**Five Things You Should Know about Digital Badges**  
**(A Practicalist’s Guide to Your Journey to a Digital Badge Pilot)**

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“A digital badge is a validated indicator of accomplishment, skill, quality, or interest that can be earned in many learning environments.” (HASTAC)

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**ABSTRACT**

Goals and Targets

- **Lesson 1:** Learn your targets and arrows.  
  - What's your story?
  - What's this program for?  
  - Who are the producers?  
  - Who are the consumers?

- **Lesson 2:** Know what you need and have.  
  - What's your story?
  - Who do we need and have?  
  - Who do we need and have?

**Resources**

- **Lesson 3:** Find a good one and stick with it.  
  - What's your story?
  - Is there an easy-to-use, easy-to-start, yet robust Open Badge compliant badging system?

**Badging Systems**

- **Lesson 4:** Collect them all in one place.  
  - What's your story?
  - How to collect evidence?
  - What do we want to collect?
  - What do the participants think?

**Assessments**

- **Lesson 5:** Streamline the whole process.  
  - What's your story?
  - How should we start planning?
  - What should come first and last?
  - Can any sub tasks be merged?

**Workflows**

- **Our story:** The main goal was to demonstrate the impact of digital badges for extracurricular workshops and faculty development seminars. We first targeted both faculty and students as the consumers of digital badges. But later we found out that faculty were more interested in giving digital badges rather than in earning them.

- **Our recommendation:** Try to involve your communications department from the start. Branding and graphic design is an essential piece of a digital badge program.

- **Our story:** During our planning phase, we had one graphic designer and two IT staff. The graphic designer’s roles were bigger than we initially thought. The two IT staff also spent quite some time learning digital badge ecosystem and available tools. It was definitely not an one-man project but rather a collaborative project.

- **Our recommendation:** Try to involve your communications department from the start. Branding and graphic design is an essential piece of a digital badge program.

- **Our story:** We chose Credly.com because their service met our needs not only for the pilot but also for a production afterwards. We looked for a cloud-based service/tool that was capable of creating, issuing, and managing badges all in one place.

- **Our recommendation:** Find an Open Badge complaint tool or service that meets all your needs now and in the future. See https://bit.ly/badge-platforms for example.

- **Our story:** We developed several forms (on formstack.com) to collect evidence from participants as well as to get feedback from them. Electronic forms worked well for our purpose as all the homework assignments were collectable via the upload feature of form pages.

- **Our recommendation:** Test out different form and survey services to find a suitable tool. Try using it for both survey and the evidence collection. See our survey results below.

- **Our story:** It is important to make the whole badging business as simple and streamlined as possible because many small tasks are involved. We started planning badges using a Badge Constellation model (e.g., spreadsheet). And then marketing, running, and managing a digital badge program come next, followed by survey research.

- **Our recommendation:** Streamline these five tasks (planning, marketing, running, managing, and survey study), and try minimizing each tasks as much as possible.

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**Student learning happens everywhere, not just inside the classroom. How can we ensure that students actually learn from extracurricular activities? Digital badges are one solution to this question. To demonstrate digital badges as a means of assessment and micro-credentialing tool, we ran a digital badge pilot for our scientific computing workshops. Student feedback and participant data collected throughout the pilot program showed promising results. We share the practical aspects of preparing and running a digital badge program and propose five things you should know about digital badges for assessing student learning outside the classroom.**

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**Scientific Computing Workshop Survey about Digital Badges**

- **Earn your badge by participating in this poster!**
  
  **Badge Requirements:** (Complete two of the following)
  1. Ask (at least) one question to the poster presenter in person or via email (jepark@hmc.edu)
  2. Leave your card or email address on the poster or via email (jepark@hmc.edu)
  3. Post (at least) one of your stories on the poster or at http://bit.ly/eli2016-badgeposter