VoiceThread

VoiceThread is an asynchronous presentation tool that allows users to share a variety of media including PowerPoint, images, and videos. Users can add comments to presentations and allow others to comment on their presentations if they wish. Students can create presentations and share them with the instructor only or share them with the entire class.

Getting Around in a VoiceThread

From an open VoiceThread, you can listen to comments, record comments of your own, and even access the settings for that VoiceThread.

1. Click on a person's Identity image to listen to that person's comment.
2. Click the play button to begin playing the VoiceThread. All comments on this slide will play in order.
3. Use the timeline to scrub through the various comments on this slide. Hover over a specific segment of timeline to see more information about the corresponding comment.
4. Record a new comment.
5. See the full duration of this slide and where you are within it.
6. Use the arrows to view other slides.
7. Use the postcard viewer to see all slides in this VoiceThread at once.
8. Zoom in or out.
9. Click the menu icon to access more information and settings for this VoiceThread.
10. See the title of this slide. If the author has added a link, the title will be underlined, and you can click on it to be taken to that link in a new browser tab.
11. See which Identity you’re currently using and click on it to select a different one.
12. Turn on closed captioning for this slide if it is a video and if captions have been added.
13. View the VoiceThread in fullscreen mode.

Close the VoiceThread

**Adding VoiceThread to Your Blackboard Course**

1. Navigate to a Content area (Course Documents, Assignments, etc.) of your Blackboard course.

2. Click on the "Tools" tab
3. Select "VoiceThread" from the menu.
4. On the Create VoiceThread page give the link a title and description if you’d like.
5. If you are creating a graded assignment, enable grading for this link in section 3 of the setup page.
6. Submit.

**Creating VoiceThread Content**

After you have added a VoiceThread link to your course, you'll need to decide what you want students to see when they click on that link. Start by clicking on the link you've just created and selecting the option you’d like to use.

**Course View**

Display the collection of VoiceThreads that have been shared with your course. Anything that has not yet been explicitly shared with your course will not appear here.
Individual VT

This shows VoiceThreads you created. Select a VoiceThread to share with your class. When students click on the link, they’ll see only the VoiceThread you selected.

VT Home

Display all of a student’s VoiceThread content in a single view. This includes all VoiceThreads and all courses that belong to them.

Creating a new VoiceThread

You can begin creating a new VoiceThread from any VoiceThread page by clicking on “Add Your Own” if you are in the Course View or Create New VoiceThread if you are in the Individual View.
Uploading files from your computer

There are two ways to add files from your computer to a VoiceThread.

1. Drag your files from your computer and drop them onto the Create page. Those files will upload and process automatically.
2. Click on “Add Media”, and then select “My Computer” and choose your files.
The files will upload and process. As soon as they are ready, you’ll see them as thumbnails on the Create page.

**Importing media from other VoiceThreads**

If you’ve already created slides in another VoiceThread that you’d like to re-use:

1. Click on the “Add Media” button.
2. Select “Media Sources” from the menu.
3. Click “My VoiceThreads”.
4. Browse through your existing VoiceThreads to find the slides you’d like to import.

Note that any comments recorded on those slides will not be imported; only the central media can be re-used.
**Importing media from another website**

Images and videos can be imported from other websites as long as you have the URL that points directly to that piece of media. These URLs usually end in a file extension like .jpg or .mp4.

1. Click on the “Add Media” button.
2. Select “URL” from the menu.
3. Enter your URL into the pop-up window.

When the media has fully imported, you’ll see the slides appear as thumbnails on the Create page.

*Note:* The URL option cannot be used to import files from media-sharing links like YouTube. These sites provide share links that do not point directly to the video file, so that media cannot be imported directly into a VoiceThread.

**Importing media from other services**

Media can be imported directly from Flickr and the New York Public Library. Images from both of these services are Creative Commons licensed and can be used by any VoiceThread member. To access these libraries:

1. Click on the “Add Media” button.
2. Select “Media Sources” from the menu.
3. Click on “Flickr” or “NYPL” to access these respective resources.
4. Browse through or search these libraries to find the slides you’d like to import.

**Using your webcam to create a slide**

The webcam option allows you to take a still photograph of yourself or to record a video directly onto the slide.

1. Click the “Add Media” button.
2. Select “Webcam Photo” or “Webcam Video” from the menu.
3. Click the button to take your picture or begin recording your video after the countdown.
4. For a video, click “Save” after you review what you’ve recorded.

**Number of slides a VoiceThread can contain**
With an upgraded VoiceThread account, you can add up to 500 slides to any one VoiceThread. This includes all types of slide, from videos to documents to images.

**Adding a title, description, and tags**
After you have added at least one slide to your VoiceThread, you will be prompted to give the VoiceThread a title, description, and tags.

- **Title**: A title is required.
- **Description**: A description is optional. This is a good place to describe your VoiceThread in more detail or display the expectations for others to participate.
- **Tags**: Tags are optional. They allow you to search for the VoiceThread by certain keywords on your VT Home page. Tags are not visible on the VoiceThread itself.

Click “Save” when you are done.

You will be taken a page where you can add media, comment, and share and return to your course.
Saving your work
All slides that you upload to your VoiceThread are saved automatically. When you return to your VT Home page, you’ll see the VoiceThread you just created.

How to comment on a slide
Begin by opening the VoiceThread and navigating to the slide on which you’d like to record a comment. At the bottom of that slide, you’ll see a “+” icon. Click on this to see all of the commenting options.

Audio from a microphone
1. Click on the microphone button.
2. Click “Allow” on the Flash permissions box if prompted.

3. After the countdown is complete, begin recording your comment.
4. Click the “Stop Recording” at the bottom of the screen to stop the recording.

5. The comment will begin playing. Click “Save” to save it or “Cancel” to cancel and try again.

Text

1. Click on the “ABC” button.

2. Type your text comment.
3. Click “Save”.

Note: You can enter URL in a text comment, and it will be hyperlinked automatically.
Video from a webcam

1. Click on the camera icon.

2. Click “Allow” on the Flash permissions box if prompted.

3. After the countdown is complete, begin recording your comment.
4. Click “Stop Recording” at the bottom of the screen to stop the recording.
5. The comment will begin playing. Click “Save” to save it or “Discard” to cancel and try again.

Audio from a telephone

1. Click on the telephone icon.

2. Enter your 10-digit phone number (US and Canada only).
3. Click “Call Me”.

4. When your phone rings, pick it up, and record your comment when prompted.
5. Hang up to save.

Audio or video from a pre-recorded file

1. Click on the upload icon.
2. Browse for the video or audio file you wish to upload, and select it.
3. Wait for the file to finish processing. You'll know it's done because the spinning wheel over your Identity image on the left will disappear.

Assignment Builder

Create a graded assignment for students to complete. You can require them to:

1. create a VoiceThread of their own to submit (student can create VoiceThreads the same way instructors do),
2. comment on a VoiceThread you've created,
3. or simply to watch a VoiceThread start to finish.

Setting up a VoiceThread assignment in your Blackboard class.

1. Navigate to a Content area (Course Documents, Assignments, etc.) of your Blackboard course.
2. Click on the "Tools" tab
3. Select "VoiceThread" from the menu.
4. On the Create VoiceThread page give the link a title and description.

5. If you are creating a graded assignment, select “Yes” for “Enable Evaluation” step 3 “Grading”.

6. Make sure to include the points possible for the assignment.

7. Submit.

After submitting click on the assignment you just created. You will be taken to a page where you can select the type of assignment you want to create.
After you've selected the type of assignment you'd like to create, you'll be walked through the steps to complete the setup process.

1. You can include a description for your assignment,
2. select a VoiceThread you've created for the Comment or Watch Assignment,
3. and even require a specific number of comments for the Comment Assignment.

**Student Assignment Submission**

When students click on the link for a graded assignment, they will see the assignment you've created.

1. They can create or select a VoiceThread to submit for the Create Assignment,
2. record comments on your VoiceThread for the Comment Assignment,
3. or watch the VoiceThread for the Watch Assignment.

As soon as they click on the "Submit Assignment" button, you will be able to grade their work.

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**Grading Student Work**

When you're ready to grade a VoiceThread assignment, simply return to your course and click on the VoiceThread link again. This will display the grader.
Click on a student's name on the right to see that student's submission. You can click on each comment below his or her name individually to jump directly to it. Enter a grade on a scale of 0-100, and hit "Enter" on your keyboard. This grade will immediately be entered into the Blackboard Grade Center.

*Note:* If you have set the assignment to be worth less than 100 points, **still grade it on a scale of 0-100**, and the score will be adjusted accordingly in your gradebook.

If you have students who have not yet submitted their assignments, click on the "Remind" button to send them an email reminder.

**Editing an existing VoiceThread**

You can edit any VoiceThread that belongs to you or to which you have been given editing rights. Add more slides, remove others, and change the settings for a VoiceThread at any time. All of those edits are immediately visible to anyone who has access to the VoiceThread. To access the Edit area from the VT Home page:

1. Hover your mouse over the VoiceThread you wish to edit.
2. Click “Edit”.
If your VoiceThread is already open:

1. Click on the menu icon in the top-left corner.
2. Select “Edit”.

**Changing the order of slides**

Each slide in your VoiceThread appears as a thumbnail on the Edit page. To change their order, just click and drag each slide to its desired location. The change will save automatically.

*Tip:* You can also reorder slides from the “postcard view”. When a VoiceThread is open, click on the Show all the slides” icon in the bottom-right corner to see all slides in that VoiceThread.
Then you can drag and drop the slides to their new location.

**Titling a slide**

Individual slides can have titles of their own. These titles appear at the top of the VoiceThread when it plays. To title a slide:

1. Go to the [Edit page](#).
2. Click on the slide you want to title.
3. Click on the pencil icon in the bottom-left corner of that slide thumbnail.
4. Enter your title.
5. Save.

*Note:* You can also add a hyperlink to your title so that your viewers can click on it to be taken to an external webpage. Enter a URL in the “Links to” field to do this.

**Putting an active link on a slide**

To place an active link directly on a VoiceThread slide:

1. Go to the [Edit page](#).
2. Click on the slide to which you want to add a link.
3. Click on the pencil icon in the bottom-left corner of the slide thumbnail
4. Enter the URL into the “Links to” field.  
   *Note:* You need to also add a title to the slide.

5. Save.

**Replacing a slide**

To replace the central media of a slide while preserving the comments that have already been recorded:

1. Go to the [Edit page](#).
2. Click on the slide you want to replace.
3. Click on the pencil icon in the bottom-left corner of the slide thumbnail.
4. Click the “Replace Media” link.
5. Select the media that you’d like to upload in place of the existing slide.
6. Save.

When people view your VoiceThread, the title will appear at the top of the slide. When they click on that title, they’ll be taken to the URL that you entered in the “Links to” field.

**Deleting a slide**
From the [Edit page](#):

1. Click on the slide you wish to delete.
2. Click on the trash can icon in the bottom-right corner.
3. Confirm that you want to delete the slide.

*Note:* When you delete a slide, you also delete any comments recorded on it. If you want to preserve the comments, you’ll need to replace the slide instead.

**Copying a VoiceThread**
Copying a VoiceThread allows you to re-use existing VoiceThread content without having to recreate it.

To copy a VoiceThread you own or can edit:

1. Go to the [Edit page](#) for that VoiceThread.
2. Click on the “Options” menu on the right side of the page.
3. Select “Make a Copy” from the menu.

4. Give the copy a unique title and description if you’d like.
5. Use the drop menu to select whether you’d like to keep all comments from the original, only your own comments, or none of them.
6. Click “Copy” to make a copy and remain on the edit page for the original. Click “Copy and open” to copy and go directly to the edit page for that new VoiceThread.
Deleting a VoiceThread

From the Edit page:

1. Click on the Options menu in the top-right corner.
2. Select “Delete this VoiceThread”.
3. Confirm your deletion.

From the VT Home page:

1. Go to the VT Home page.
2. Hover your mouse over the VoiceThread you wish to delete. The overview will appear.
3. Click on the trash can button in the bottom-right corner of that overview.
4. Confirm your deletion.
Changing your VoiceThread settings
The settings for a VoiceThread can be changed at any time. You can alter the settings for VoiceThreads you own or can edit.

1. Go to the Edit page for the VoiceThread.
2. Click on the “Options” menu in the top-right corner.
3. Select “Playback Settings” from the menu.
4. Make your adjustments.
5. Click “Update”.

What does each playback setting mean?

Playback Settings

- Allow others to download original media
- Allow others to export
- Start playing when opened
- Automatically advance to the next slide after 4 seconds
Allow others to download original media

This option allows viewers of your VoiceThread to download your original slides to their computers by right-clicking on the slide and selecting “Download Original Media”. Comments will not be included. You can only use this feature if you have an upgraded VoiceThread account.

Allow others to export

This option allows others to export your VoiceThread. Click here for more information about exporting. This feature is enabled by default.

Start playing when opened

Enabling this option means that the comments on your VoiceThread will begin playing automatically when people first open it.

Automatically advance to the next page

When the VoiceThread is in play mode, it will play through all of the comments on a slide and then pause until the viewer manually advances to the next slide. If you want the slides to advance automatically instead, enable this option.

Allow others to make a copy

This option allows you to determine whether others can make a copy of the VoiceThread. This feature is disabled by default. Click here for more about how to make a copy.

Enable Comment Moderation

Turn on Comment Moderation, which allows you to preview all comments on your VoiceThread before revealing them to others. Click here for more information.

Wait X seconds before advancing

X = the number of seconds after all the comments on a slide have played before the VoiceThread automatically goes to the next slide. The default is 4 seconds, but you can change it to anything you would like. If you want your viewers to linger in order to encourage commenting on a slide, you'll want to make it longer, but if you want your VoiceThread to play back like you're giving a presentation, you probably want to set X to 0 seconds.

More Information

VoiceThread Tutorials
https://sc.voicethread.com/#tutorials