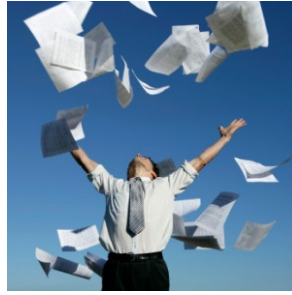


The Paperless Music Tour: iPads, the Cloud & Social Media

Brayer Teague - Downers Grove North High School, Downers Grove, Illinois



District 99 schools (Downers Grove North & Downers Grove South High School) each have a long tradition of music ensemble touring. Both schools have bands and choirs that tour independently, and our District 99 Orchestra also engages in educational travel. Every four years, the bands of Downers Grove North & Downers Grove South combine to form an Honors Band for the purposes of continuing a twenty-five year old exchange with a Musikschule in Bietigheim-Bissingen, Germany.

Our District 99 Honors Band's most recent journey was the eighth European tour I have coordinated for student musicians in our schools, and my sixteenth tour overall. I have used the web as a communication tool since the mid-90s, but the last several tours have evolved to include the use of a blog to disseminate important pre-tour information, as well as 'on the ground' reports from students and faculty as we travel. But our most recent summer tour utilized - unquestionably - the most robust menu of technology resources we have ever deployed. The payoff was big. Parents and students applauded our use of technology, staff enjoyed much lighter backpacks, and the use of Social Media increased our unique page views to well over 22,000 hits during the tour (up from 1,900 hits on a similar tour taken just four years ago).

The Blog as Central Communication Hub



We have used a Blog (powered by Google's Blogger) for the past half-dozen tours we have coordinated. For our students and parents, the idea of a blog as the central hub of communication for a tour has become standard in the way we operate.

Blogs are free to set up, and they are intuitive to design and update. Setting up the initial structure of a blog for your music tour will only take a matter of minutes. You can add, manipulate and develop as your tour plans progress and as specific needs for your organization arise. To set up a free blog, go to: <http://blogger.com>

We explored, utilized and paired many additional technologies with our tour Blog, and I will explain many of those resources below. But I believe it's worth stressing that the Blog was the center of efforts. We set up all the other technologies (like Facebook, Twitter, etc.) to be **fed** through the blog, meaning our staff and students were for all practical purposes only managing one technology during the tour.

Our most recent tour blog may be viewed, as an example, at:

<http://d99honorsband2012.blogspot.com/>



Tip: When establishing a tour blog, I would suggest you 'disable comments.' We have found that - for the purposes we use the blog - we do not need or want students or parents pontificating opinion on the site. We simply shut down the ability to comment on posts in the settings.

Pre Tour Communication



Feedburner

One challenge that we needed to overcome with our most recent tour was that the membership of our District 99 Honors Band was a very select group of 75 musicians from two different campuses. There was no way for us to use traditional email distribution lists (based on our band classes at school) because we did not want to inundate the families of students who were NOT participating in the tour with all the correspondence that would be a part of the tour preparation.

We solved this challenge by creating a system where students, and the families of student tour participants, could 'sign up' for email alerts. Google's *Feedburner* (www.feedburner.google.com).

This allows you to add a "Follow By Email" box to your blog. Then, once every 24-hours, at a time you specify in your settings, Feedburner will collate all of the blog posts made in the past day, and send them in a simple index - via email - to your subscribers. We had to make a big push to parents at the time of tour registration to make certain that every family had at least one email address (that they checked regularly) registered with our blog. But once we did that, blog posts became the main method of communication about upcoming rehearsals, tour meetings, and all logistical details that families needed to know.

District 99 Honors Band - 2012 European Tour

[Edit Feed Details...](#) | [Delete Feed...](#) | [Transfer Feed...](#)

Analyze

Optimize

Publicize

Troubleshootize

My Feeds

SERVICES

Headline Animator

Display rotating headlines

BuzzBoost

Republish your feed as HTML

✓ Email Subscriptions

Offer feed updates via email

Subscription Management

Communication Preferences

Email Branding

Delivery Options

PingShot

Notify services when you post

FeedCount

Show off your feed circulation

Socialize

Publish to the social web

Chicklet Chooser

Creative Commons

Password Protector

NoIndex

Email Subscriptions

Give your biggest fans another way to keep up with your blog or podcast feed by placing an email subscription form on your site.

Subscription Management

Subscription Form Code

Select which language you want to use in the window that appears when a potential email subscriber signs up. The selection you make immediately modifies the code to copy and paste below.

Language:

Copy and paste the following code into any web page. Your subscription form will be automatically inserted each time the page is loaded. From there, readers can subscribe to receive daily email with your newest content.

```
<form style="border:1px solid #ccc;padding:3px;text-align:center;"
action="http://feedburner.google.com/fb/a/mailverify"
method="post" target="popupwindow"
onsubmit="window.open('http://feedburner.google.com/fb/a/mailverify?uri=District99HonorsBand-2012EuropeanTour&loc=en_US','popupwindow','scrollbars=yes,width=550,height=520');return true"><p>Enter your email address:</p><p><input type="text" style="width:140px"/>
```

Use as a widget in TypePad

Subscription Link Code

You can also offer email subscriptions from a link rather than a form. Just copy the following link code. Users who click it will be prompted to enter their email address in the form that appears.

Preview Subscription Link...

```
<a href="http://feedburner.google.com/fb/a/mailverify?uri=District99HonorsBand-2012EuropeanTour&loc=en_US">Subscribe to District 99 Honors Band - 2012 European Tour by Email</a>
```

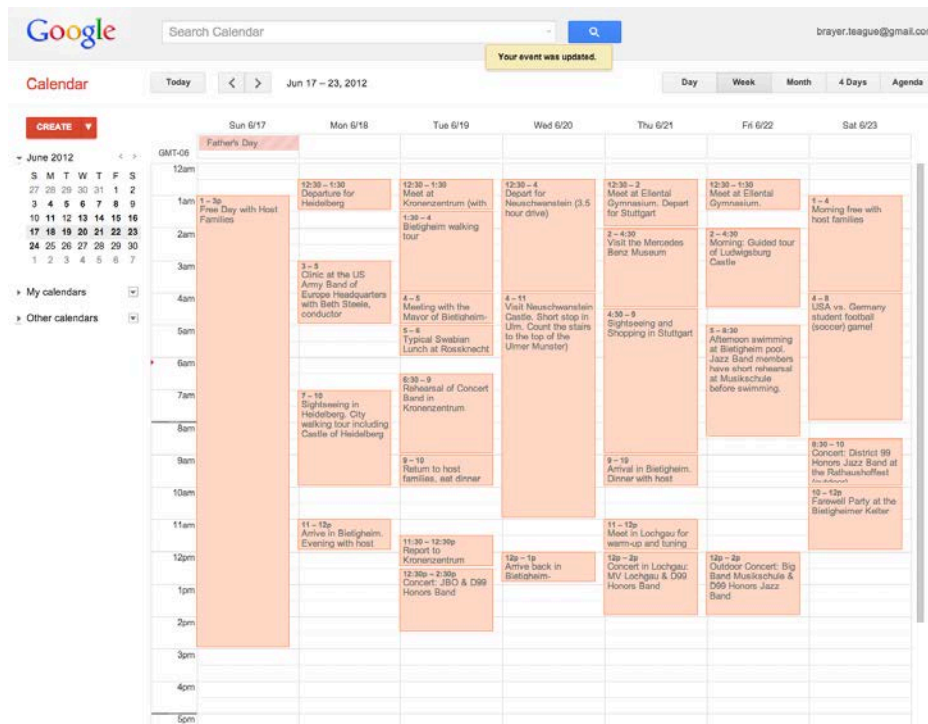
Use as a widget in TypePad

Synchronous Calendars & Itineraries



Google Cal

This was the fourth tour that we used Google Calendar as a way to manage the official tour itinerary. By entering each itinerary event in Google Cal, and then making the calendar 'public,' faculty, tour participants, and family members could subscribe to the calendar on their desktop computer, laptop computer, or mobile device. I noticed a marked increase, this year, in the number of students who carried a SmartPhone of some kind, or an iPod touch, and referred to them during the tour for itinerary information.



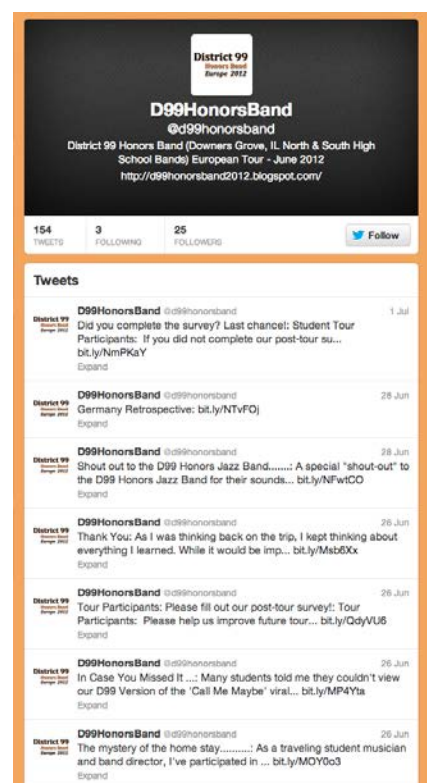
Tip: If your tour will take you to a new time-zone, make sure you enter the itinerary events in the 'local time zone' for your tour. That way, when the user travels to the new time zone, the event will appear correctly on the mobile device.

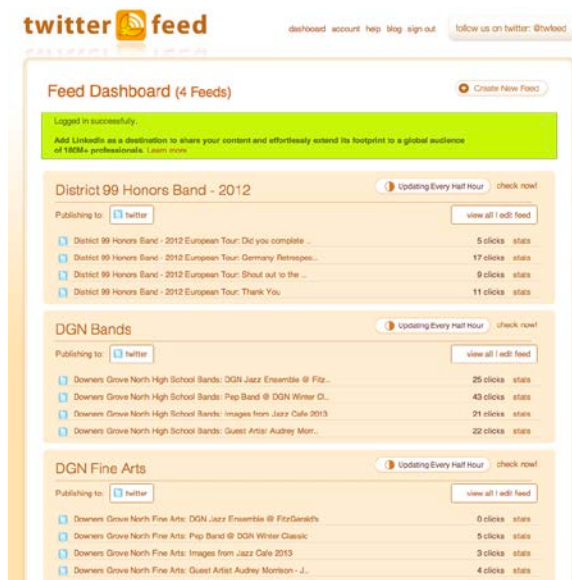
Harnessing Social Media



Twitter & Twitter Feed

Something new for us on our most recent European tour was to establish a specific Twitter handle for the tour. (<https://twitter.com/#!/d99honorsband>). This allowed us to do several things, but most importantly it allowed us to encourage student participants (and their parents) to subscribe to our blog post information via SMS messages (texts). Using a free service called Twitter Feed (www.twitterfeed.com) we linked our blog posts to the twitter account. Then, instructing users to subscribe to the Twitter account via their





cell phones (sending a text message that read “follow @d99honorsband” to 40404), users received a text message - with an active URL to the new information - every time we updated the blog. We did not do unique posts solely to Twitter. We simply used it as the vehicle to disseminate the blog posts via immediate text messages.

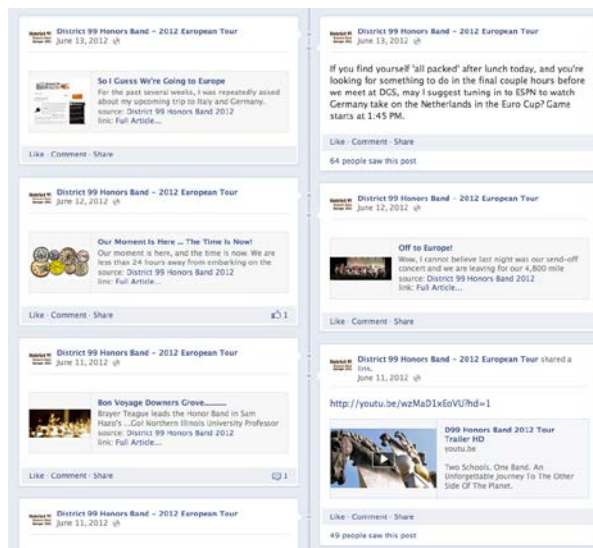
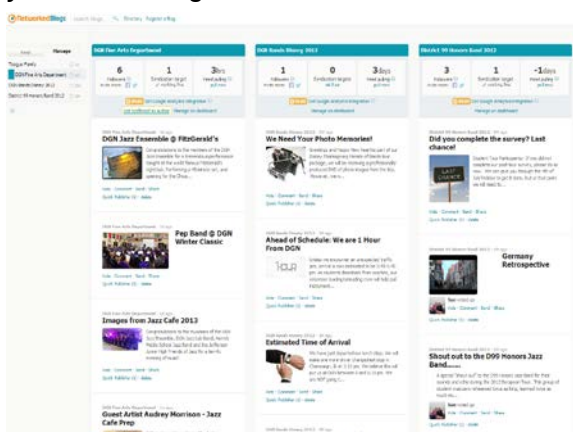


Facebook & Networked Blogs

We also decided to create an official Facebook page for the tour, and encouraged participants, and family members, to subscribe. We used a free Facebook App called Networked Blogs



(<https://www.facebook.com/networkedblogs>) to push all of our blog posts to the official Facebook page we had created. Again, we did not do unique posts solely to Facebook. We simply used it as a vehicle to disseminate blog posts via the “News Feed” paradigm that so many have become accustomed to using in the past five years. Even though families received an email each day via Feedburner (as described above), we found that most students were aware of the information we posted to the blog long before the email arrived in their inbox, simply because they were tracking it in their Facebook newsfeed.



I believe that interaction with our blog (especially the posts that students wrote during the tour) increased significantly based on our tie to a Facebook page. By the end of the tour we had over 22,000 hits from persons in over a dozen countries (compared to 1,900 hits just four years earlier when we were not connecting the blog to Facebook).



Tip: Facebook is of course dynamic Social Media, and we found that students had set up an 'unofficial Facebook page' for the tour before we could even launch our official page and tie it to the blog. I asked the student that created the page to add me to the group, and in doing so I believe we created a desire for appropriate language and civil discourse.

Group Messaging (Domestic Tours)

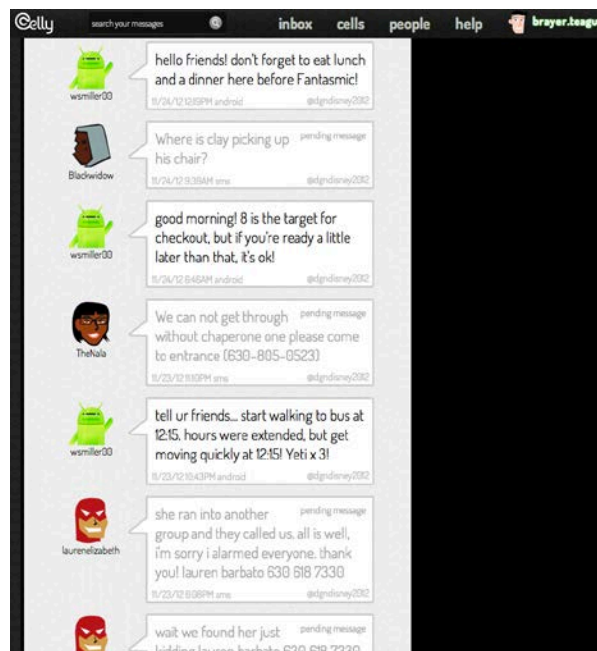


Celly

In the summer of 2012 – after our European Tour had ended – our music team discovered an absolutely free messaging system called Celly.

(<http://cel.ly/>) Celly has been evolving as a delivery system for mobile messages, and now brands itself as a “mobile social network” that works with any mobile phone or device. Members can join instantly with one text and exchange group messages, polls, reminders, and web alerts.

There are no member limits with Celly. A single message can reach many people all at once. In schools, students and teachers can communicate freely with Celly while keeping phone numbers private. Group messages can be moderated by one or more curators to keep conversations on-topic and friendly.





On our recent DGN Marching Band tour to the **Walt Disney World Thanksgiving Parade of Bands**, we used Celly extensively to communicate with students while the tour was in progress. Each student was asked to sign up for the Cell we created, and the tour chaperones were designated as 'curators'. We used Celly to send text reminders about meeting times, transportation schedules, and venue check-in locations. Celly allowed us to stay in contact with all of our students, even when spread out at a Disney park. They had instant communication with us when someone was feeling ill, or had an issue that needed adult/teacher involvement.

Native iOS and Android Apps are also available. For more information and examples of Celly's presence in schools, visit: <http://cel.ly/school>

iPad = No More Binders!



Every music educator that has ever coordinated a tour understands the sheer amount of paperwork required. There is no Music Ed course that could ever fully prepare us for it, and at it can feel overwhelming. Legal forms, medical forms, copies of passports, emergency contact lists, flight manifests, equipment lists, stage set-up charts, bus lists, host-family

reports ... the list goes on and on. On past tours, each chaperone would travel with a 3-ring binder that included copies of all pertinent paperwork. One (unlucky) teacher was typically stuck with keeping track of multiple binders, filled to the brim with legal forms, copies of passports, medical documents, etc. This time, we went totally paperless, and each of our eight faculty chaperones traveled with only an iPad. (Our department does not own that many iPads at present, but a quick conversation with a fellow Department Chair colleague at my school led to permission to borrow a full set for our tour.)



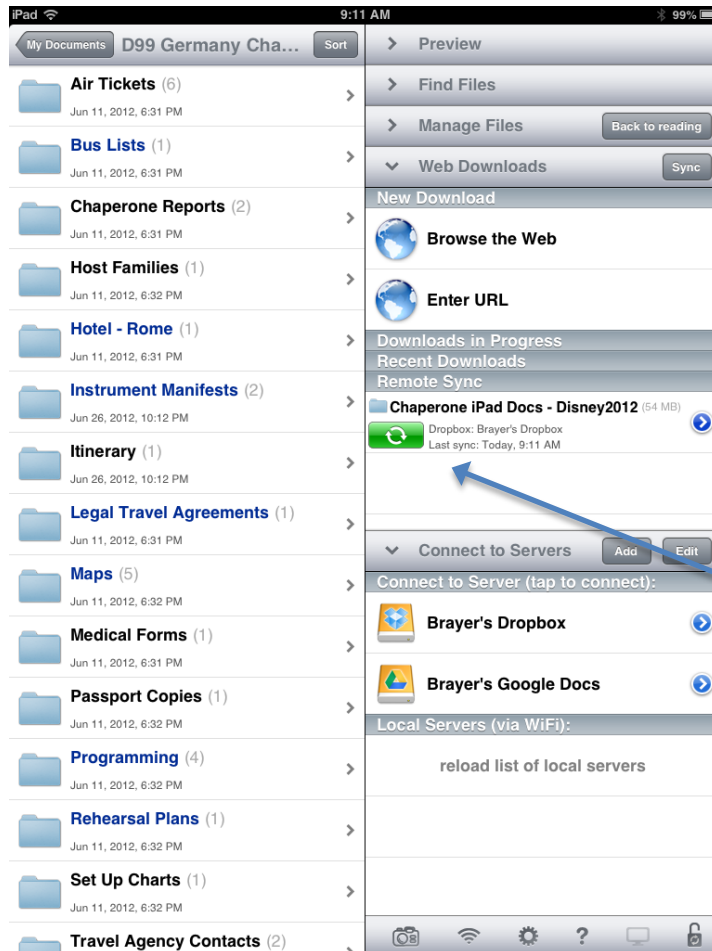
The iPad was an amazing tool for the tour. We loaded it with a variety of apps that facilitated our travel. These included apps for language translation, weather, flight status, maps, city guides and blogging. Tools for music instruction were also loaded on each iPad (tuners, metronomes, etc.). But there were two apps that were - by far - the most important to our success on the tour:



GoodReader

Every single document that we would have traditionally put in a 3-ring binder was saved as a PDF file and then accessible to chaperones on their iPad through GoodReader (www.goodiware.com/goodreader.html). This included scans of all student/faculty passports (something critically important to have on hand during an international tour), as well as all the medical information and scans of health insurance cards.

I chose GoodReader because it's very easy to annotate PDF files through this app. So, when it was time to check into our hotel in Rome, and we needed to 'write down' the actual assigned hotel room numbers, we would do so very quickly on the iPad.



But when I realized that GoodReader is a PDF management app that allows synchronous updates of PDF files, I decided that I'd never go back to traditional paper binders.

GoodReader allows you to do a one-button sync with any DropBox or Box.net account. So, after I created all the various pieces of paperwork we would need on the tour, I would simply save them to a designated DropBox folder on my computer, and I would know that the other faculty-chaperones could get the most up-to-date files simply by doing a sync every morning.

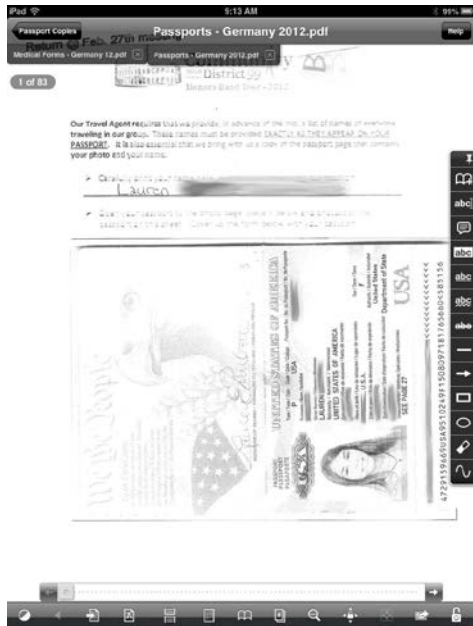
(Remote Sync Files)

Have you ever created a 3-ring binder, passed it out to chaperones, and then realized that one document was missing, or one needed an update? Not a problem using GoodReader.

Examples of GoodReader Use During Music Tours

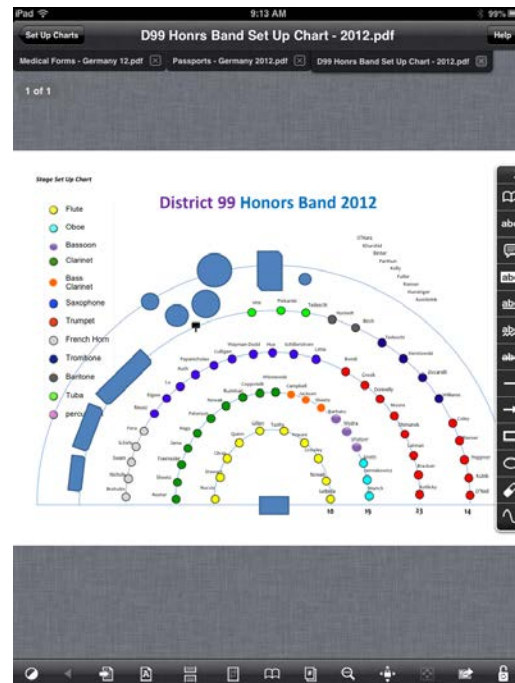
Medical Forms

Passport Copies



The screenshot shows a GoodReader app interface displaying a medical form titled "Medical Forms - Germany 12.pdf". The form is for a student named "L. LAURIC" and includes fields for personal information, allergies, medications, and emergency contact. The form is being viewed on a tablet, with the GoodReader interface visible at the top and bottom.

Set Up Charts

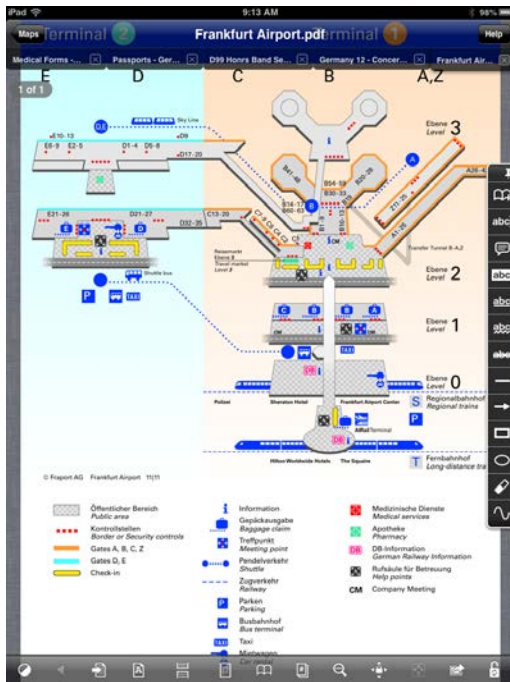


Concert Set Lists

The screenshot shows a GoodReader app interface displaying a concert set list titled "Germany 12 - Concert Band Programming.pdf". The set list is for a concert on Monday, June 11, and includes a list of songs and their durations. The set list is being viewed on a tablet, with the GoodReader interface visible at the top and bottom.

Germany 12 - Concert Band Programming.pdf	
Concert Repertoire	
Bon Voyage Concert (Monday, June 11)	
...Gol - BT	
Requiem for Band - GW	
The National Game - GW	
Slaval - GW	
Harry Potter Suite - BT	
Stars and Stripes - BT	
Concert #1 (Tuesday, June 19)	
...Gol - BT	
Announcement/Greeting	
Star Spangled Banner - Sandra	
German National Anthem - Sandra	
Procession of the Nobles - Reimund	
The Thunderer - GW	
After the Thunderer - GW	
The National Game - GW	
Dreamland - BT	
Harry Potter Suite - BT	
Announcement/Closing	
Alleluia! Laudamus Te - GW	
ENCORE #1: Beguine for Band - GW	
ENCORE #2: Stars and Stripes - BT	
ON DECK: Slaval	
Concert #2 (Thursday, June 21)	
...Gol - BT	
Announcement/Greeting	
The Thunderer - GW	
After the Thunderer - GW	
The National Game - GW	
Dreamland - BT	
Slaval - GW	
Harry Potter Suite - BT	
Beguine for Band - GW	
ENCORE: Stars and Stripes - GW	

Airport Maps



Hotel Room Lists

10:22 AM
Rome Italy 12 Hotel Rooms - annotated.pdf

1 of 3

Rome, Italy Hotel Rooms

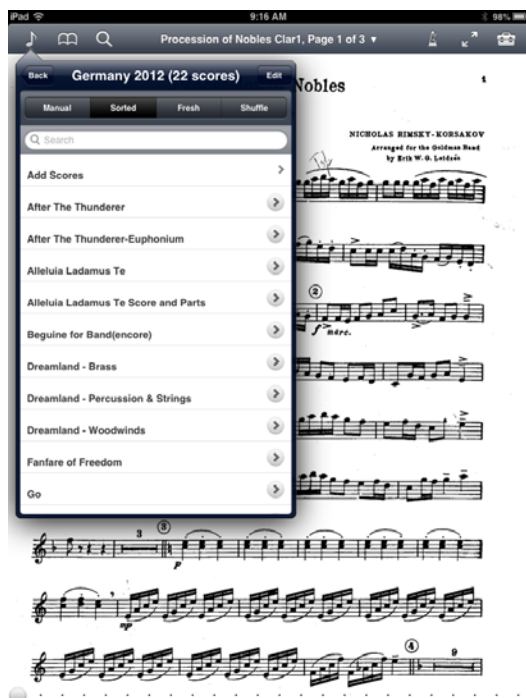
Rome Room	Actual #	Last, First	YIS	Gender	Instrument	Chaperone
24	172	Jarmakowicz, Claudia	10	F	Oboe	Belt-Roselieb, J.
24		Nowak, Michelle	10	F	Flute	Belt-Roselieb, J.
32		Krause, Morgan	11	F	Flute	Belt-Roselieb, J.
32		Papanicholas, Kelly	12	F	Alto Sax	Belt-Roselieb, J.
33	156	Fuller, Karrienne	12	F	Percussion	Belt-Roselieb, J.
33		Hunsinger, Trisha	12	F	Percussion	Belt-Roselieb, J.
34		Nowak, Nicole	10	F	Clarinet	Belt-Roselieb, J.
34		Wisniewski, Rachel	10	F	Clarinet	Belt-Roselieb, J.
39		Stewart, Kayleigh	10	F	Flute	Belt-Roselieb, J.
39		Wydra, Rachel	10	F	Bassoon	Belt-Roselieb, J.
26		Elgass, Erin	11	F	Alto Sax	Miller, C.
26		Wayman-Dodd, Kaitlyn	12	F	Tenor Sax	Miller, C.
28		Jackson, Sarah	10	F	Bass Clarinet	Miller, C.
28		Tushy, Evangeline	10	F	Flute	Miller, C.
36		Gillen, Stephanie	12	F	Flute	Miller, C.
36		Marich, Stephanie	12	F	Oboe	Miller, C.
40		LeBeda, Allison	9	F	Flute	Miller, C.
40		Nystedt, Alexis	9	F	Euphonium	Miller, C.
41		Brehelm, Cassie	9	F	French Horn	Miller, C.
41		Nichols, Cameron	10	F	French Horn	Miller, C.
25		Barbato, Lauren	10	F	Bassoon	Mullen, J.
25		Cilvaz, Rachel	10	F	Flute	Mullen, J.
27		Crowley, Hannah	11	F	Flute	Mullen, J.
27		Nagy, Amanda	11	F	Clarinet	Mullen, J.
35		Coppetelli, Amanda	10	F	Clarinet	Mullen, J.
35		Kombrink, Emma	11	F	Percussion	Mullen, J.



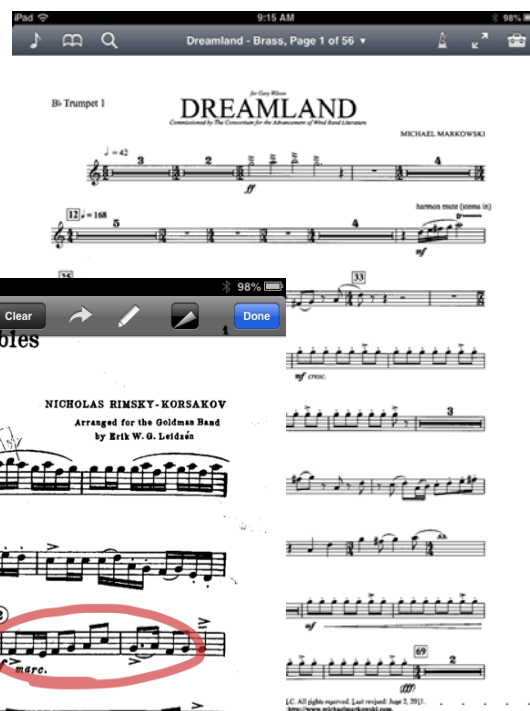
ForScore

Many music teachers have begun using ForScore (www.forscoreapp.com/) to manage PDF files of sheet music. The app is - in many ways - 'GoodReader' designed for musicians. Instead of carrying a hard-copy set of parts (1 of each part) for emergency situations, we created a scan of our tour sheet music, and synced those scans (via a Box.net account) to all the chaperone iPads. We hoped we wouldn't need to use this, but when we arrived at the Frankfurt, Germany Army Base (for a clinic with the conductor of the US Army Band of Europe) and 4th Horn player forgot her music folder at her host-family's house, the solution was as easy as placing my iPad on her music stand, opening ForScore, and scrolling to her music.

Organize Scores and Parts



Back Up Parts



Annotate PDF Files

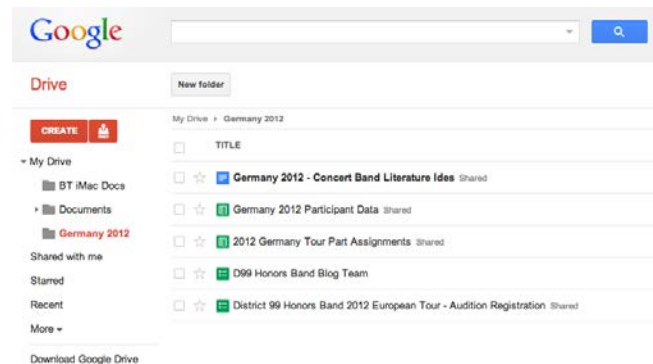


The Cloud



Our staff frequently uses cloud based storage services to manage our tour documents. Doing so allows multiple faculty members to

contribute to the planning and collaborate on documents, even those who do not teach in the same building. Beginning a full year before tour departure, colleagues from both Downers Grove North and Downers Grove South plan tour repertoire and share itinerary ideas with one another using Google Docs.



Later in the planning process, we rely heavily on services (all that have free account options) like DropBox and Box.net (aka Box.com) to store tour documents. These tools also allow us to 'embed' these documents on our tour blog so they could be easily viewed by families.



Establishing "Team Blogger"



Maybe my greatest point of pride in the way we have developed our tour blogs is the use of student 'bloggers' to report out to followers in our community during the tour. We have used teams of students to do this on short tours stateside (like a marching band performance at Walt

Disney World), as well as longer international tours. The student blog posts become especially meaningful and poignant when the students are staying with 'host families' in Europe on longer tours.



We have all witnessed students who have handled their personal online presence poorly, making decisions that would be inappropriate for a school website. But I have come to believe that students - when given guidance about good blogging etiquette - can easily navigate the responsibility. In our case, we asked students who were interested in joining our 'Team Blogger' to express their interest via a Google Doc form, and then we selected six students to represent the group: three men, three women, and three from each campus.

FRIDAY, JUNE 15, 2012

All Roads Lead to Rome



If it is still true that all roads lead to Rome, then these roads are full of fast drivers, traffic, motorcycles between lanes, and are laid out so illogically that I never know where we are. Luckily, we have a tour guide for that!



After almost 24 hours of travelling, this beautiful city was a nice visual break for our eyes, which had been mostly focused on passing clouds. On our two plane trips, I was able to catch up with old friends, chat with close friends, and make new ones. Above, Ryan S, Sam H, and I proudly sport our orange and black tour shirts during our layover in Germany.



Allison L, Evan C, Alexis H, and Cassie B. in the Piazza San Pietro

I have already learnt so many interesting things about Italian culture. For instance, a "bar" does not serve alcohol in Rome. In fact, "bars" are in and out type coffee houses. Also, pizza can be bought "by the meter" and sold based on the weight of the finished product. I am excited to see what real Italian pizza tastes like!

I always schedule a 30 minute meeting with "Team Blogger" prior to tour departure, and I use the meeting to articulate our expectations for appropriate posts. A copy of our Blogging Etiquette Guide may be found here:

<http://tinyurl.com/c2ap247>

Showing posts with label Marjorie Fera. Show all posts

FRIDAY, JUNE 22, 2012

Home Away From Home

As we enter the last few days before our return, I'm really beginning to appreciate the many amazing experiences I've had on this trip. Of course I miss the family and friends I've left behind, and this busy schedule is starting to wear me out a little, but for all that, I can honestly say that I don't want to go home. At least, not yet! It's so beautiful here, and we've seen some pretty incredible things on our European journey - ruins and castles and so much more.

The biggest reason that I'm not ready to leave, though, is my family. Rather than just some people I'm staying with for a little while, I really think of them as my family after spending

THROUGH THE EYES OF ...

- Marjorie Fera (DGS Student)
- Stephanie Gillen (DGN Student)
- Cameron Nichols (DGN Student)
- Bill Miller (Faculty)
- Dan Reeter (DGS Student)
- John Shimanek (DGS Student)
- Brayer Teague (Faculty)
- Joe Vitti (DGN Student)
- Glenn Williams (Faculty)

There's an App For That



It's very simple to create a Smart Phone App that brings your Blog posts, YouTube channel and Twitter/Facebook feeds to any iPhone, Android phone, or iPod Touch. I tried this for the first time in 2010/11 when

our Downers Grove North Marching Band performed in the London New Year's Day Parade. It cost our department \$25 for the app to be fully functional (without ads) and at the time I wondered if the usage justified the cost. But we developed the app again for our 2012 summer tour to Europe, and our post-tour polling showed robust use by families.

There are many services that will create a Smart Phone app; we chose 'Widgetbox' (www.widgetbox.com) and received a lot of positive feedback.

TUESDAY, JUNE 5, 2012

We Have 'An App For That'



Do you use a 'Smart Phone'? You can now use your iPhone or Android phone to quickly access our Germany 2012 Tour Blog in an easy-to-use App. It's a very handy way to quickly check-in on the most recent posts and information about the band's tour, follow our Twitter feed, or view short YouTube videos we will post while on tour. Parents, this may be your fastest and easiest way to "follow" the band from home.

How do you do it? Using the web browser on your smart phone, type in the following URL:

<http://wbxapp.com/d99honorsband2012>

Alternatively, you can scan the box below with your phone's QR Barcode Reader:

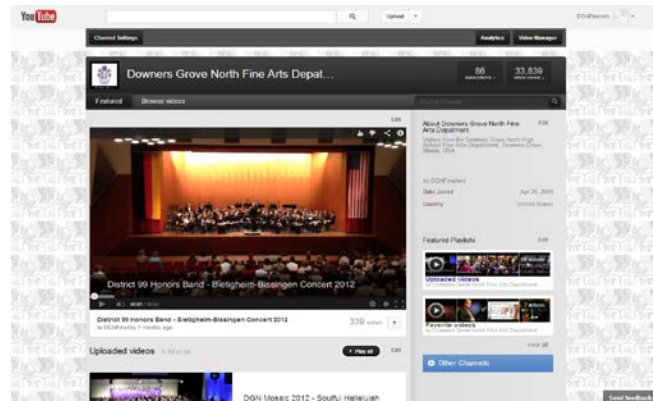


Once you access the page you can either 'Add to Homescreen' (iPhone) or add a Bookmark or Widget (Android). Then you are good to go. The latest D99 Honors Band news is only a few clicks away!

YouTube Channel



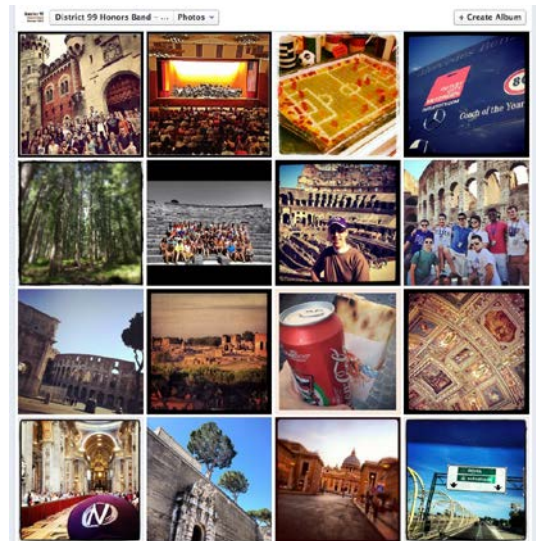
Publishing video from an iPhone, or an iPad, while on the road is very easy, especially with the use of Apple's iMovie app. On our tour this summer we uploaded video highlights of performances to our department's YouTube channel (<http://www.youtube.com/user/DGNFineArts>).



Instagram



Many of us use photo sharing services (i.e. Flickr, Shutterfly, etc.) to allow users to share images. One of the newer players in this market (and arguably the most popular with students) is Instagram (www.instagram.com) which combines photo sharing with the 'fun-factor' of social media. For our recent tour we established an Instagram feed, and linked it to our official Facebook page. Our goal was to share an occasional whimsical or quirky photograph with followers back home.



Just For Fun ...



I find it a joy to work with high school aged students, who have an enduring ability to keep me young. And sometimes the best ideas come directly from their sense of humor and creativity.



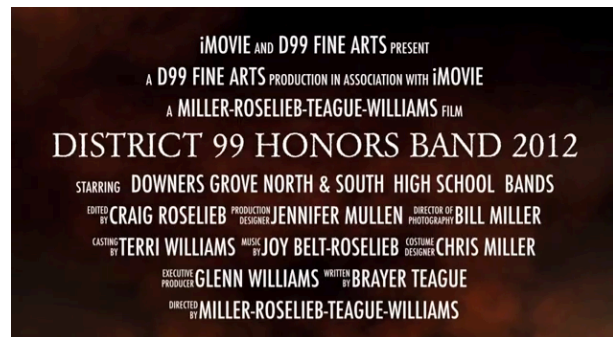
Bus Lip Dub

Have you seen the Harvard Baseball Team's viral video where they sing and dance to the tune 'Call Me Maybe' in the back of a team van? I had not prior to the tour, but my students had. So, on the way back to our host families from a tour of the Mercedes-Benz Museum in Stuttgart, 'Bus 2' decided to film their own 'video response' to the Harvard Baseball Team. <http://tinyurl.com/cjyonql>

Tour 'Trailer' in iMovie

I have used iMovie for many years, but it was more recently - when exploring the native iPad app - that I discovered that you can easily create fun movie trailers with your own video content. So, in the final week before we departed on our tour, we took some video of the band in rehearsal and produced (in literally a matter of minutes) a 'trailer'. We opened our final parent meeting with this video, and it was a huge hit with students and parents alike.

<http://tinyurl.com/7xgo9oe>



Coda



When we returned to the United States, and arrived back on campus to be greeted by families, we heard effusive praise and thanks from parents about the blog and our use of integrated technologies. "You made it so much easier on us parents!" said one. "I was glued to my computer every morning checking out the updates" said another. Indeed he was, as

were many others. We had only 75 students traveling on this particular tour, but racked up an astounding **22,000 page views** to the blog by the time we returned. Participants returned to the blog after we returned home as well to download photos, write additional reflections, share YouTube clips with friends & family, etc. As of this month, there have

been over **44,000 hits to the tour blog**, including traffic from the United Kingdom, Argentina, Austria, Ukraine, Germany, India, Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, and Australia.

Pageviews by Countries



We also 'pushed' our information - via the blog email settings - to school district administrators and Board of Education members during the tour. For our school district it has become a way to keep the successes of the Fine Arts programs visible to those who make important funding and support decisions. And, in doing so, our Board and administration has quickly realized the good-will the blog has created equates to positive press in the community. The integration of these technologies into our institutional tour practices has created a true 'win-win' for everyone.



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Brayer Teague (Northwestern University '90 / University of Michigan '95) currently serves as the Fine Arts Department Chairperson at North High School, a position he has held since 1996. He has been recognized five times by the Marquis "Who's Who in American Teaching" and in 2001 was named a **Golden Apple Scholar** finalist. In 2008, Mr. Teague received the **Chicagoland Outstanding Music Educator Award** sponsored by the Quinlin & Fabish music company, and in 2010 he earned distinction as a **National Board Certified Teacher**.

Mr. Teague is an advocate for expanding the walls of the traditional arts classroom through music performance tours. In addition to a bi-annual music and cultural exchange program he coordinates with a musikschule in Bietigheim-Bissingen, Germany, Mr. Teague has led student music tours to Ireland, England, Italy, France, Austria, Switzerland, the Czech Republic, Canada, and a host of cities in the United States.