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What's the best tool? [1]

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With Winter Web Camp, it has been a busy week filled with lots of trainings and good conversations with faculty. My favorite day this year was Multimedia Day were Amy Arnold and myself showed off many of the tools that can be used to add multimedia to online courses.

In our sessions we focused on TechSmith products: SnagIt, Relay, and Camtasia. But it is important to point out that you can easily search online and find thousands of other tools that can offer the same features that these TechSmith products provide. So, what is the best option?

I am a big supporter of TechSmith products, I have been using their products for years and think that they are among the best. However, that doesn't necessarily make them the best for you.

The reality is that the best product for you is what you already have.

For instance, if you're wanting to record audio files for your course, your best option is not buying a fancy microphone and software to record/edit the audio. When you buy something or get a new piece of software, it adds a layer of complication and difficulty that can become a major barrier.

Instead the best solution is first using what you already have and are familiar with. So, if you're wanting to record some audio, I would encourage you to use your smartphone. Almost every smartphone has a voice memo or voice recording app built in that allows you to quickly record audio and e-mail it to yourself. This will give you an audio file that can easy be shared in your online course. You also want to keep it simple - when you're recording your audio, record it in way that doesn't require editing.

By using the technology that you already have and keeping your output simple, you’re able to focus on the teaching material. Then, with time, you’ll get more confident, and you’ll be ready to grow to using more advance products.

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