



Company Backgrounder

Turnitin® is the leading originality checking and plagiarism prevention service used by millions of students and faculty, and thousands of institutions worldwide.

The flagship service of iParadigms, LLC, Turnitin is the leader in textual intellectual property protection and a pioneer of other web-based services for collaborative, online educational support. Founded in 1996 by a group of researchers, teachers, mathematicians and computer scientists from University of California, Berkeley, iParadigms set out to create a new model for the protection of written work from misappropriation on the Internet. Ultimately, their vision was to create an instructional tool that would increase student engagement in the writing process, and help them better learn to write, think and reason.

Today, Turnitin is a key component of education worldwide. It stands at the forefront of a building awareness for best practices in teaching and learning, with a service that has expanded beyond just originality checking. Turnitin now offers a full complement of web-based services to manage a 100%-digital workflow process for writing assignments – paperlessly.

Behind the Curtain

At the heart of Turnitin's easy-to-use service is iParadigms' proprietary and complex document source analysis technology. This technology creates unique digital "fingerprints" of each text document, including those submitted through the Turnitin plagiarism prevention system; these fingerprints are then compared with the fingerprints of other data in iParadigms' databases. The system locates and catalogs information from academic resources, online encyclopedias, news agencies and other sources likely to be used for plagiarism, searching billions of Internet pages, millions of student papers, and commercial databases of journal articles and periodicals. Comparison of new submissions against this database ensures that papers can never be sold, recycled, or traded among students from different years, in other classes or at other institutions. Search results are compiled into Originality Reports, which can be made available to instructors' seconds after papers are submitted.

Beyond Turnitin: WriteCycle™ Digital Writing Workflow Solution

iParadigms' goal is to eliminate the "paper" part of student papers – and thus relieve faculty pressure and overload – with a 100% digital workflow that creates new possibilities for feedback, engagement and learning. The WriteCycle digital writing workflow solution includes three interconnected services that help students engage better with their courses, instructors and peers. For faculty, it helps remove the roadblocks associated with providing frequent and timely feedback to students, and helps them gain control of the flow of paper, so they can do what they do best—teach.

WriteCycle includes:

Originality Checking & Plagiarism Prevention

Turnitin's plagiarism prevention and originality checking service is recognized as the worldwide standard for preventing Internet plagiarism. It also protects students' original work from being used without citation by another person, and serves as a learning tool to help instructors and students better identify and correct unintentional plagiarism. Turnitin's comprehensive plagiarism prevention system lets faculty quickly and effectively check students' work in a fraction of the time necessary to scan a few suspect papers using a search engine.

GradeMark™ Digital Grading

The GradeMark digital markup system lets instructors edit and grade papers completely online, and give students valuable feedback — paperlessly. Instructors who are used to marking papers with pen or pencil will discover an increased degree of efficiency and flexibility with this paperless system. No more comments scribbled in margins, arrows leading to more extensive notes, and incomprehensible editing symbols that often confuse more than help.

Peer Review Collaboration & Feedback

The peer review process gives students a new perspective on research and writing concepts learned in class, and engages them with their peers. This patent-pending system lets instructors create customizable and flexible peer-review assignments that students then use as a framework for reading, evaluating and learning from each other's work. Peer Review is widely regarded as a highly effective means for encouraging collaborative learning and improving student writing.

Ancillary Tools to Manage Writing-Intensive Courses

All three WriteCycle services are delivered in an environment that includes many of the tools usually associated with a course management system, such as: an assignment library; a calendar; discussion boards; and a highly functional grade book.

Educator Resources

Turnitin works with educators to significantly reduce plagiarism. This includes identifying underlying causes, such as: access to vast amounts of documented and undocumented information on the Internet; lack of proper citation skills; and students' lack of confidence in their writing abilities.

Educator resources include:

Free Live Training and Support

When an institution becomes a Turnitin licensee, they have access to live technical support and training at no extra charge. Hours and schedules are convenient to academic schedules. In addition, a complete library of online videos helps educators get up to speed with Turnitin on their own schedule. Custom sessions are also available. And our new series of Turnitin Summer Institutes for teachers will be coming to a school near you very soon!

Plagiarism.org

Are you concerned with the growing problem of plagiarism among your students? Educators and students can visit plagiarism.org to get the latest information on online plagiarism. Learn how Turnitin is used by more than 450,000 instructors, get detailed information about the technologies behind Turnitin, facts about Internet plagiarism, and a report on the growth of "cheat sites" online.

The Learning Center at Plagiarism.org

This online resource helps instructors educate students about plagiarism, and what it means in the Information Age. The site focuses on planning, organization and citation skills that are essential for producing quality writing and research, while at the same time reducing plagiarism.

Advocacy

Sometimes great technology, a digital writing process and instructional support are not enough: there's a human element to consider. That's why iParadigms supports the National Education Technology Standards (NET•S) project. These standards, developed by the International Society for Educational Technology, a nonprofit membership organization that provides leadership and service to advance the effective use of technology, are used in every U.S. state and many countries. They're credited with significantly influencing expectations for students and creating a target of excellence relating to technology. These standards provide administrators, educators and students with guidelines and insight about meeting the challenges of teaching and learning in a digital world.

As one of its six key components, NET•S invokes good digital citizenship, with guidelines on how to use technology responsibly for researching, communicating, creating information and finding solutions to problems. iParadigms has joined the NET•S project as a sponsor and advocate for good digital citizenship, and encourages faculty to teach students early and often about the proper uses of information, how to access reliable sources, and give others proper credit for their work.

Green Numbers

Turnitin is also good for the environment. By our calculations, our WriteCycle paperless workflow solution saves over 10,000 trees every year, representing a tower of paper almost six miles high (5.9 miles, actually; that's taller than Mt. Everest). The amount of energy savings is difficult to quantify, but in toner cartridges alone we save over 23,000 a year. This fact – along with the ever-increasing cost of paper – is significant for educational institutions' carbon footprints AND their bottom lines.

The Road Ahead

Back in 1996, the digital world of the Web was limited to just 200 gigabytes (roughly equivalent to a single academic library's worth of content). Today the number of indexed Web pages is well beyond the 11.5 billion pages estimated just three years ago. No one knows how big the Internet is today, or what it will be tomorrow. There is no one entity in charge of the Internet. We can only guess at how we will use the next generation of the Web and beyond.

One certainty is that iParadigms has the highly scalable, robust technology necessary to deliver the data-intensive services needed to minimize plagiarism, streamline the writing process, encourage best practices, provide instructional support, and improve learning outcomes. iParadigms is committed to helping students engage with their course material, their instructors and their classmates, in ways that promote integrity and responsible use of the Web, thus uniting faculty and students in the production of written work fueled by original thinking.

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