/138129>

NASA Elementary STEM Inquiry: Experiencing Water Exploration

Event Date: Sept. 8, 2015, at 6 p.m. EDT

NASA collaborates with GLOBE to introduce water in a hands-on STEM inquiry-based experience. Learn how NASA missions collect data about the water cycle. Explore the Elementary GLOBE resources including teacher guides, storybooks and related STEM activities designed for grades K-5. The activities promote problem solving, communication skills and teamwork while engaging the students in learning that is both fun and relevant to their everyday lives. Register online to participate. <https://www.etches.com/139045>

Mission to Mars Series: Curiosity, On Target!

Event Date: Sept. 9, 2015, at 6:30 p.m. EDT

Participants will get an overview of the Mars Science Laboratory (Curiosity) Mission and training in an engineering design activity from the On the Moon educator guide, which has been modified to model the Curiosity landing parameters. This webinar addresses the Next Generation Science Standard ETS1. Register online to participate. <https://www.etches.com/137602>

Mission to Mars Series: Engineering Our Way to Mars

Event Date: Sept. 10, 2015, at 6:30 p.m. EDT

Have you ever wondered what it's like to be a NASA engineer? In this online presentation, learn how to design and build an airbag system that will safely land a payload on Mars. Science concepts covered will be force, potential, and kinetic and mechanical energy. The activity also meets Next Generation Science Standards and Common Core Math Standards. Register online to participate. <https://www.etches.com/138909>

Please direct questions about this series of webinars to Steve Culivan at stephen.p.culivan@nasa.gov.

Bring the Space Station Into Your Classroom With NASA's STEM on Station Website

NASA is celebrating NASA astronaut Scott Kelly, Russian cosmonaut Mikhail Kornienko and their yearlong mission to the International Space Station with the launch of the new STEM on Station website!

The website features lesson plans, videos and up-to-the-minute education news. Follow along with Scott and Mikhail to find out what we hope to learn from their extended mission. Get to know the International Space Station, and learn how work there benefits life on Earth as well as prepares us for our future journey to Mars.

The STEM on Station website also features Learning Launchers. These "Teacher Toolkits" focus on research and activities related to the space station. Each month, a new Learning Launcher will feature One-Year Mission research or another topic related to the space station. Use lesson plans, videos and related resources to bring the International Space Station into your classroom. Since more topics will be featured, check back often to see what's coming next.

We are working "Off the Earth, For the Earth ... and in the Classroom"!

To check out the new website, visit <http://www.nasa.gov/education/STEMstation>.



#WhySpaceMatters Photography Competition

NASA and the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, or UNOOSA, have launched a global photography competition to highlight how the vantage point of space helps us better understand our home planet, improve lives, and safeguard our future by aiding sustainable development on Earth.

To highlight the role of space-based science and technologies and their applications on Earth, NASA and UNOOSA are inviting the public to submit photos depicting why space matters to us all in our daily lives. To participate, post a picture and description on Instagram using the hashtag #whyspacematters and tagging @UNOOSA.

NASA astronaut Scott Kelly, who is three months into a one-year mission aboard the International Space Station, will announce the winning photo each month by posting it from his Instagram account @StationCDRKelly.

For more information about the competition, visit <http://www.unoosa.org/oosa/contests/whyspacematters/index.html>.

For more information about the International Space Station and the One-Year Mission, visit <http://www.nasa.gov/content/one-year-crew>.

Earth Science Week 2015 Contests

The American Geosciences Institute is sponsoring a series of contests to celebrate Earth Science Week 2015. This year's celebration takes place Oct. 11-17, 2015.

Earth Science Week 2015 Photography Contest -- Open to All Ages

<http://www.earthsciweek.org/contests/photography/index.html>

Geoscientists study our planet's geosphere (land), hydrosphere (water), atmosphere (air), and biosphere (living things). These spheres -- or Earth systems -- continually affect and influence one another. With a camera, you can capture evidence of the dynamic impact of change processes in your home, neighborhood, school, workplace or local public spaces. In a photo, show at least one Earth system affecting another Earth system in your community.

Earth Science Week 2015 Visual Arts Contest -- Open to Students in Grades K-5

<http://www.earthsciweek.org/contests/visualarts/index.html>

Earth science is the study of Earth systems -- land, water, air and living things. Scientists pay special attention to the ways these things affect each other, such as the way wind shapes the landscape or falling rain nourishes plants. Use artwork to show how land, water, air and living things interact in the world around you.

Earth Science Week 2015 Essay Contest -- Open to Students in Grades 6-9

<http://www.earthsciweek.org/contests/essay/index.html>

Since the earliest hand-drawn maps and diagrams, "visualization" has been an important way of explaining and understanding the interactions of land, water, air and living things. Earth



scientists today use more sophisticated technology to monitor and represent these Earth systems -- the geosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere and biosphere. In an original essay no more than 300 words in length, explain one way that geoscientists' use of cutting-edge visualization is advancing Earth science today.

The entry deadline for all three contests is **Oct. 16, 2015**. Visit the contest websites for full details.

If you have any questions about these contests, please email the Earth Science Week staff at info@earthsciweek.org.

International Observe the Moon Night

On Sept. 19, 2015, the whole world has the chance to admire and celebrate our moon on International Observe the Moon Night. And you can join in the fun!

Check the map of registered observation events at <http://observethemoonnight.org/> to see if an event is being held near you. If not, please consider registering and hosting one and inviting your community. You don't know where to start?

This link walks you through the process of planning an event of any size. See how to host an event in six easy steps: <http://observethemoonnight.org/getInvolved>.

Do you need suggestions for hands-on activities? Visit <http://observethemoonnight.org/activities/> for ideas.

Are you worried about cloudy weather obscuring your view of the moon?

The "Moon as Art" collection, chosen by the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter, or LRO, team, gives the public the opportunity to see the moon as others have seen it for centuries -- as an inspirational muse. But this time, also see the moon from the perspective of being in orbit with a series of eyes that see different parts of the electromagnetic spectrum. Learn more at <http://lunar.gsfc.nasa.gov/moonartgallery.html>.

Additional beautiful, high-resolution images of the moon's surface taken by LRO's cameras are available at <http://lroc.sese.asu.edu>.

Questions about this opportunity should be directed to Lora.V.Bleacher@nasa.gov.

Visualize Learning With an Earth Science Week Toolkit

Every year, Earth Science Week tackles a different topic in its toolkit of materials for educators. Choose the kit that best fits your instructional needs. Focusing on the theme "Visualizing Earth Systems," the 2015 kit includes:

- * 12-month school-year activity calendar, suitable for hanging
- * New Earth Science Week poster, including a learning activity
- * Material on geoscience education and resources from USGS
- * NASA visualization DVD and booklet on Earth science
- * National Park Service posters on geologic and air resources
- * GPS Adventures material from NOAA
- * Soil science resource from Soil Science Society of America
- * Anthropocene poster from Howard Hughes Medical Institute
- * Educational material from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- * Unavco resource on Earth's shape, gravity field, and rotation
- * Mining, exploration, and reclamation resources from SME
- * Material on climate science from U.S. Department of Energy
- * Esri material on Global Positioning System technology
- * Geologic Map Day poster with geologic mapping activity
- * Brochures, bookmarks, fact sheets, postcards, and more!

Past years' kits address other topics: "Earth's Connected Systems" illuminates natural systems' interactions. "Mapping Our World" covers maps. "Discovering Careers in the Earth Sciences" targets careers. "Our Ever-Changing Earth" focuses on change processes.

Each kit contains materials to help you prepare for Earth Science Week (October 11-17, 2015) and teach Earth science all year long. For ordering, special shipping, bulk order discounts, and more information, visit <http://www.earthsciweek.org/materials> or phone AGI Publications at 703-379-2480.



FORTE celebrates 500,000 downloads by giving away \$24 product

Music Notation Software FORTE has hit 500,000 downloads. For this reason they're give away their \$24 product FORTE Basic until Sept. 14.--FREE

Handorf – Aug. 20, 2015 – FORTE, an intelligent music notation software, announced today that they hit the milestone of 500,000 downloads. As a celebration, they launched a giveaway campaign of FORTE Basic, an easy-to-use, affordable alternative to the complex and expensive music notation programs available today. They're giving away Free copies of this \$24 software 100% Free.

A free copy of FORTE Basic can be downloaded instantly before September 14th at this site:
<http://www.fortenotation.com/en/lp/giveaway/>

FORTE creates an ideal environment for hobbyists who enjoy making music. The FORTE developers are musicians themselves, so they understand how important an intuitive user interface is in order to create an enjoyable scoring experience. FORTE was developed to feature a visually attractive user interface, a new level of sound quality with a comprehensive orchestral sound library, as well as simplified features, such as added layout editing features.

About FORTE

FORTE is a product of the Lugert Verlag Publishing House in Handorf, Germany. The Lugert Verlag has been offering materials for music teachers and musicians, for classes in school, music schools and colleges for many years. Currently, the publishing house offers a wide assortment of magazines, schoolbooks and DVDs. Additionally, Lugert produces learning software and sells musical instruments. The FORTE program has been used in 40 countries by more than 10,000 users, and has established itself as a sustainable alternative to expensive programs. For more information, please visit FORTENotation.com.

Manage Your Junk Mail with Unroll.me

By Dani Sloan

As we start the new school year we're always looking for ways to unclutter our personal, professional, and digital lives. A great place to start is by unsubscribing from all the junk mail that we've unintentionally signed up for, but that can be quite a time consuming process.

Enter: Unroll.me

Simply head over to unroll.me, connect your email address and start the fun. It will automatically scan your inbox for junk mail. You can select to unsubscribe from emails, "roll it up," or leave it as is (showing up in your email inbox). If you choose to "roll it up" you'll receive a once daily email that has all of your junk-ish type mail on it. Usually, I choose to just delete the daily roll-up email (instead of hundreds), but sometimes I give it a peek.

Happy unsubscribing!

Modular Computer - Acer's Revo Build

Acer's new Revo Build is a new style and design for PCs. The Revo Build offers a modular approach to customizing your PC. It has great benefits along with a small and sleek design.

The Acer Revo Build is a PC, but with a building block type of design. Each block is a different type of computer component. One block might consist of a power supply, the other might be a Graphics Processor Unit (GPU), or a 1TB hard drive. Each added block customizes and adds on to your PC to make it faster and more tailored to your needs.

Not only can you customize the hardware as you add blocks to your Acer Revo Build, but it also offers an easy way for you to keep it within budget – by buying a component one block at a time. If there is a need for a new hard drive, projector, or even a wireless charger for a smart phone then all that is needed is to go out and purchase a new hard drive component from Acer and just plug it in. There would be no need to hire an I.T. professional to do the installation! Another great feature is that each block can be interchanged or used between other Revo Build computers.

According to Acer, the compact size of the Acer Revo Build's base unit is a little under 5 inches wide and slightly over 2 inches tall. Included in the base unit are USB 3.0 ports, a DisplayPort, HDMI port, microphone and headphone ports, and an SD card reader.

Without the hassle of cables, and I.T. skills to switching out computer components, the Acer Revo Build seems like a perfect fit for those who are looking for a small, sleek, and easy-to-upgrade PC.

Sources: <http://us.acer.com/ac/en/US/press/2015/163825>

