

# No catching technology

Ged Cann

Indiana University Professor and e-learning expert Curtis Bonk believes education has never caught up with technology and maybe never will.

"I remember seeing a speech given in Sweden when the keynote speaker said technology had outstripped theory and education — that was 1999 and it's only gotten worse," he said.

However, that is not to say he is not determined to help it catch up.

This will be the subject of his talk at the national DEANZ 2016 Conference hosted at the University of Waikato from April 17-20.

"I have one talk that goes through 50 technologies that are revamping the scope of education today. If only one had happened it would have been a revolution in technology. The fact that we've had 50, including mobile learning, online learning, digital books, virtual worlds, the list goes on."

He said for many these technologies opened up doors to education they never had, while at the same moment, there are teachers who resist them.

"You have learners who are

embracing the technology and instructors who are often hesitant about every new idea," he said.

Professor Bonk said the solution was to create frameworks and practices that enable teachers to become acquainted and use these tools. These might include hosting massive open online courses (MOOCs) for subjects such as programming or design.

"I try to simplify the possibility of using technology so as to reduce resistance and get people to become users and eventually advocates."

According to Mr Bonk there are six stages of incorporating technology into learning: stage one is awareness, stage two resistance, we then progress to understanding, then use, and finally stage five and six are sharing and advocacy.

"We've been stuck in the resistance movement for some time."

A notable exception, he said, is online learning, which had moved to stages three and four as it becomes more accepted within society.

Studies out of Harvard University suggest it is less an age issue among teachers, but experience.

"Young people have grown up with mobile phones attached to their appendages but all of us now have smartphones, so it's more a



Indiana University Professor and e-learning expert Curtis Bonk.

matter of have you been part of the culture of using technologies," he said.

According to Professor Bonk, learning about computer science and programming will not remain the domain of tertiary education sectors for long.

"We see these code academies and hackathons and computer camps . . . These are places where kids can learn in intensive environments and

this is pushing through to younger ages," he said.

"We will be addressing a decade from now the need society has for computer science backgrounds by having experiences with people of younger ages," he said.

■ If you would like to learn more about the DEANZ 2016 conference visit [www.conference.deanz.org.nz](http://www.conference.deanz.org.nz)

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