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Different technologies for different collaborations : adoption of social tools fore scientific practice /

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Abstract

Collaboration and communication are central to academic teaching, learning and research, with ?social media? innovations increasingly adopted and adapted to meet such needs. ?Social software? innovations provide new opportunities to engage in collaborative scientific activities. In this paper we explore the adoption of both general-use and science-specific social software in tightly-coupled and loosely-coupled forms of scientific collaboration. Results of survey and interview data show that scientists tend to adopt general-purpose, rather than science-specific technologies. This is found for both forms of collaboration (e.g., Google Docs for tightly-coupled collaborations, and social networking sites for loosely-coupled collaborations). However in some cases, existing technologies were regarded as sufficient for such collaborations (e.g., document track-changes, and email lists, respectively). Finally we note that the interaction between the social software and collaboration types leads to tensions in their mapping onto public and private spheres of interaction; and provide some recommendations for the design of future social software for researchers and those involved in

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academic teaching and learning. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)