

INSIDE

Guest Column...	2
Spotlight on...	6
Case Study...	8
Regional Roundup...	11
Worth While Web...	13
Technology Tracking...	14
CEMCA News...	15
SMART Tips...	16
News in Brief...	18
Book Review...	20
Software Review...	22

A Quarterly of the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia

From the Director's Desk...

Readers of *EduComm Asia* must be wondering why we have repeatedly focussed on e-learning and other technology enhanced learning systems during the past few issues. I would not blame you for feeling that perhaps we are promoting these technologies as the only way of teaching and learning.

Our concern has been to separate the hype from the hope, the myth from the reality. One has only to conduct a brief survey of literature to be flooded by articles that speak of the hype and the myth. Only a miniscule will draw your attention to what I call the "nuts and bolts" of e-learning.

Such nuts and bolts include issues such as enabling environments, institutional readiness, collaborative practices and models; learner supports, and revenue generation and sharing procedures. There are other aspects also that we need to draw attention to such as cases of success, and lessons from failure.

The corporate sector has been successful in deploying e-learning for training. We therefore requested Dr. Kandam, a person with both academic and corporate experience to write this issue's guest column on setting up an online education delivery system. His column is an eye opener and we hope you will find it useful as you try to determine if e-learning is suitable for your organization.

We profile the UNDP's Initiative Asia Pacific Development Information Programme (APDIP) from Kuala Lumpur highlighting its valuable work in forging partnerships and policy dialogues.

Out of the rural and backward regions of Andhra Pradesh comes our case study of the Telugu Velugu Project where communities empower themselves as initiatives for poverty alleviation.

Since I myself was a bit confused about copyright and intellectual property protection issues, the section on Smart Tips includes an elaboration and clarification that for many of us will tell what we can and cannot do in our academic research and publications.

Our other sections are also there – from Book Reviews to BiblioFile to Regional Events and CEMCA News.

And in closing, I feel that we have made a difference whenever I am told in meetings that someone has read this academic newsletter and has found it useful. As important as the bouquets are, I would also be grateful for constructive brickbats.

Dr. Usha Vyasulu Reddi

Guest Column...

Setting-up an Online Delivery System in Higher Education



M. Kandan

Education and training has gone through a number of radical changes in terms of design and delivery methods over a period of time. There exists different levels of technology use in education delivery ranging from chalk and board to use of the overhead projector, interactive television, general-purpose projection system, and highly sophisticated computer based training. Several technology-supported learning delivery methods are fully mature, widely accepted, and extensively used by an increasing number of educational, vocational and corporate training institutions. The primary purpose of technology use for education delivery has been to enrich the instructional effectiveness and provide flexibility to the learners. However, cost effectiveness and reaching larger student population remained as important factors for many institutions and resulted in the birth of distance education.

Distance Education

It was during the 1970s, many colleges and universities sought cost-effective and pedagogically sound ways to accommodate larger student enrolments, and provide

better access to higher education to people in need. However, the severest critics of distance education were the fellow academics from the traditional universities. When, The UK Open University was floated in the year 1969, it has been looked down as a Pariah by all the leading universities. And the same thing happened when India's first Open University, Andhra Pradesh Open University now named Dr. BR Ambedkar Open University was established in the year 1982, followed by Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) established in the year 1985. Now, the Asian region has the largest number of Open Universities, and some of them are trendsetters in innovation in education and training. It took more than a decade for the UK Open University to

Over the years, there is a growing realisation about the benefits of online learning, and a number of universities and teaching institutions are slowly embracing online delivery.

command respect among the academic community. It took time for the traditionalists to accept the advantages of distance education. Today, there is a large number of open universities coming up, and almost every "conventional" university has its own distance education programs.

This is exactly what is happening with the online education or online learning, started in mid 1990s. The traditionalists were once again up in arms to criticise the so-called drawbacks of online training, conveniently ignoring its advantages. Nevertheless, over the years, there is a growing realisation about the benefits of online

learning, and a number of universities and teaching institutions are slowly embracing online delivery.

Emergence of Online Learning

The Internet is emerging as a global mass media with the potential to transform education. Currently, the online learning has emerged as a new paradigm of learning with the advent of Internet as the medium of delivery. It is not the first time that such a paradigm shift has taken place in the field of education delivery. A number of innovations have been introduced over the years both in terms of technology and instructional designs. However, unlike other such innovations introduced, the online training combines the flexibility of distance education and the interactivity of conventional classroom based education.

Instructional Design

One of the most powerful features of the Internet is its ability to provide interactivity among geographically-distant people. It has a lot of scope for providing an instructional design that can make the learning much more interesting and easier. Further, the hypermedia provides immense scope for addressing the individual differences among learners through differentiated instructional design, and offer facilities for the learner to choose the learning method that suits best his/her style. The learner can be provided with customisable learning paths, including the instructional event sequence, for a specific learner based on his/her preference, background, experience, and prior knowledge level.

Anytime-anywhere Learning

The online training provides an efficient and cost-effective learning with any-time any-where flexibility. Online training offers the possibility to obtain skills without the trouble of commuting and attending training in a classroom. The 24-hour access to course materials allows the learner to learn on his/her own time and pace. The on-line interactive courses delivered via the Internet are

not only flexible in terms of time and place but also as interactive as regular classroom based training.

Access to the Best Faculty

More than the convenience, the online learning provides opportunities to interact with best of the faculty who would otherwise be unavailable. Additionally, it also helps the learner to master the communication skills needed in the cyber world.

Rich Learning Experience

Online courses have the capacity to offer a rich learning experience that takes full advantage of the electronic medium. The technological advancements made in the last several years allow educators to create learning materials that communicate subject matter through new and exciting interactive mediums. An online training is not just a lecture on the web! The online training is well designed and organised, usually by a team of people including the teacher and design and support staff to provide a good learning experience. Online training is much more learner- centred than conventional classroom training. In online training, the learner can read, listen, observe, interact and practice too. Then, one can interact with other students and tutors to discuss about what s/he is learning.

The Classroom goes to the Learner

The biggest advantage is that there's no physical classroom to go, and attend the class on a prefixed schedule. Rather, the learner can attend the online-class whenever s/he has time and still participate in all the discussions, which take place between the fellow learners and the faculty. Lectures, coursework, assignments, questions, discussion, all take place at the learners' convenience - online. Plus, the learners receive personalised instructor feedback, and share insights and information with fellow online students.

In fact, with the powerful features of the Internet and intelligent instructional design the drawbacks

in the current form of distance education (DE) can be addressed to a great extent, rather they can be converted into advantages over the formal education. This in turn will also enhance the image of DE among the academia and otherwise. In such a scenario, the online education delivery cannot only compliment or supplement the DE but also can become a fully independent education and training system.

Setting-up Online Education Delivery System

When we discussed with institutions that are in the process of setting up online education on the purpose and requirement of the system, it was apparent that many of them lacked clarity. Their answers ranged from cost saving to flexibility and ramp up requirement. Hence, this brief article on setting-up online education delivery system.

The major aspects involved in setting-up an online education system are detailed below. These may vary to some extent depending on the mix of delivery mode and the education programs. In fact, the institutions that are planning for online education should try to position them by providing value added services and delivery design.

Feasibility Study

As a first step, it is important to do a detailed requirement study on the basis of the institution's offering, clientele, and infrastructure availability. Also important is the identification of programs and courses for online delivery considering the target audience. The involvement of faculty and other members of the institution in sharing responsibilities towards the online education delivery without compromising on their responsibility in their current role should also be assessed for estimation of the manpower requirement. The delivery and the evaluation strategies, whether it should be purely online based or a

combination, etc., should be part of the requirement study. Considering the course requirements, type of content, course objectives, learner profile, and the interactivity levels required, the instructional design and training delivery strategies should be formulated. Also, at this stage, various administrative system requirements such as registration, access control mechanism, etc. are formulated.

Instructional Model

An online learning delivery system can be leveraged in various instructional models, and every program or course can have a combination of instructional delivery models. Broadly, these instructional models can be grouped into following.

- Completely online based
- Online -supported
- Post course online support
- Online resource centre

The online supported courses will address the learning needs where the personal contact with the faculty is essential and requires some amount of hands-on for mastering the skills. The post course online support is ideal for providing mentoring or handholding of participants who attended short in-service courses.

Content Development

This refers to development and production of learning materials as per the instructional technology and design formulated, based on the learning delivery requirements. The various activities involved in learning material creation are envisionment, requirement analysis, visualization, media and content development, storyboarding, construction and integration, and testing and evaluation. Depending on the development methodology and the scale of operation these stages can vary. It is important for the institutions to have clear understanding on the courses and programs to be launched, the development effort required and the strategy by which it will be executed. The learning material development and learning service

components are the most effort intensive and requires well thought out plan.

It is recommended that the institutions should develop in-house expertise in learning material development for the online delivery. Since, the type of programs and courses offered may be unique to a great extent, the subject matter expertise is mostly available within, and the nature and focus of courses may keep changing, the need for new development and up-gradation may be a continuous process. Hence, it is recommended that the institutions should have a facility for in-house development with a small development team to start with. In addition, the faculty needs to be oriented in online content creation as per the process outlined for development.

Learning Delivery System

This refers to creation of the site and various navigation systems, database design, messaging systems and other backend operation systems, including the administrative interface and integrating them together as an online learning delivery system.

Various facilities and features that are needed in a virtual learning environment vary depending on the need and purpose for which it is established. The learning and administration features are primarily dependent upon the type of courses, subjects, need for laboratory exercises, instructional design adopted for delivery, testing and certification requirements.

Delivery Site

The site should reflect the personality of the institution, its programs and services, the type of image it wants to present; and provide sufficient information for all the stakeholders of the site. Selection and use of layouts, style, colour, fonts and images are part of the site personality.

The navigation should be simple and user-friendly. All basic information should load fast in the most common browsers and should

be reachable in minimum number of clicks. Site content structuring should reflect the structure of the institution. Site navigation and learning navigation should be differentiated and easily accessible. In general, the major facilities offered in the online delivery site can be broadly grouped into two: a) learner facility and b) administrative facilities, and some of the features that can be made available in the facilities are listed below.

Learner Facilities

- Online registration
- Create and modify personal info/profile
- Track learning plan progress
- View all enrolled courses from the Learning Desk
- View/browse courses from the personal Learning Desk
- View reports on assessment results
- View course related FAQs
- Check their understanding/learning
- Access the online library
- Access the resource centre
- Send queries to the faculty for doubt resolution
- Participate in the relevant peer discussion forums
- Take pre-assessment tests
- Take practice tests
- View the learning plan
- Practice exercises
- Take practice assignments, projects, and case study analysis
- Facilities for synchronized discussion with peer and faculty
- Audio and video embedded courses

Administrative Facilities

- Create and modify user accounts.
- Create and modify user role.
- Create and update courses.
- View and produce reports on course usage.
- Track learning plan progress by learner, course, and group/batch.
- View learners by course, date and curriculum.

- List learners by key information.
- Create and control access for batches/groups/subgroups.

These above listings of features are neither exhaustive nor mandatory. The actual requirement of these features should be based on the feasibility and requirements study. Alternatively a suitable Learning Content Management System (LCMS) can be used that provides most of the above features.

Learner Services

People think that creation of online learning is onetime effort and once developed it can go on. The important aspect of the online learning is the kind of interactivity it can provide for the geographically dispersed learners. Providing such synchronized and asynchronous interactivity requires not only the tools and systems, but people who can provide these services. For example, the faculty need to be available for an online seminar or answering a student query. Queries on specific courses, tutorials, mentoring, maintaining of various student interactive forums, seminars and conferences, are part of this service. In addition, this will also include updating of resource centres and online library.

Other than learning services, the students need to be provided service on admission & registration, responding to the front office queries, preliminary counselling, admission and registration. There should be a dedicated team/person (depending on the load) to handle this service.

Infrastructure Set-up

This component takes care of the basic infrastructure that is required to deliver online education to its learners and creation of learning materials, and infrastructure for the learning service personnel. Regarding the hosting of online delivery system, these days many of the institutions have the basic necessary infrastructure. Else, they can go for either of the following options.

- a) Set up the institution's own information infrastructure

(networking, hardware and software) on a turnkey basis.

- b) Host the online delivery system on a third party's (ISP or who has facility for hosting) infrastructure and subsequently shift the site to own facility.

Ongoing Operations

This is one major aspect often missed out or rather ill-planned in any technology project implementation. An important element of an online education delivery system is the interaction between student and the online faculty and discussion with peers through various synchronized and asynchronous interactivity tools for query resolution. Once the system is functional, the provision of the learning services would become the responsibility of the subject experts available within the company or institution.

Appropriate mechanism needs to be devised to have its dedicated online faculty to service the learners. Broadly the ongoing activities can be grouped as below.

- a) Maintenance of various systems, site and other infrastructure.
b) Providing services pertaining to learners' queries and other interactive services.
c) Management of learning services.

Though various functions mentioned above look distinct and clear, they are highly interrelated and the various functional teams need to work in tandem with each other.

Buy vs. Build

The institution that is preparing for online delivery should consider various pros and cons and decide on to buy a pre-packaged LCMS solution or to build one with custom requirements. Almost every company that sells LCMS stresses that their software can revolutionize the way e-learning is delivered. They say that with their system, one can quickly and effectively deploy a training system. Or even create an online

university! Further they claim that courses can be created on the fly with the help of wizards and templates. Almost all of them provide features ranging from e-commerce, course management, various forms of collaboration and interactivity to assessment and reporting systems. Many of them say their system is interoperable and port courses developed by a various vendors who adhered to standards such as AICC, IMS etc. and willing to customize features and interoperability. But do you need them? Do you have a plan to buy course content from multiple vendors? Does your instructional methodology require all these features? Do you have budget for such operations? These are some of the questions that need to be raised before taking a decision on buying a readymade LCMS.

Almost every company that sells LCMS stresses that their software can revolutionize the way e-learning is delivered. They say that with their system, one can quickly and effectively deploy a training system. Or even create an online university!

Almost every company suggests that interactive courses can be built on the fly using their LCMS. What kind of courses? A set of simple HTML pages with a combination of multiple choice test items! If you need real multimedia rich content, they would suggest that you should create with other tools such as Flash, Authorware, Director, etc to name a few, and import to the LCMS. It implies that in addition to LCMS, you need to have these tools and the skills to use them. There is whole lot of hidden cost in terms of associated software tools, customization, and upgrades. Typically an LCMS license is provided in terms of number of users, number of courses, and the number of installations or on a revenue sharing basis, which results in increasing the final delivery cost.

Most of the LCMSs provide a variety of interactivity tools just for

the sake of adding more features in their product. For example, course based chat rooms. A faculty who is well versed in using chat can handle at the most four to five students. Look at the faculty student ratio in such an environment and the operational cost.


Considering the time it takes to develop the entire online delivery system, the tilt may go in for "buy" option. However, the institution needs to consider various other aspects to take a meaningful decision, and may opt for phase wise development of its own LCMS with certain essential features. The system can be enhanced based on the way the "delivery approach" evolves over a period of time.

The development cost of online delivery systems can vary depending on the technology used, the features, portability, and various inbuilt reporting and maintenance features, which the system incorporates. It can range from mere \$ 50,000 for a basic system to a few million dollars for the full-featured delivery system development.

Management Council

The heads of departments and centres that offer these courses should form the core team that manages the online delivery system. In addition to the management structure, it should have an advisory council, similar to an academic council of the university system, drawn from different departments and functional areas and headed by the head of the institution. This council should be made responsible for advising the management team on policy guidelines and launching of various online courses and programs.

Dr. M. Kandan has an M.A. in Psychology from the Presidency College, Chennai and a Ph.D. in Management from the Faculty of Management Studies, Delhi. Dr. Kandan is Director (Technology and Development) with First eLearning Quest Pvt. Ltd. His interests are: technology based education, psychology of online education, and computer applications in knowledge management. He can be reached at: kandan@elquest.net

This guest column has been written exclusively for **EduComm Asia** on invitation. 

Spotlight on...

APDIP : Strategic ICT Initiatives for Poverty Alleviation



In advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, resources and networks, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) established the Asia-Pacific Development Information Programme (APDIP) to promote the strategic and effective use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) for poverty alleviation and sustainable human development. Established in 1997 and based in Kuala Lumpur, APDIP operates at two levels at the national level, through a network of 25 UNDP Country Offices covering 42 countries in Asia-Pacific, APDIP assists national and sub-national institutions by providing technical and policy support and building capacities. At the regional level, APDIP builds synergies between national programmes and activities and provide a regional platform to facilitate multi-country co-operative approaches to ICT for development.

APDIP delivers its objectives through activities that involve awareness raising, advocacy and building capacities, in three core programme areas, namely:

- Policy Development and Dialogue
- Access
- Content Development and Knowledge Management

Some of its current activities and initiatives are:

Policy Development and Dialogue

APDIP aims to raise awareness and promote regional and national policy dialogue and development of ICT policies and strategies focused on ICTs for poverty alleviation and the creation of an enabling environment. Through the provision of technical advisory services, seminars and workshops, APDIP seeks to promote policy options on both governance and application; develop regulatory and network-readiness; build capacities in the formulation and implementation of policies; support efforts to share knowledge and 'lessons-learned' through APDIP's ICT4D web-portal, regional workshops, and events. As a result, countries are able to develop ICT policies with a strategic vision through a consultative process.

APDIP assists countries in formulating comprehensive ICT frameworks and enabling policies to harness the potential of ICT and support national development in line with their social, economic and political objectives. To date, APDIP has helped Afghanistan, Bhutan, China, Iran, Laos, Mongolia, Nepal, and Thailand in their ICT policy efforts. APDIP is also conducting a series of capacity building seminars for ASEAN public sector officials to inform them of global best practices and trends in planning, implementing and executing e-Government



projects. To complement initiatives for promoting ICT policy development and dialogue, APDIP facilitates networking and information sharing through building a repository of key regional and national ICT-related data, programmes and best practices. For example, the Digital Review of Asia-Pacific is a comprehensive, country-by-country review of the state of diffusion, adoption and application of ICT in 28 Asia-Pacific countries. This publication, in print and web formats, will be available in April 2003.

Promoting ICT for Human Development in Asia

In cooperation with the Human Development Resource Centre in New Delhi, APDIP has begun the preparation of a Regional Human Development Report on ICT for Development. This multi-country study aims to assess ways in which ICTs can be harnessed to address the key issues of human development as reflected in the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (See <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>). The principal objective of this project is to reinstate human development at the heart of ICT deployment and initiatives. The project seeks to examine the following questions: How best can ICTs be used to bring about social transformation and development? What are the ways in which ICTs can be harnessed to best address the key critical concerns and sectors of human development - poverty eradication, healthcare, education, human resources and environmental management and

economic development.

Essentially, this proposal aims to review and assess progress made by countries in the Asian region, in drafting and implementing their national policies and strategies for harnessing the potential of ICTs for reducing poverty and enhancing human development. It will identify gaps and constraints to implementation of ICT strategies, document best practices, and in general provide a practical knowledge-sharing instrument for encouraging and facilitating greater South-South and North-South cooperation for ICT for Development. The countries that will be covered by the project are based on a mix of the Technology Achievement Index, including leaders, potential leaders, dynamic adopters and marginalized countries. Nine countries have been selected for this research project: China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam.

e-Learning for Life (ELFL)

The ELFL project is a joint collaboration between UNDP/APDIP, the Ministry of Education of Malaysia, and the Coca Cola Corporation. The main objective is to bridge the digital divide, in terms of knowledge and opportunities, among marginalized communities in Malaysia through the provision of ICT tools and training. As a pilot initiative, six schools are transformed into community "hubs" for life-long e-learning as a way of extending ICT access to communities-at-large. Students, teachers, and community members share the ICT facility and infrastructure of the school.

The main components of the



project include awareness raising and community development, capacity building through the training-of-trainers (teachers, students, parents, and community members), development of community and extra-curricular content for posting on school and community websites and portals; and provision of necessary hardware and software.



In building the capacities of teachers, students, and community members, the project seeks to encourage maximum beneficiary participation as a way to foster a sense of local ownership among the stakeholders.

International Open Source Network (IOSN)

Open Source software refers to applications and operating systems whose source codes are open for other parties to review, refine and modify, and represents an opportunity for developing countries to adopt cheaper software and solutions toward bridging the digital divide.

To provide developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region with the awareness and option of using affordable yet effective Open Source ICT solutions to achieve rapid and sustained economic and social development, APDIP recently launched the International Open Source Network (IOSN). The IOSN serves as a clearinghouse for information on Open Source solutions, tools, technologies, and applications. It will network specialists, users, and advocates so that resources and capacities will be better known and available to all. It will help to strengthen current Open


Source capacities, support the development of needed toolkits and resource materials, and generally assist in co-ordination of OS programmes and initiatives through networking, training, consultative facilitation, incentive or grants programmes and support "localization" efforts.

IOSN will be a reference point and resource base for the Open Source community, including OS programmers and technicians, governments, institutions, and individuals, for networking and information exchange in Open Source solutions. The Network will assist countries and communities to adopt and localize affordable software solutions. It will support R&D efforts on various aspects and dimensions of Open Source. The Center will also provide policy advice to governments based on best practice and research.

Partnerships for Development

APDIP believes that technology is about people: ICT projects are not only about technology but about people working together. APDIP relies strongly on partnerships with



Governments, ICT for Development community, development and educational organizations, donor agencies and the private sector, to achieve its objectives. 

Contact:

Asia Pacific Development Information Programme
United Nations Development Programme
Wisma UN, Block C,
Kompleks Pejabat Damansara,
Jalan Dungun, Damansara Heights, 50490
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
P. O. Box 12544, 50782 Kuala Lumpur,
Malaysia
Tel: +603 2095 9122 Fax: +603 2093 9740
Email: info@apdip.net
[Http://www.apdip.net](http://www.apdip.net)

Case Study...

Velugu Project in Andhra Pradesh, India

Meera Shenoy

The Andhra Pradesh government, in its Vision 2020 document, outlines elimination of rural poverty as one of its important goals. Towards this, it has initiated “*Velugu*”, which translated means “light” in Telugu. The implementing organization is SERP (Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty), an autonomous body set up and chaired by the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, N.Chandrababu Naidu. Velugu is being rolled out in two phases, Phase I is APDPIP (Andhra Pradesh District Poverty Initiatives Project) and Phase II is APRPRP (Andhra Pradesh Rural Poverty Reduction Project). DPIP (2000-2005) is implemented in six districts in 180 backward mandals; RPRP, which was rolled out by the government in June 2002, operates in the remaining 16 districts of Andhra Pradesh. Together, they work with 300,000 rural poor, mostly women, who are federated at the village and mandal level. The project deals mostly with women groups, which are federated.

Every component in the project right from identification of the poor is done with people's participation. For example, project staff involving the community using participatory analysis tools like social mapping, well being analysis and wealth ranking of the poor, does identification of the poor. The village Panchayat's Gram Sabha ratifies this list and the poor identified become the target beneficiaries of *Velugu*. The project is broad based, dealing with social issues, health, disability and education on one hand; on the other hand it aims to enhance the livelihoods of the poor and improve their quality of life. There are committed professionals called community coordinators, who undergo intensive training and actually live and work in the villages, one for every 1,500-2000 households. The project also has a rung of para- professionals, drawn from the people themselves, like bare foot botanists, para veterinarians etc.

Objectives of the Communication strategy

- Indicate to the project beneficiaries and the outside world that Andhra Pradesh is serious about poverty alleviation;
- Ensuring participation of beneficiaries and other stakeholders in the process; and
- Transforming women sanghas (groups) into learning organizations.

Challenges

- Nothing of this size has been attempted before which means no previous lessons to fall back on.
- It has to be participatory and demand-driven.
- Target of the communication strategy is wide ranging from opinion makers in the village to a wide cross section of stakeholders with varying mindsets.
- Some of the concepts and processes need to be communicated innovatively.

For the women groups to articulate their needs, first the Community coordinator goes to the village and with involvement of the people does a LEAP or Livelihood Enhancement Action Plan. LEAP is done within the broad context of the Livelihood Framework of the project, which is exemplified by four arrows: Increase in Income, Decrease in Expenditure, Increase in Employment and Decrease or diversified risk. This involves looking at the available economic and social resources in the village, looking at best practices, constraints, and zeroing down on opportunities. Thus the sub-projects generated in the LEAP are demand-driven and identify gaps, leakages and constraints of the poor comprehensively. Also while the community will implement the sub-project, the project would handhold the community. The projects are funded partly by the community, banks and the community investment fund.

Mandal Velugu Learning Centres (MVLC)

MVLCs are being set up in 500 mandals, each equipped with a computer, TV, radio and other infrastructure. These centers will be the hub of training activity to convert the women sanghas (groups) to learning organizations.

Training modules, case studies of best practices, examples of poor having pulled themselves out of poverty are documented in print and CD format. In print they are called “Inspirational Series” and “Voices of Women”. Inspirational Series chronicles the process by which women sanghas in a particular district have engaged successfully in economic activity (*see box*). When the stories are circulated between the various districts, shared learning takes place. For example, when the red gram activity was taking place in Mahboobnagar women in Adilabad read about the activity and wanted similar initiatives to be done by the project in their area. Likewise, Voices of Women talks about individual women struggles and pitfalls and how the process of coming together built their strength, helped them gain confidence and emerge as leaders in the process. These stories are also converted into CDs, which the women watch in the MVLC.

The project, as part of its Livelihood program, does an analysis of livelihoods in each district and works on the value chain of commodities that are important to the poor or critically affect the maximum peoples lives. For example, In Adilabad, it is soya and lac; in Mahboobnagar castor, redgram and groundnuts. The entire process of cutting the middlemen, teaching the women quality parameters, financial management is recorded in video format and distributed to all the MVLCs. Film explaining LEAP process and actually demonstrating a LEAP in the village acts as a teaching module. The role of the community coordinator, who is the face of the project in the villages, has also been documented in seven capsules. As part of the convergence with other government institutes, useful CDs made on issues which impact the poor are being collected so that a comprehensive list of material is available at the MVLC.

Building and forming grassroots

level peoples institutions, right from women's self-help groups to higher federations involves a great deal of training. It involves helping the women understand the dynamics of group formation, group management, financial management and federation building and to build their capability to identify and analyze problems, to apply skills and resources to solve them in a sustainable manner. Training modules have been prepared, both print and video, to help rolling out of this component.

Leading Television channels have requested the project to do a weekly program on developmental issues, details of which are being worked out. With cable penetration being highest in Andhra Pradesh compared to other states, this will help rolling out of the project. In the use of ICTs, the project is examining various pilots. One of the challenges of the project is to

A fading light of a single yellow bulb can hardly mask the excitement in Daulatabad village, in Mehboobnagar district, Andhra Pradesh. There are forty to fifty men and women with children in tow. In the centre is a large weighing scale where jute gunnysacks of red gram are being weighed. Anjamma watches the weights critically and gives her nod when the balance is perfectly poised. Rajender, a local youth maintains the books and writes down the name of the sangam, amount weighted and money paid out. A bullock cart comes in with a jingling of bells heavily laden with sacks. The villagers have hired the cart to bring their produce to this central point where the Village Organization (VO) is, for the first time, pooling together and buying their produce.

Tilotamma runs her fingers through one of the opened, unloaded sacks and states confidently, "Grade No.1" as the farmer heaves a sigh of relief. He has just witnessed a half-an-hour discussion when his neighboring farmer who had brought in three quintals insisted his produce was Grade one but Tilotamma and her three VO members responsible for the check were unrelenting. "Grade No.2", they said and he had to finally accede. Prices of the three grades are clearly displayed on a board and the samples of the grades are on a table. How do you decide on the prices, we ask. There is a telephone in the Mandal office. Our marketing person from the Tandur market calls us at four in the evening. So last evening Tandur prices are what we give," says the VO leader. The women themselves decide the handling charges.

In Kosgi, Somaiah bending with a 15-kilo sack staggers in. He has walked just 3 KM, he says. He is a tribal farmer with very small landholdings. "Before I would have to transport my gram 35 KMs to the Tandur

scale up any pilot across all districts. *Velugu* will work with the Times Foundation (part of the Times of India group) to hold workshops for the vernacular and district media to sensitize them on developmental issues. Generally social issues hardly get sufficient coverage. This partnership envisages working with the district media to write about positive developments, interviews in the social sector.

Community Media

What the project considers critical is to give knowledge of strategic communication tools to the people and use of traditional tools like Kalajathas (rural Theatre). Facilitating rural women to become print, radio and video reporters is in tune with Velugu's philosophy of grounding all programs with people's participation.

a) In Chittoor district, women from the poorest of the poor, who have

market. By the time the handling cart, and other charges are paid, my expenses would be around Rs.130 per quintal. The traders would always insist that it is Grade 3 even if I grew the best quality and the weighing was always suspected. I heard at the chaay (tea) shop that our women were buying, so I walked here instead." As the sacks are weighed and the transactions noted in the register, they are stocked in a little building neatly, one above the other, with little maneuvering passage. "House Full," declares Injamma, the VO leader of Daulatabad. What she means by this urban expression which we hear when cinema tickets are sold out is, her storage house is completely stacked. Their one weeks target has been met in just two days!

While the idea of pooling the produce was given to the women by Velugu, it was the women themselves who decided on the five pooling centres, each serving three to four villages, in each Mandal. A short training session on quality and now the women themselves were confidently deciding on the grades and price.

While for each farmer it works out to a saving of Rs.250 per quintal, for the VO it would add to their corpus by approx. Rs.50 per quintal. For the end user, be it an industry or consumer, it means better quality which cannot be compensated for in any packaging or branding. Last season the VOs procured 4,500 quintals of red gram, some of which was milled. This season 10,000 quintals will be procured in Mahboobnagar and Adilabad district. This intervention will benefit 5000 families. Companies like Food World are working with the women groups to buy the red gram.

Based on the red gram success, the rural women themselves are adopting a similar strategy for other commodities like groundnut, castor, maize, amla and Soya.


some brush with education, bring out a bi-monthly newsletter called "Navodayam" (lit. New Dawn). Initially the women were apprehensive of traveling away from homes and interacting with strangers. Today they quote several instances where they have had an impact on society. Manjula from Vedurukuppam talks about the story she wrote which inspired other women to tackle alcoholism. Saraswati from Keelapalli has done exposes of a different kind- murky land deals, gambling activity all this has been dealt by her in articles. Today everyone of the twenty reporters say their family members - husband, children, mother-in-law, respect them more because they have a status in society. In fact, they admit they are good role models for their girl children all of whom want to be vilekharis (journalists) for leading dailies like Eenadu. Navodayam has in its one year made a mark in the district. Local cooperative banks and retail shops want to advertise in their paper. Cinema theatres offer bulk booking at lower rates for their newspaper readers. The women have not yet started accepting advertising. But their aim is to make Navodayam independent of the project and stand on its own feet.

Meanwhile, these print reporters are acting as resource team for training women reporters in other districts.

In Orvakal village in Kurnool district, women have been taught the basics of radio programming. Two of the women were chosen for a UNESCO workshop and now make their own programmes using the local idiom, local voices, artists, situations and images.

Kalajatha, the popular name for rural theatre, is used effectively for mass communication. Topics range from child labor, health, gender and caste discrimination to livelihood. Kalajatha teams in the districts use songs and skits and local instruments as a part of their repertoire.

These folk forms intermingled with kalajathas help communicate a message effectively.

The communication department also plans to use this band of women reporters to identify folk and other dying forms to build up a heritage collection. 

Meera Shenoy can be reached at meera@velugu.org. More about the project can be seen at <http://www.velugu.org>

BiblioFile...

Prasad, V.S. (Ed) (2003) *Best Practices in Open and Distance Education*, Booklinks: Hyderabad ISBN: 81-85194-74-2

The document is a collection of papers presented by distinguished experts in the field of Distance Education at a National Conference on "Best Practices in Open and Distance Education" held during August 24-25, 2002 in Hyderabad at Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Open University. The book covers aspects of parameters and benchmarks for best practices, resources for best practices, case studies of best practices, and NAAC approach to assessment and accreditation of Open and Distance Education.

Simpson, Ormond (2002) *Supporting Students in Online, Open and Distance Learning, Ed 2*, Kogan Page: London, ISBN: 0-7494-3740-5

This fully revised and expanded new edition of *Supporting Students in Open and Distance Learning* reflects current concerns and developments in ODL. It includes increased coverage of tuition in different media, issues of student retention, quality assurance, staff development, online support and computer conferencing. It will help lecturers, moderators and tutors to develop a range of skills with a focus on support, retention and student outcomes.

Naidu, Som (Ed) (2003) *Learning and Teaching with Technology: Principles and Practice*, Kogan Page: London ISBN: 0-7494-3776-6


This book explores the creative opportunities offered by information and communication technologies (ICT) and provides an authoritative, rigorous survey of the ways in which ICT is currently transforming core

teaching functions, namely: subject matter representations; activating learning and the engagement of students; supporting interaction and socialization; assessing learning outcomes; and providing feedback to students. It is an useful reading for all educational professional who recognize the new opportunities offered by the new technology-enabled teaching-learning environment. (from the jacket).

Madhur, S. P. et al (Eds) (2003) *Online Learning: Selected Readings*, Vikas: New Delhi ISBN: 81-259-1429-3

A compendium of papers presented at Vidyakash-2002 the first international conference on online learning held in India in December 2002. The papers cover a wide spectrum of e-learning domains such as courseware engineering, instructional design and delivery, learning environments, and learner support. A rich source of technical content that reports both theoretical developments and best practices in e-learning across the globe.

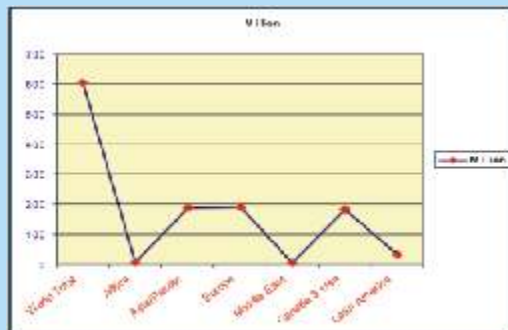
Liu, Sharen et. Al (2002) *Manpower and Training Needs of Content Providers in Singapore*, AMIC: Singapore ISBN: 9971-905-95-7

This book provides a comprehensive overview of the state of health of production companies that provided creative works for broadcast and or professional use. Specifically, it examines the types of production activities carried out and the kinds of training requirements and manpower needs in the industry. The study also unveiled the problems faced by local content provider companies and suggested that Singapore need not go the way of producing programmes to become a thriving media hub. Instead, the country can concentrate its effort in post-production activities or build its reputation in film and television training. 

Research shows...

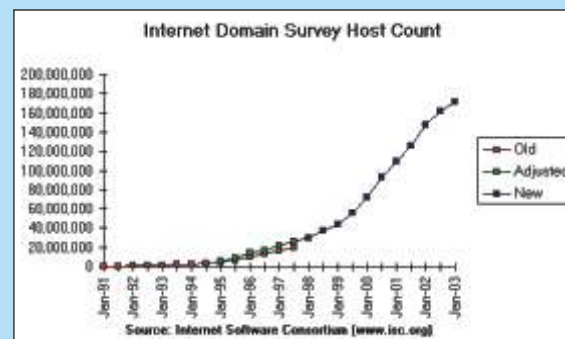
How Many Online?

An "educated guess" as to how many are online worldwide as of September 2002 by NUA Internet Survey shows the number as 605.60 million.



Source: http://www.nua.ie/surveys/how_many_online/index.html

Internet Domain Survey: Host Count Graph, Jan 2003 No of Host in Jan 2003 is 171,638,297



Source: Internet Software Consortium (www.isc.org)

Regional Roundup...


International Seminar on Violence, Media and Challenges of Modern Societies

The Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) together with several partners namely the Embassies of Switzerland, Germany and France with the Goethe Institut Inter Nationes, British Council and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung organized the International Seminar on Violence, Media and Challenges of Modern Societies in Kuala Lumpur from 14-16 November 2002.

Seventy-two broadcasters and social scientists from thirty-nine countries and organizations participated in the seminar. The newest nation Timor Leste (East Timor) was represented by its Inspector General. Other countries include, Afghanistan, Bangladesh,

Bhutan, Britain, Brunei, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Iran, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Kyrgystan, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Netherlands, Philippines, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

The seminar ended on a resounding note with a recommendation to the preparatory meetings organized by the United Nations to include the topic "Violence and Media" in the agenda of the World Summit on the Information Society to be held in 2003 and 2005.

Source: <http://www.aibd.org.my> 

BRAOU Declares 2003 as the Year of Learner Services


The BRAOU has declared 2003 as the Year of the Learners. Vice-Chancellor Prof. V. S. Prasad on 1st January 2003 released the Learner Charter in a simple function at Hyderabad. The learner charter is a

first of its kind in India. We are please to reproduce it in the sidebar.



NCERT-COL Workshop for African Teachers

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), India joined hands with the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), Vancouver for an 11-day workshop for teachers and educators from India and Africa. Teachers and educators from seven countries in Africa interacted with their Indian counterparts at NCERT, from 17-27 February 2003. They exchanged ideas on topics such as structure and management of education, promotion of distance and open learning, charting a new course in education in an era of globalization, training strategies and evaluation and the significance of the role of IT. The African countries represented in the workshop were Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

Source: <http://www.expressindia.com/> 

DR. B.R. AMBEDKAR OPEN UNIVERSITY

Learners' Charter

The Vision

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's social philosophy of education as a means of creating an egalitarian society is the vision of this University. Access to relevant quality education and training programmes for diverse sections of society with a focus on hitherto deprived sections at lower costs by using the modern technologies in teaching-learning processes as well as in administrative and support services is the goal of this University. The University programmes aim at making education and training instruments for living and for making a living.

The Mission

- Enrichment of on-going academic programmes;
- Competency building through education and training programmes;
- Interactive individual based, teaching-learning processes;
- Reliable and credible student evaluation systems;
- Result-oriented, accountable and

transparent administrative and logistic support systems; and

- Research, innovation, training and networking of system development and staff development.

University's Responsibilities towards Learners

- Inform learners and public about the University programmes, systems and activities.
- Preparation of and adherence to Academic Calendar
- Curriculum design for education and training programmes
- Enrolment of learners
- Development of quality print, electronic and multimedia learning materials
- Timely distribution of learning materials
- Providing interactive, technology enabled Learner Support Services
- Conduct of examinations for evaluation of student performance
- Awarding degrees, diplomas and certificates
- Prompt response to student enquiries and study needs

- Networking/Collaboration for value addition to learning.

Learners' Responsibilities of Learning

- Finding out about the University Programmes, Admission Regulations and Teaching-Learning Systems
- Keeping a record of all documents and communications related to study
- Following the time schedules, rules and regulations of the University
- Regular and intense self-study of print, electronic and multi-media learning materials
- Optimum use of the Face to Face Academic Counselling and other Support Services
- Preparing for writing of assignments and year end examinations
- Receiving the degrees and living as worthy alumni of the University
- Giving feedback for system improvement
- Having faith and ability to pursue the studies through self study method

THE UNIVERSITY PUTS THE LEARNER FIRST

SAARC Online Distance Learning Initiative

The Sri Lankan President, Chandrika Kumaratunga, recently inaugurated a seven-nation online distance-learning programme, aimed at linking the SAARC countries through a non-governmental initiative.

The project, undertaken by the South Asia Foundation (SAF), will connect the open universities in the SAARC region through the Internet and offer distance-learning across the region. Ms. Kumaratunga drew attention to the constraints faced by online distance learning in poor countries, and said that apart from infrastructure-related hurdles, there was also a need to review the existing copyright laws, which were "a major barrier to the use of the Internet and the world wide web".

Highlighting the importance of distance learning, she said, in addition to reaching communities living in far away places with little access to formal education systems, it can "meet the problems of shortages of trained teachers and lack of facilities".

Stressing the need to address the issue of trained personnel to operate such systems, Ms. Kumaratunga said there was a need to formulate systems that would encourage sufficient numbers of trained persons, who were from the region, but are employed in the West, "to return to their homelands, at least for short periods every year".

Source: <http://www.hinduonnet.com/> 

Prof. Dikshit elected Chair of SACODiL

Prof. H.P. Dikshit, Vice-Chancellor, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) has been



elected as the first Chairperson of Board of Governors of SAARC Consortium Of Open & Distance Learning (SACODiL) for a


period of 3 years in the second meeting of Vice-Chancellors of Open Universities and heads of Distance Education Institutions in the SAARC Region.

This new structure shall function under the umbrella of SAARC, and shall be made operational from 2003. The Secretariat of SACODiL shall, initially, be located at IGNOU campus.

The composition of the Board of Governors of SACODiL include, Vice-Chancellor/Head of Open Universities of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka with National Focal Points of SAARC in the Ministries of foreign/External Affairs of member countries and SAARC Secretary General or his/her representative. The Board of Governors shall meet at least once in a calendar year.

SACODiL shall review and approve strategic plans and annual work programmes, monitor implementation and evaluation of the results. It will make administrative and financial regulations; propose annual budget and fund raising activities. SACODiL will also decide on new studies, new areas of cooperation; make recommendations to create new operational mechanisms and submit an annual report to the SAARC Secretariat.

The meeting of Vice-Chancellors also recommended that the "Mutual Recognition of Educational Degrees in the Region" be initially started with open universities in the region with possibilities for credit transfer/credit exemption. IGNOU will submit a paper to the SAARC Secretariat outlining the modalities to accord recognition of degrees and credit transfers.

Source: <http://www.ignou.ac.in/> 


Technology Education Channel at IGNOU

Prof. Murlī Manohar Joshi, Hon'ble Minister for Human Resource Development, Science & Technology and Ocean Development, Union of India inaugurated Gyan Darshan III, the technology education television channel and four Gyan Vani FM radio channels (Bangalore, Coimbatore, Lucknow and Vishakhapatnam), at New Delhi on 26th January 2003. Hon'ble Minister also renamed the Technology Channel as "Eklavya Channel".

The technically educated population comprises only 5 or 6 per thousand in India as compared 80 per thousand in Western Countries. Rapid growth in this population is imperative if we are to take our rightful place in the global economy, he emphasized. Open and Distance Learning through Technology supported means is, thus, necessary and a separate satellite 'EDUSAT' is a step in the right direction.

Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Hon'ble Minister for Information & Broadcasting on this occasion stated that amalgamation of education and technology is a great thing to happen in India. Around 5,000 hours of technology education by IITs is ready for telecast by this Channel and those who could not be admitted to prestigious engineering courses can also benefit from this Channel.

Prof. H.P. Dikshit, Vice-Chancellor, IGNOU, stated that with one million students, IGNOU is the largest university in the world. A joint initiative of Ministry of HRD, Indian Institute of Technology and Indira Gandhi National Open University, Gyan Darshan-III would have an initial daily telecast for 16 hours and would be up-linked using the infrastructure facilities of IGNOU. Eventually the duration of the telecast of the channel is likely to increase to 24 hours, he added.

Source: <http://www.ignou.ac.in/> 

Worth While Web...

*The Internet and its World Wide Web has become a great source of information. However, finding quality and reliable information is still a problem. In this issue we focus on **Evaluation of Web-based information**. We hope these links would be useful to you in understanding the new developments. All the links were working fine at the time of going to the press.*

Bibliography on Evaluating Web Information: This bibliography, originally created for a panel discussion at a regional conference in Wisconsin, has grown with the increasing number of documents which address the problems and issues related to teaching and using critical thinking skills to evaluate Internet resources. <http://www.lib.vt.edu/research/evaluate/evalbiblio.html>

Criteria for evaluation of Internet Information Resources: This is a "toolbox" of criteria that enable Internet information sources to be evaluated for use in libraries, e.g. for inclusion in resource guides, and helping users evaluate information found. http://www2.vuw.ac.nz/staff/alastair_smith/evaln/index.htm

The Internet Guide to Construction of Quality Online Resources: This set of pages keeps track of online resources relevant for evaluation, development and administration of high quality actual/scholarly networked information systems. <http://www.ciolek.com/WWWVL-InfoQuality.html>

Critical Evaluation of Resources on the Internet: Many of the same methods used to evaluate print sources, such as

journal articles and books, also apply to the evaluation of resources on the Internet. In addition, there are some evaluation criteria that are unique to Internet resources. <http://www.library.ualberta.ca/guides/criticalevaluation/index.cfm>

Evaluating Internet Based Information: The World Wide Web is expanding at an unbelievable rate. Some experts say that a new site is placed online every 3 seconds!! It is possible for almost anyone to place anything on the Internet. How can we be sure that the information we receive online is accurate? Read what some of the experts say. <http://www.lme.mankato.msus.edu/class/629/Cred.html>

Evaluating Internet Resources: Web information encounters different patterns of peer review. Voices of experience are not always heard on the Web. Unlike the peer review processes formal scholarly work often undergoes, the traditions for Web information review are not mature. Measures of value and "correctness" gained from traditional media can't be applied to a medium that is highly dynamic and, by its nature, always incomplete. Read more at <http://web.wn.net/~usr/richter/web/valid.html>

Evaluating Websites for Educational Uses: With millions of pages on the Web purporting to serve educational purposes, how do educators sort out the good from the bad, the useful ones from the time-wasters? Librarians and other information specialists share their expertise in evaluating Web information resources in the articles listed here. Included in this resource guide is a checklist of questions to ask when evaluating a Web site as a potential educational resource. <http://www.unc.edu/cit/guides/irg-49.html>

Evaluating Information: <http://servercc.oakton.edu/~wittman/find/eval.htm>

Web Evaluation Guide: http://www.infosearcher.com/cybertours/tours/tour04/_tourlauch1.htm

Ten C's For Evaluating Internet Sources <http://www.uwec.edu/library/Guides/tencs.html>

Evaluation of World Wide Web Sites: An Annotated Bibliography <http://ericit.org/digests/EDO-IR-1998-02.shtml>

Evaluating Internet Resources: <http://library.albany.edu/internet/evaluate.html>

Evaluating Web Information: <http://www.lib.vt.edu/research/evaluate/evaluating.html>

Guide for Evaluating a Web Page: <http://www.indiana.edu/%7Elibrcsd/eval/checklist.html>

Evaluating Web-based Resources: <http://www.thelearningsite.net/cyberlibrarian/elibraries/eval.html>

Evaluating Internet Resources <http://www.mlb.ilstu.edu/ressubj/subject/intrnt/evaluate.htm>

Criteria for Evaluation of Websites <http://www.evalutech.sreb.org/criteria/web.asp>

Review of Web Evaluation Sites <http://www.indiana.edu/~librcsd/eval/review.html>

Compiled from the World Wide Web by Sanjaya Mishra, PhD



Technology Tracking...

USB Storage Devices

Sanjaya Mishra

How many times it has happened to you that after having prepared an excellent PowerPoint presentation, you could not save it to a floppy disk as it has only 1.44 MB space? This is one of the common problems faced by mobile professionals, who need to take huge amount of data along with them to work from different places. Some lucky amongst us try to upload the desired files to our websites and then access them anywhere. In such a situation too there is probability of not having access to Internet due to various reasons including problems during downloading. For those of you having access to a CR-RW, transporting huge files may not be a problem, but CR-ROMs are bigger in size. We are talking of some thing very small using which you don't have to re-work on your PowerPoint files to make them smaller or to save them in multiple floppies or to upload to a website.

Now, we have the small big thing—the USB disks usually called the Pen Drive (though a trademark



too). Floppy drives are well past their times. Some computer manufacturers are considering removing floppy drives, at least for the laptop versions!

The USB disks are the current rage in the ever-accelerating mobile miniaturization market. The USB drive can store up to 1 GB data

(current availability), which is 708 times higher than a floppy disk. It is a plug and play device that is bus-powered (USB 1.1 interface) and hence not only requires no separate power adaptor, but also consumes less power from the system.



These disks are so compact that you can actually take them inside your pocket and carry anywhere. They are available in various storage capacities: 32 MB, 64 MB, 128 MB, 512 MB, and 1GB. But the size remains the same. To operate the USB disk drive, just insert it into one of the USB slots in your desktop computer or laptop, the system will automatically recognize it as a removable drive. Now, you can read, write, copy, delete and move data from and to this drive. You can save your presentations as well as favorite MP3 songs. Simply fantastic, is not it?

There are other versions of this simple tool that can do much more than just working like a hard disk drive. With the WeWa MP3 player (<http://www.penpower.us>) that uses the USB technology, you can actually record your own voice apart from storing music and data.

A company called ClipDrive (<http://www.clip-drive.com>) has put a biometric fingerprint reader to the USB disk drive to store and retrieve data only by the specific user. Of course, it comes with the additional software for this purpose.

With Optimal Access's (<http://www.optimalaccess.com>) USB pen drive application, you can even store your desktop settings into the USB disk and personalize any other computer that you may use as that of your own desktop.

One of the biggest problem and a caution for USB drive user is: loss of data during removal of the disk. Therefore, remove your USB disk carefully according to the instruction to avoid loss of data during ejection of the disk.

Do you have huge files to transport? Don't worry, don't have headaches,



and don't burn CDs, just catch hold of your USB disk – Pen Drive, Key Chain!

Sanjaya Mishra, PhD is a Programme Officer at CEMCA. ECA

Educational Media Consultants

CEMCA is in the process of developing a database of Educational Media Consultants in the region to promote the exchange of professionals and utilise the expertise available within the region. For inclusion in the database send your resume to Director, CEMCA or register online at <http://www.cemca.org>.

CEMCA News...

Multimedia Workshop at BRAOU

The CEMCA conducted a workshop on Multimedia Courseware Development for Distance Education at Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University (BRAOU), Hyderabad from 20- 31 December 2002. The workshop was a collaborative venture



amongst BRAOU, Osmania University and CEMCA. The workshop had a strategic mix of instructor led sessions, practical exercises, both individual and group. The participants, in groups, produced four prototype multimedia lessons as the outcome of the workshop. During the workshop, participants worked on Director 8 and audio editing systems. Before working on the software, the participants developed multimedia scripts, flowcharts and storyboard. There were in all 18 participants in the workshop. Participants in the workshop were from Osmania University, University of Hyderabad, BRAOU, and Educational Media Centres in various universities in India. Prof. Usha V. Reddi, Director, CEMCA led the team of resource persons. Other resource persons for the workshop included Prof. A. Srinivasa Rao, Mr. Y.S.N. Murthy, and Dr. Sanjaya Mishra. Mr. Nimal T. Fernando coordinated the programme. Prof. V. S. Prasad, Vice-Chancellor, BRAOU graced the inaugural session and Prof. Malla Reddy, Former Vice-Chancellor, Osmania University was the Chief Guest in the valedictory session of the workshop. **ECA**

Regional Workshops on e-Learning

The Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA), New Delhi organized two regional workshops on e-Learning in January 2003. The objectives of the workshops were to:

- Explore critical attributes of e-Learning and its opportunities.
- Critically analyze and review contemporary e-Learning practices.
- Facilitate sharing of knowledge and experience about e-Learning.
- Provide opportunities for hands on practice with e-Learning technologies.

The workshops were designed for training executives, senior trainers, educational planners, learning technology managers, and teachers in Universities, Colleges, and Schools, who are interested in exploring the potentials of the Internet to promote, produce and deliver education and training on the Web.

The first e-learning workshop was organized in collaboration with the DOEACC Centre (Formerly Centre for



Design and Technology of India), Calicut from 16-22, January 2003. In all

29 participants from various parts of India participated in the workshop. Dr. Chandrasekharan, Director, National Institute of Technology, Calicut inaugurated the workshop and Dr. Reddi, Director, CEMCA delivered the valedictory address.

The second workshop on e-learning in the series was held at Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL), Colombo from 27th January to 1st February 2003. In all 18



participants from various universities in Sri Lanka participated in the workshop. Prof. Uma Coomaraswamy, Vice-Chancellor of OUSL, inaugurated the workshop and Dr. Reddi, Director, CEMCA delivered the valedictory address.

Both these workshops has a common curriculum that cover a balanced mix of theoretical inputs and hands on practical experience on Learning Management Systems (LMS), Content creation for the



Web, Pedagogical designs for e-learning, Collaborative learning designs, Online assessment, and issues related to planning and management of e-learning environments.

The lead facilitator for the workshop was Associate Professor Som Naidu of the University of Melbourne. Dr. Sanjaya Mishra, Dr. Usha V. Reddi, and Mr. Pankaj Khare supported him in conduct of the workshop. **ECA**

Publications Under Progress

The Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA), New Delhi is in the process of developing and bringing out the following publications:

- *Educational Media in Asia : Reviews, Cases and Lessons*
- *Educational Multimedia : A Handbook for Teacher-Developers*
- *A Manual for Teleconference*
- *e-Learning : A Guidebook*

In addition a computer literacy pack is also being prepared under the aegis of Commonwealth of Learning Literacy Project. **ECA**

SMART Tips...

Your Rights to Understand Copyright

Ramesh C. Sharma

What is Copyright?

Copyright is a shield that protects published and unpublished literary, scientific and artistic works. Such works can be in a tangible material form, e.g., an essay, a song, a computer graphic, a computer code, a research article, a dance sequence. Whatever we may hear, see or touch, which may be recorded in any medium like paper, audiotape, and videotape or on computer hard disk, may be covered under copyright. Copyright laws enable the creator or producer of such work exclusively to reproduce, distribute by making copies or otherwise, display, translate, transform and perform publicly. Such activity can be undertaken only by the creator of such work and not by anybody who has an easy access to that work.

Copyright provides four basic protections to the authors:

- The right to sell or distribute copies of the work.
- The right to prepare new works based on the protected work.
- The right to make copies of the work.
- The right to perform the protected work (such as a stage

play or painting) in public.

What is and is not copyrightable?

Copyright laws have been adopted to protect original literary and artistic works, which may include (not limited to) written works, works pertaining to visual arts (paintings, drawings, graphical, movies), and sculpture etc. Photographs, architectural drawings, computer codes and songs may also be covered under this category. Prime concern for an item to be protected under copyright is that it has to be original, not necessarily to be 'first of a kind' but certainly reflects an element of creativity put in by the person who claims copyright for that item.

Simple or generalized ideas may not be claimed for copyright, for example, the idea for a story may be copyrightable but the idea itself can't get copyright protection. Once the author creates a story from that idea, the story can have copyright. Similarly an idea for a book, game, and work of art or for a movie or advertisement also falls in the same category. The 'functional feature' of a work is also not copyrightable; rather they are protected under patent laws. For example, a mechanic may produce an attractive watch and here copyright law may be applied to protect this attractive 'appearance' of the watch, however the working mechanism of the watch may not be

covered under copyright. This working mechanism of the watch can be protected under patent law.

Copyright Notice and Duration

Copyright protection comes into effect as soon as any work is created and put in a material form. There are three main components in a copyright notice: (1) the words "copyright" or the symbol ©; (2) the year of first publication of the work; and (3) the name of the copyright owner. For example, **Copyright © 2003 CEMCA**. This notice is put up at a prominent place on the work and in a manner that it is clearly visible to the user or viewer. Sometimes we may see the copyright notice with more than one year like "**Copyright © 2000, 2001 CEMCA**." These dates indicate that some work was created in one year and modified later on. In addition to modification, new work may have been created or added in subsequent years, like in case of computer software. The year date in such copyright notices indicate the years in which that work has been created and not the date when the copyright will expire. The Berne Convention holds an important decision here in this regard and fixes a general and minimum period, which lasts the life of the creator and thereafter (after death of creator) fifty years further. All countries that have signed the Berne Convention honour this ruling. The number of years of copyright protection differs from country to country for special cases of distinguished works.

What is Fair Use?

People use others' materials within

INTERNATIONAL TREATIES ON COPYRIGHT

Berne Convention (1979)

The **Berne Convention For The Protection Of Literary And Artistic Works**, administered by the **World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)**, is a group of 140 Members. Under Berne Convention there is a provision for 'minimum protection to be granted' to copyright owners, and as supported by WIPO, follows 'three basic principles' namely 1) **national treatment** ["works originating in one of the contracting States (that is, works the author of which is a national of such a State or works which were first published in such a State) must be given the same protection in each of the other contracting States as the latter grants to the works of its own nationals."]; 2) **automatic protection** ["protection must not be conditional upon compliance with any formality."]; and 3) **independence of protection** ["protection is independent of the existence of protection in the country of

origin of the work."]<http://www.wipo.int/clea/docs/en/wo/wo001en.htm>

Universal Copyright Convention (U.C.C.) (1971)

The Universal Copyright Convention (U.C.C.) administered by UNESCO and a predecessor to the Berne Convention, has 98 members. http://www.unesco.org/culture/laws/copyrig/ht/html_eng/page1.shtml

Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement (1994)


The **Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement**, administered by the World Trade Organization (WTO), incorporates the main substantive articles of the Berne Convention (Articles 1 through 21, except Article 6^{bis}) and is represented by 135 members.

http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/trips_e/t_agm0_e.htm

Geneva (phonograms) Convention (1971)

The Geneva Convention for the Protection of Producers of Phonograms Against Unauthorized Duplication of Their Phonograms and is administered by WIPO with 57 members and serves for producers of sound recordings. <http://www.wipo.org/treaties/ip/geneva/index.html>

Rome Convention (1961)

The Rome Convention or the International Convention For the Protection of Performers, Producers of Phonograms and Broadcasting Organizations, is administered by WIPO and has 60 members. Like Geneva Convention, Rome Convention also works for providing international protection in sound recordings. <http://www.wipo.int/clea/docs/en/wo/wo024en.htm> 

the context of “fair use”. Plagiarism is bad and it is a taboo and not acceptable in the academic world. However, certain kinds of use are allowed for educational and non-commercial purposes and are considered “Fair Use”. As per the provisions of sections 106 and 106A of United States Copyright Act of 1976, fair use may be defined as the use of a copyrighted work, including such use by reproduction in copies or phonorecords or by any other means specified by that section, for purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research, is not an infringement of copyright. There are some factors, which may be kept in view while deciding the fair use for using a copy-protected work:

- the purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for non-profit educational purposes;
- the nature of the copyrighted work;
- the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the

copyrighted work as a whole; and

- the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work.

<<http://www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.html>>

Thus, fair use is a situation when for the purpose of research, news reporting, making parody or providing education on some copyrighted work, we use a portion of some copyrighted work 'as such' without obtaining permission of the creator or author. This practice has to be observed very carefully, because some activities like scanning images from magazines or books or copying text from some work may not fall under fair use. We must also make it certain whether the use of work is for educational and non-profit purpose. If it is copied or used for non-profit or educational use, then it may be treated as fair use. Similarly the less the original material we use, more likely it will be considered as fair use.

Copyright Treaties

Although there are no international laws, which enable an author or a

creator to protect his or her work throughout the world, but most of the member countries follow **Berne Convention** and the **Universal Copyright Convention (UCC)**. Here the work of the creator is protected in those countries also, for which he or she may not be a citizen. The **Berne Convention** and the **Universal Copyright Convention** provide for the protection of following works: (a) both unpublished and published works of a person, who is a national or resident of a member country to these treaties; or (b) published works, with permission, of an author who is not a national or resident of a member country to these treaties. This also indicates that a work may be treated as published or created simultaneously in a number of countries, if it was created in two or more than two Berne Union countries within 30 days of its first publication. The UCC requires a copyright notice to protect a work whereas under Berne Convention, there are no formal requirements.

Copyright Infringements

A work may be called infringed upon when it appears to be nearly original. Copyright infringement is also said to occur when some activity is undertaken which involves making copies for sale or hire or selling or letting them for hire. Copyright infringements occur when someone makes a public exhibition of infringing copies by way of trade or distributes infringing copies for the purpose of business that it affects the interest of the owner of copyright. Any person who infringes a copyrighted work is liable to face legal action by the copyright owner. The Law permits the owner to remedies by way of injunctions, damages and accounts.

Guide to Honour Copyright

Here are few tips on how we can respect the copyright protection to an author:

- We should try to familiarize ourselves with the copyright information on a work we are using.
- Due credit should be given to the original creator, whenever we are using, adopting, or citing someone's quote or work in our work.
- The authors or creators must put the copyright notice at some prominent place and in an easily

NEW MOVEMENTS

Copyleft


Copyright laws are designed to protect the work of authors from unauthorized use or misuse and thus in a way restrict the free access to it. There are some authors or writers who believe in sharing their work with all and put their work in a public domain. They encourage others to make free use of their work, justifying that it will encourage innovation. The model of 'Copyleft' was developed as a retort to the copyright and has become very popular with the growth of Internet as internet is the best medium for the free, easy and fastest dissemination of information. Copyleft may be defined as to have free exchange of information and encouraging innovation through copying freely. This concept emerged because of some opposition of the copyright philosophy wherein authorizing the creators or authors to protect their creations or works and prohibiting others to copy or use for commercial purpose and distribute it. Thus it was considered that such actions discourage innovation and the free flow of information is restricted. Copyleft is very famous in the field of computer software, where some companies or corporations (like Free Software Federation


<<http://www.gnu.org.au/fsf/fsf.html> >)


promote their products by allowing making available their code as an 'open source code' and encourage people to use, modify and distribute it, for example, Linux Operating System. The authors or writers who create their work through copyleft insist that their work may be copyleft, by providing due accreditation to them.


Creative Commons

(<http://creativecommons.org>)

 **Attribution.** You let others copy, distribute, display, and perform your copyrighted work and derivative works based upon it but only if they give you credit.

 **Noncommercial.** You let others copy, distribute, display, and perform your work and derivative works based upon it but for noncommercial purposes only.

 **No Derivative Works.** You let others copy, distribute, display, and perform only verbatim copies of your work, not derivative works based upon it.

 **Share Alike.** You allow others to distribute derivative works only under a license identical to the license that governs your work.

readable or visible form on their work.

- If the work of an author is in any electronic form like in a database, CD-ROM, bulletin board, or on the Internet, it will be governed by the same copyright protections. In such cases if we are copying the information for our personal use, then it may likely be treated as fair use. But if we copy it and put on our personal web site, then there are less chances of its being considered as fair use. Since Internet contains both protected and unprotected information, we must be careful in copying material and must look in for the copyright declarations contained therein.
- Mostly the authors of a work (e.g., video, audio, graphic, icon) provide information on how to use their work. If such explicit guidelines are available, these should be followed.
- In case we need to use some material of an author as such, then we should request the author

or the owner of copyright for permission of its use. A copy of such request for permission and the permission accorded must be kept safe. Also in educational settings, if we are using some material for one semester, it may be considered fair use, but if we are using it consistently in many semesters, then it will not be considered fair use. In such case obtaining permission becomes necessary.

- We must also take care of Time Restrictions for the copyrighted materials and we need to seek permissions depending upon the nature of work, for example the time limit for fair use of copyrighted work related to multimedia is two years, we have to seek permission again after the expiry of this period.
- We must obtain permission when we are in need to use the other's work for commercial or non-educational purpose. The permission is also necessary when the work is to be duplicated beyond the limit fixed under

copyright conditions or we want to use it in its entirety.

- If we are sending a message to some discussion list then the message is being sent to a public forum where thousands of people may be 'listening'. Such messages may not be treated as private communications and may not ensure privacy. Hence when we post a message to a list, we are providing permission for the message to be transmitted to even those who are not list members but have an interest in the topic. We may check the copyright notice on such server or site.
- Copyright for individual messages remains with the person who wrote them, so if someone wants to quote a message in a book or in a paper (change the medium) then there is a need to give credit to the original author(s) for their words. **ECA**

Dr. R.C. Sharma is Regional Director at IGNOU Regional Centre, Karnal. He can be reached at rc_sharma@yahoo.com

News in Brief..

Directory of Open Access Journals

The Information Program of the Open Society Institute, along with SPARC (The Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition) and Lund University Libraries, Sweden, recently announced the establishment of the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ, <http://www.doaj.org>). The project will create a directory of open access journals and will be completed in late spring 2003.

The Directory of Open Access Journals aims to increase the visibility and ease of use of open access scientific journals, thereby promoting their increased usage and impact. The Directory will comprehensively cover all open access scientific journals that use an appropriate quality control system,

and it will not be limited to particular languages or subject areas.

To ensure the wide dissemination of the directory, the Open Society Institute will work with the eIFL Network (<http://www.eifl.net>), an umbrella organization for national library consortia in nearly 50 countries, to make the directory available to more than 3,000 libraries in the developing countries.

To include an open-access journal in the Directory of Open Access Journals, please contact Sara Kjellberg, sara.kjellberg@lub.lu.se. **ECA**

Gateway to Learning Objects in Singapore (GLOs)

The Internet is increasingly being

used for education and training purposes. Countries everywhere are now using the Internet as the medium to deliver e-learning. The recent setup of the Asia E-Learning Network (<http://www.asia-elearning.net>) in Japan is an illustration on the importance of e-learning to the economies in Asia. The GLOs initiative is intended to support teachers in enhancing student learning thereby greatly improving educational outcomes for students.

In order to increase collaboration and cooperation, this initiative will set up a digital learning repository to realize the vision of making Singapore the e-learning hub. It also has plans to conduct research in the area of learning objects in developing e-learning systems on intelligent tutoring, gaming and simulation.

The E-Learning Competency Centre situated at the National Institute of Education has decided to initiate the Gateway to Learning Objects in Singapore, or GLOs in short.

Source: [Http://www.elearninghouse.com](http://www.elearninghouse.com) **ECA**

JISC and NSF to collaborate on major digital initiative

The JISC (Joint Information Systems Committee (<http://www.jisc.ac.uk/>) of the UK further and higher education funding bodies and the US National Science Foundation (NSF) (<http://www.nsf.gov/>) have agreed to fund a programme which will provide exciting new content and a range of benefits to education sectors on both sides of the Atlantic. The five-year programme, called 'Digital Libraries in the Classroom' will cost around £6m (\$9.5m) and will draw on best practice in the creation and delivery of content from both the UK and the US, resulting in a range of resources in four key subject areas.


The focus of the programme is to investigate and exploit the potential of online resources in learning and teaching across a range of pre-selected subject disciplines. But a key focus for each of the projects across the programme will be to combine the application of sound pedagogic principles in the creation, delivery and use of online materials, with new research to develop the

Encouraging Doctoral Research in Media

In order to promote doctoral research in educational media, CEMCA invites research scholars to undertake research on utilization of educational media, and in various other areas of media and learning. A modest funding will be given to cover survey and report writing work. Registered research scholars are requested to apply in the application format, which can be available from the **Director, CEMCA**

underlying information technology. The result will be resources that will provide exemplars for the provision of digital resources in disciplines beyond the ones chosen for development.

The programme consists of four projects, each of which will pool the resources and expertise of British and US Universities with long and distinguished track records in the use of information and communication technologies.


Source: <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/> 

UNITAR/ UNESCO Publish Bilingual ICT Encyclopaedia

A virtual library bringing together 1150 documents from 650 authors dealing with legal, societal and technological issues of the Information Society that was developed following a joint initiative of United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and UNESCO with financial support from several international organizations is now free of charge available.

A French and an English version both treating the same topics with different sources is considered as a toolbox or a sort of bilingual ICT Encyclopaedia, that addresses the challenges of the Information Society with its uneven distribution of technological innovations and ICTs that has created a digital divide among countries and regions, overlapping with already existing inequalities.

The objective of the CD-ROM is to offer its users a comprehensive introduction to the field of ICTs. It provides information ranging from addressing the digital divide to developing Information Infrastructure, including the building of a legal framework or issues such as e-Development, e-Communities and e-Democracy.

Source: Web World 

ISSN 0972-284X



is published quarterly by Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA).

CEMCA, a centre of **The Commonwealth of Learning** (COL) Vancouver, Canada, is an international agency.

CEMCA's mission is to promote the application of media and technology in education in Asian Commonwealth countries. *For more information,*

visit us at :

52, Tughlakabad Institutional Area,
New Delhi- 110 062 INDIA

please call us at:

+91 11 26096730
+91 11 26076965

Our **Fax No.** is
+91 11 26085208

or visit our website:

<http://www.cemca.org>

e-mail: cemca@nda.vsnl.net.in

Editor -in -Chief

Dr. Usha Vyasulu Reddi

Editors

Sanjaya Mishra, *PhD*
Nimal T. Fernando

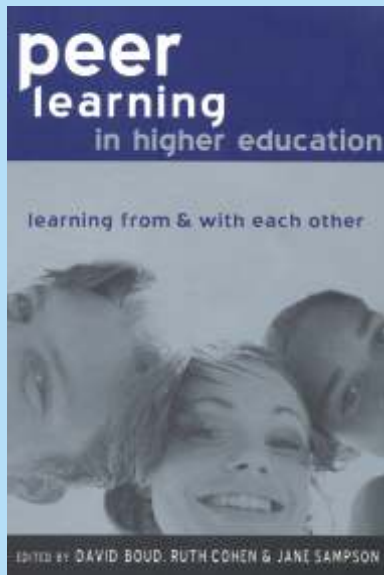
Design & Printed by :

Ritika Advertising,
D-306 (1st Floor), Defence Colony,
New Delhi - 110 024

Printed and Published by

Dr. Usha Vyasulu Reddi
For and on behalf of CEMCA

You are welcome to reproduce or translate any material in this newsletter. Please credit us appropriately and send a copy of the reproduced material for our information. The views expressed in the articles are those of the authors and not necessarily that of the publisher. Products mentioned in the newsletter are only for information and do not mean endorsement by CEMCA or COL.

Book Review...

Boud, David; Cohen, Ruth and Sampson, Jane (Eds) (2001) *Peer Learning in Higher Education: Learning from & with each other*, Kogan Page: London

P.R. Ramanujam

We, the academics conditioned by the institutionalized teaching learning methods, usually think that unless we follow certain established and formalized ways of teaching learning imposed on learners, learning will not take place. This assumption and the rigid practices of teaching learning have been questioned time and again and yet we see the need for fresh attempts to do the same because of our tendency to formalize even the most informal practices. The book under review focuses exactly on this dichotomy that inevitably comes up in spite of all our conscious efforts to keep off formal rigidities when we advocate informal, confidence building, creative ways of peer learning.

The book has 12 chapters, with Introduction as the first chapter, Conclusion as the last chapter and the remaining 10 chapters in between focusing on basic considerations and some Case Studies related to peer learning in the context of Australian higher

education. Thematically, the book is divided into two parts: Part one comprising chapters 2,3,4, and 5 discuss the basic theoretical and conceptual issues. Part two consisting of chapters 6,7,8,9,10, and 11 as Case Studies present discipline based experiences of peer learning in a range of subject areas such as business administration and computer sciences.

The introduction by David Boud is extremely useful to understand the different models of peer learning, ranging from the traditional proctor model to the now much hyped about collaborative and cooperative models of peer learning. The conceptual clarity comes out admirably through this introductory chapter which also answers questions of why, how and what of peer learning. There is considerable use made of peer activities in research degree studies; particularly in professional doctorates; and in clinical work and field placements, but the special demands of these contexts demand treatment in their own right. The focus here is on the normal undergraduate and postgraduate classes that most teaching staff in higher education deal with on a regular basis. The central argument throughout is that peer learning also must be managed by experienced and sensitive teachers with view to effecting the following in the members of the learner groups who come together for peer learning:

- Ability to work with others with a sense of responsibility which should lead to better learning, increased confidence and self esteem
- Critical inquiry and reflection which will enable students to articulate what they learn and critique the views of their peers.
- Communication and articulation of their knowledge, understanding and skills through additional practice in an

atmosphere of freedom and with indirect supervision.

- Managing learning and acquiring skills to learn individually and collectively in an environment created by the groups themselves.
- Self and peer assessments which are ultimately given weight.

The above learning outcomes, of course are possible only when peer learning is planned in a sensitive way making allowance for individual characteristics of members, careful implementation, choice of appropriate strategies, evaluation, etc. which have been discussed in detail in the first part of the book.

The second part of the book consisting of six Case Studies focus on the contexts, the innovations, rationale implementation, briefing the students, getting the feedback and evaluation in different areas such as Business Administration, Visual Communication in Computer Science, Software Development, Computer supported role play simulations, and online self and peer assessment system. The six Case Studies provide a wealth of fascinating experiences narrated by the students themselves. Although the Case Studies put emphasis on quality of learning as well as the different needs of students, there are problems. “The benefits of the strategy to the quality of learning also far outweighed concerns to keep all control of assessment in the hands of academic staff who are often reluctant to relinquish any control over their students' learning. Yet this is more a product of tradition and fear of the unknown than any real education imperative” (p.114). If the present concern of higher education is to “develop in students not only discipline-specific knowledge and skills but also work and life skills such as teamwork, decision making, leadership, communication and negotiation” (p.141), then, the Case Studies provide enough evidence that peer learning also helps achieve the intended goal.

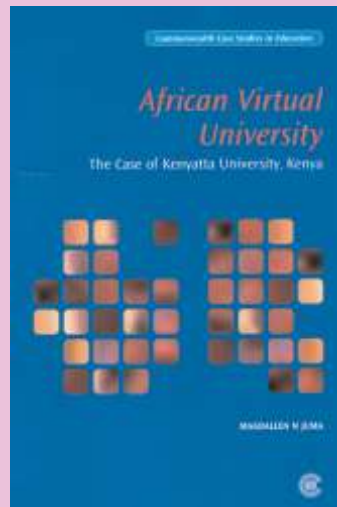
The conclusions drawn about in the last chapter of the book, again by

David Boud clearly suggests that construction of high quality learning environments through peer learning in higher education is very much a reality at least in the Australian context, and arguably in the western context in general. As David Boud argues, “Peer learning activities per se are not important, what matters is their contribution to the overall learning experience of students” (p.174). The key challenges for peer learning as exemplified by the different chapters of the book focusing on the conceptual and experienced based issues, however, still remain challenges not only to the contributors to the book but also to those who venture to experiment with peer learning in countries like India where there is much talk about it but little practice of what is possible. Undoubtedly, this book would help the new managers of peer learning, especially in the context of distance open learning, which promises many innovations. **ECA**

Dr. P.R.Ramanujam is Professor & Director of STRIDE, IGNOU, New Delhi. email: ramanujam_p_r@hotmail.com



Soh, C. (2001) *The Use of Information Technology for the Management of Education in Singapore, Commonwealth Secretariat: London* ISBN 0-85092-666-1



Juma, Magdallen N. (2001) *African Virtual University: The case of Kenyatta University, Kenya, Commonwealth Secretariat: London* ISBN 0-85092-665-3

Sanjaya Mishra

Educational systems all over the world are in a state of change to meet the expectations of the society they serve, and because of the economic and technological factors affecting education. The demand for quality education is significantly high in the commonwealth countries. At the same time most of the countries in the Commonwealth have limited resources and face the biggest challenge to provide equal educational opportunities to all their citizens. Proper use of technology and use of distance education means are considered tools for empowerment of nations to tackle these demands. There are many, innovative projects currently being implemented in many commonwealth countries. Some of these projects are best practices in collaboration and partnerships amongst international funding agencies, governments, and non-governmental organizations. In order to share the experiences of these projects, the Commonwealth Secretariat has started the Case Studies in Education Series. Both the publications under review are from this series.

The case study of IT application in Singapore schools shows the magnitude of educational enterprise, which is centrally managed by the Ministry of Education (MOE). The MOE use IT for examination system, student posting in schools, teachers' personnel management, and financial management. It shows how a networked, web-based system can reduce much of the data entry workload and increase efficiency in the system. The case study emphasizes the importance of planning, sound systems analysis, and user training and support as key ingredients of successful implementation of IT in schools.

African Virtual University at Kenyatta University case study showcase one of the most impressive innovations of Africa in terms of education, technology and collaboration. The AVU provides a very unique academic structure through which learners can take courses from AVU, local universities and universities overseas to complete a programme. AVU delivers its programme using the satellite-based and Internet-based technologies. The case study identifies the impact of AVU on Kenyatta University as: availability of new courses, capacity building of the staff, increased generation of income, and access to digital library. It also identifies the challenges as disruption in electricity supply, slow Internet connection and lack of communication policy in Kenya. The case study states “there is a great hope and promise for AVU in revitalizing university systems in Kenyatta” (p. 38).

Both these case studies are informative and useful in nature, though one would prefer to read these cases in-depth. And thus there is a scope to go beyond what is available. Nevertheless, the series is a welcome addition to the knowledgebase of education in the Commonwealth. **ECA**

Sanjaya Mishra, PhD is a Programme Officer at CEMCA.

Software Review..

Author's Tool kit

[In this section, we have reviewed a special educational material as a deviation from our usual computer-based software. We present to you the review of an excellent training toolkit for authors of distance learning materials -- The Author's Toolkit, as educational software].



Prepared by the Center for Courseware Design and Development (CCDD) of the Technikon SA (TSA), it comes in a beautiful pack containing a CD-ROM, six small booklets, a pen and a writing pad. The six booklets are:

- Guidelines for Writing OBE Materials
- Author Assistance: Implementing your instructional strategy
- Thuso Process: Action Verbs
- TSA Course Materials: A writer's guide
- Thuso Process: Materials Evaluation Criteria
- TSA Reference Methods

Based on the requirements of the South African context, where the National Curriculum Framework provides standards and guidelines



for Outcome Based Education (OBE) at different levels, this toolkit instructs authors how to prepare distance-learning materials suitable for OBE. The *Guidelines of Writing OBE Materials* describe the national legislation, qualification registration process and steps in development of materials in bulleted points. The booklet on implementing instructional strategy covers issues related to motivating the learners, especially the strategies to be used in preparing distance-learning materials to motivate learners. It provides guidelines on how to write the preface of a learning module and also various sections of the unit/chapters. The types of experiences, assessments, and feedback to be included are also covered. The booklet on action verbs, smallest in the pack, provides a list of action verbs that can be used in writing objectives.



The *TSA Course Material : A writer's guide* discusses the copyright issues and procedures at TSA, and also the "house style" of TSA to maintain uniformity and adhere to international intellectual property rights practices. The TSA Reference Method included in the pack is in its 5th edition. It shows the popularity of this booklet and is surely a useful document. It provides illustrations for referencing different kinds of documents. Though there are many standard practices like APA Style, MLA Style and Chicago Style available, it is very useful in the institutional context. The booklet

on *Materials Evaluation Criteria* provides a checklist for authors to ascertain the quality of learning materials developed by them.

The Toolkit comes with a CD that once set up in your computer provides a template driven approach to writing distance learning



materials. It prompts the author to write different sections of a lesson in a sequence of events. Once all the events/components are prepared, the system automatically gets them together to form the lesson or a module as required. You can then export the file to your word processor. The approach here is a very simple process to help the beginners, and thus it is a great learning manual, and a training toolkit as well for that training large number of course writers to achieve uniform style is a difficult task. The CD allows you to achieve what it will take years of face-to-face training to do.

The Toolkit shows the innovation and concern for quality at TSA. At the same time it also showcase the capability of CCDD on design and development of distance learning materials.

Interested to know more about the CCDD? Contact: Dr. Thabi Molete, Director, CCDD, TSA.

Email: tmolete@tsa.ac.za



Research Proposals Invited

In order to promote research in the area of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) application in education and especially in distance learning, CEMCA invites research proposals from teachers and scholars for appropriate funding. Proposals should focus on action research for institutional building. Appropriate duration of the research should be between 6-9 months. Funding will not be given for purchase of capital equipments, and salary of research staff. Research proposals can be submitted anytime during the year. The present thrust areas include, but are not limited to:

- Digital divide
- Multimedia applications
- Online learning
- Teleconferencing
- Appropriate media use
- Gender issues in technology
- Technology for people with disabilities

For application format and guidelines contact: Director, CEMCA.

Educational Media Database

As an ongoing project CEMCA has been developing and maintaining a database of educational audio and video programmes produced in the region. The database currently has more than 6000 records. The purpose of the database is

Forthcoming Events...

SITE 2003

SITE 2003 is the 14th annual conference of the Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education to be held at Albuquerque, New Mexico from March 24-29, 2003. This society represents individual teacher



educators and affiliated organizations of teacher educators in all disciplines, who are interested in the creation and dissemination of knowledge about the use of information technology in teacher education and faculty/staff development. SITE is a society of the Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education (AACE). *For more information, contact: Jennifer Gwaltney, Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education, P.O. Box 3728, Norfolk, VA 23514, Email: conf@aace.org, Website: <http://www.aace.org/conf/site/default.htm>*

ICDE 2003

The International Council for Open



and Distance Education (ICDE) and the Open University of Hong Kong (OUHK) cordially invite you to

the 21st ICDE World Conference on Open Learning and Distance Education in Hong Kong from 1 to 5 June 2003. An interesting academic and social programme is being planned and you are assured of a stimulating, enjoyable and memorable experience. *For more information, contact: Secretariat, ICDE 21st ICDE World Conference Organizing Committee, The Open University of Hong Kong, 30 Good Shepherd Street, Homantin, Kowloon, Hong Kong, China, Email: HK2003@ouhk.edu.hk Website: <http://www.ouhk.edu.hk/hk2003/>*

ED-MEDIA 2003

Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education



Conference: "ED-MEDIA 2003:

to act as a reference point for sharing of information and resources. Educational institutions in the region are requested to continuously send us list of audio and video programmes produced by them for updating the database. By submitting information for inclusion in the database you are actually making it available to a wider community of users through our online website and

the offline CD ROM. Now, it has also been decided to supply the database and its regular updates to participating institutions. Therefore please share information about your audio and video programmes and co-operate in updating this database. For further details contact: *Nimal T Fernando, Programme Officer (Broadcast Media), CEMCA.*

Forthcoming Events...

World Conference on Educational Multimedia, Hypermedia and Telecommunications" from June 23, 2003 to June 28, 2003 at Honolulu, HI. *For more information, contact:* Jennifer Gwaltney, Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education, P.O. Box 3728, Norfolk, VA 23514, Email: conf@acee.org, Website: <http://www.acee.org/conf/edmedia>

ICTE 2003
Fourth International Conference on Information Communication



Technologies in Education, July 3-5, 2003, on Samos Island, Greece. ICICTE 2003 will be an integrated event offering collaborative opportunities to educators, administrators, IT specialists, and others from all levels of education, from primary through post secondary. *For more information, contact:* conference Administrative Director, Nancy Pyrini ineag@otenet.gr
Website: <http://www.ineag.gr/ICICTE>

NAWeb 2003
The NAWeb 2003 - The Web-Based Learning Conference to be held from October 18-21, 2003 at New



Brunswick, Canada will focus on innovative and practical uses of the World Wide Web in teaching and learning, extending the reach of

existing campuses and creating "virtual" campuses of a new and unique nature. *For more information, contact:* Rick Hall, Email: hall@unb.ca Website: <http://naweb.unb.ca/>

E-Learn 2003
Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education
Conference: "E-Learn 2003: World



Conference on E-Learning in Corporate, Government, Healthcare, and Higher Education" from November 7, 2003 to November 11, 2003 at Phoenix, AZ
For more information, contact: Jennifer Gwaltney, Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education, P.O. Box 3728, Norfolk, VA 23514, Email: conf@acee.org
Website: <http://www.acee.org/conf/elearn>

AAOU 2003
17th Annual Conference of the Asian Association of Open Universities on "Networking and Partnership for Strengthening Collaboration in Open and Distance



Education" to be held from 12-14 November 2003 at Siam City Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand. *For more information, contact:* Assoc. Prof. Lapa Chintanaseri, Conference Director, Foreign Relations Unit, Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University, Bangpood, Pakkred, Nonthaburi 11120, Thailand, E-mail: aaou2003@stou.ac.th
Website: www.stou.ac.th/Aaou2003/index.htm

Distance Education Clearinghouse:
Conference Database
The Conference Database of the Distance Education Clearinghouse identifies worldwide conferences,



seminars, workshops, and other events of interest to distance education and related fields. Events may be on site or online, but in all cases, the topic must always relate to distance education. You can find conferences by title, location, or date. Call for Papers information is also available in the Conference Database. Additionally, you are invited to submit a conference or call for consideration for this database.

Visit the website
<http://www.uwex.edu/disted/conf/>

Dear readers,

EduComm Asia is your newsletter of useful ideas, views and information. From one issue to the next, we aim strengthen the newsletter. The best way to do so is by keeping content diverse. You can help to do so by becoming a contributor. Write to us about educational media news and other events that you would like to see in the newsletter. All contributions shall be duly acknowledged and appreciated.

-Editors