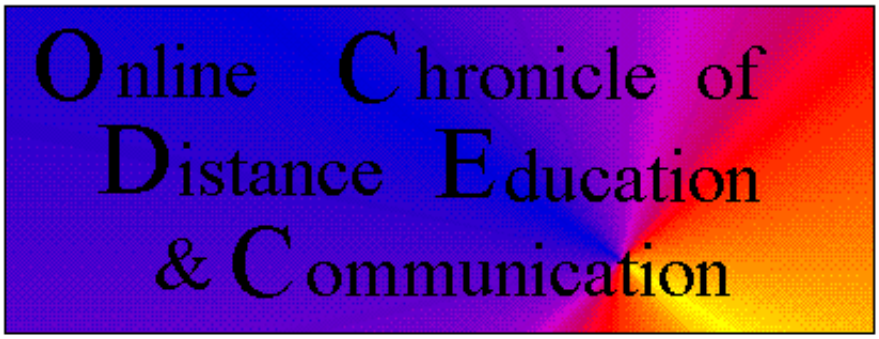

Volume #3, Issue #1

Date: October 1989

Editor:
Jason Ohler, Director
Educational Technology Program
University of Alaska Southeast

ONLINE JOURNAL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION

In the industrial age, we go to school. In the information age, school can come to us. This is the message implicit in the media and movement of distance education.

Volume #3, Issue #1

October 1989

Editor: Jason Ohler

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WELCOME TO THE THIRD SEASON OF THE ONLINE JOURNAL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION

WE ARE ALWAYS INTERESTED IN CONSIDERING YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS.

Bear in mind that the electronic journal suffers from "uncompromising sequentiality"- readers can not skip past articles that don't interest them the way they can in a paper-based journal. Until our technology allows "browsing," our only alternative is to make articles brief and to provide the authors' IDs so they can be contacted directly by readers for more detailed information. This approach cuts down on the network resources needed to distribute the Online Journal and allows for greater reader interactivity, while reducing

the amount of unwanted information readers are forced to scroll through.

Therefore, please limit articles to 4 screens (2 pages) maximum if it's possible. If you can, also please indent one tab space on the left and keep the right margin at 70. I look forward to hearing from you.

This issue at a glance:

THE ONLINE JOURNAL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION

ITEM #1

A GLOBAL NETWORK FOR CHILDREN SECOND INSTALLMENT

by Robert D. Carlitz, Univ. of Pittsburgh
ID= RDC@pittvms

There are a few general features which should guide the development of a network for children's mail. In this note I will advocate certain general features and present an example which incorporates them. Once we have refined the general guidelines to follow, then it should be easy to begin setting up pieces of the network in a manner that will allow it to be extended easily.

1. It should be easy for any individual school to connect to the network. This requirement has several implications. The necessary hardware should be readily available and not too expensive. The software

which runs on any local node should be simple and modular in structure. There should be no major administrative chores at the school level.

2. It should be easy to develop software for the system. The network itself can be an aid to software development and distribution. But the need to support a variety of different machines (consistent with the first point above) will complicate matters. One solution is to demand a computer at the school level which is sufficiently powerful to allow a certain amount of inefficiency in the software it runs. This would ease the development process - although it would raise the cost of the machines at the school level. Perhaps the sensible approach here is to consider the sort of hardware that can reasonably be expected to become available at low cost over the next three to five years - rather than focussing upon the low end of currently available hardware. Such an outlook should make it possible to satisfy requirements 1 and 2 simultaneously.

3. The network should be structured with certain minimal performance standards. One might demand, for example, overnight mail delivery anywhere on the network. And there should certainly be a requirement that the mail be reliably delivered. These standards should be fairly lax initially - to allow initial operation at very low cost. But the network structure should allow for eventual upgrades in the quality of service and a gradual tightening of the minimal performance standards. It is important not to get locked into obsolete technology merely because it is the cheapest alternative at the outset.

4. There should be a list of initial minimal services that the network should provide. These should include electronic mail, newsgroups or some equivalent bulletin board function and file servers or some equivalent data base management system. Each service should be structured in a flexible manner to allow a simple expansion of system services. Mail messages might, for example, encapsulate other services through a simple system of headers. A particular header might identify graphics or music content and would invoke appropriate software for handling these items on the recipient's machine.

5. Network billing should be on the basis of connectivity and projected traffic rather than by individual message charges. This follows the model of BITNET and avoids discouraging users from making full use of the network. It also allows school systems to anticipate and cover the costs of the service on a year to year basis.

I'm sure I have omitted features which we will certainly need, and I invite readers to fill in these missing items - as well as to criticize the items that I have listed above. Without further apology, let me describe a workable system that satisfies the constraints which I have just specified.

At the school level consider machines in the class of a Mac Plus, an Atari ST 1040, an Amiga 1000 or an IBM PC-XT. These machines can all run UUPC, a public domain package which implements the uucp "g" protocol. The UUPC package includes a mailer which is even more primitive than the Unix mail command. This would be replaced by a mail shell, which would include a mouse-based word processor and mailer. The mailer would use an address file, which would contain the addresses of various children's correspondents. Children would select the desired address from this file and would thereby be insulated from the complexities of uucp addressing.

The machines specified above are not the least expensive machines available today. But they do provide the functionality of a mouse interface and good-quality graphics at a reasonable cost. In mass production, models of these machines could probably be produced at a cost of under 500 dollars. All of these machines offer a reasonable C programming environment and have a range of public domain software available to them. The

UUPC package, in particular, is available for all of them. No adequate mail shell exists for any of them, but this development task would not appear to be too forbidding.

The school machines would be linked by phone lines to central mail servers. Mail transfer could take place at night, so no new dedicated phone lines would be required. A UUPC session could be started at the end of the school day. This program would await a phone call and would transfer enqueued mail messages when the call arrived. Alternatively, the school machine could initiate calls during the school day, but this would require a dedicated phone line and perhaps a closer level of supervision.

The mail server machines could be Unix(R) boxes located at the offices of the local school board. These machines would have sufficient disk capacity to hold outgoing and incoming mail for the schools they would serve. Communication between different school districts would involve long-distance telephone calls or packet-switched networks. In the initial stages of the project existing usenet links could be employed to eliminate some of the communications costs. As traffic on the network increased it would be necessary for the network to cover its own costs, however. The Unix boxes would run standard uucp software, which would provide mail transfer and file serving capabilities for the school machines. Teachers and older children could log onto the Unix machines to access news and other programs.

Aside from the mail shell there is little software development required in the above scheme. Some work might have to go into assuring reliable mail transfer under uucp. The system lacks a validation method and may offer problems on that score. It is my impression, however, that problems with uucp arise from difficulties in administration and addressing. By monitoring these aspects of the network carefully we may be able to avoid any serious trouble in these areas.

The hardware necessary to implement this model network is also readily available. The mix of single user and multi user systems may attract the interest of vendors, who typically offer both types of machines for sale and have not devised a very successful integrated sales strategy. The market relevant for the present discussion is one which has not been seriously penetrated by any of the hardware mentioned above. Schools have typically bought low-end products of the sort that were available three to five years ago. These are 8-bit computers which sold for prices of the sort targeted above. Although there is a large software base for these machines, it can reasonably be expected that they will be supplanted by the 16-bit machines mentioned in our outline during the next three to five years.

Bob Carlitz
May 10, 1989

ITEM #2

CENTRAL AMERICA AND DISTANCE EDUCATION

by Irvin Boschmann & Edgardo Richards
cdp!csuca@labrea.stanford.edu

PROGRESS REPORT: CENTRAL AMERICAN DISTANCE EDUCATION PROJECT.

In the last week of July and the first week of August, we completed the installation of the equipment (a system for audio conferencing and an electronic blackboard with 30" monitor) in CSUCA, the Universidad de Costa Rica, the Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica, and the Universidad de Panama. We have been doing tests during the month of August to familiarize all the operators (not least ourselves) with the workings of the

equipment. We are planning an 'inaugural activity' for sometime in September.

We decided to begin with a Costa Rica-Panama subsystem because the infrastructure (telephone lines, electric power, air- conditioning) is much more available and/or reliable in these countries. Based on our experiences with this subsystem, we plan to conduct a week-long workshop for all the designated operators, after which we will install the equipment in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua. We hope to have the installation phase completed by mid-November.

Given that the Central American university year is generally early March to the end of November, our initial plans are to use the system as a vehicle for conferences, meetings, etc. and to begin utilizing it as a means for giving courses in March 1991.

The above describes our progress to date in the context of the international network for distance education which we are trying to put into place. We are also moving on the other aspect of the project, that of installing equipment which permits an extension center of each university to receive courses from the parent university.

The extension centers will not have an electronic blackboard, so will have full audio conferencing capabilities as well the capacity to receive data from the blackboard in the sending site. We have installed the equipment in an extension center of the Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica. Some of the professors are already using it as a supplement to their usual teaching methods, thereby eliminating some of the 3 hour trips (each way) over mountain roads they had to take in order to physically be at the center.

Any questions can be directed to:

cdp!csuca@labrea.stanford.edu

Irvin Boschmann
Edgardo Richards

ITEM #3

An excerpt from: PROSPECTUS, UNIVERSITY OF THE WORLD
&
A report: NEW UNIVERSITY OF THE WORLD 1989 PROJECT
from James Grier Miller, MILLERJ@SDSC

Editor's note: The entire Prospectus is available from James Miller at the above ID.

PROSPECTUS UNIVERSITY OF THE WORLD

July, 1988

UNIVERSITY OF THE WORLD
CENTRAL OFFICE
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LA JOLLA, CALIFORNIA 92037, U.S.A.
TELEPHONE: (619) 456-0103
BITNET:MILLERJ@SDSC

FACSIMILE: 619-454-3206

I._N._T._R._O._D._U._C._T._I._O._N._ The concept of a university of the world originated with Dr. James Grier Miller, a scientist and educator, who formerly served on the faculties of Harvard, the University of Chicago, the University of Michigan, and Johns Hopkins University, and as President of the University of Louisville. He is now a faculty member at the University of California on both the Los Angeles and the San Diego campuses.

In 1983 the University of the World was incorporated as a not-for-profit, tax-exempt corporation and in 1984 its central office was opened in La Jolla, California. It is an organization designed to link and connect existing educational institutions in all countries so that the consortium as a whole can serve the educational needs of students in all countries.

During its formative years, as the concept grew, alternate names for the University of the World were suggested. Among them, for example, were "electronic global university," "open electronic university, and "world electronic university." Although these names would include our electronic capabilities, as "University of the World" does not, we prefer and have retained our original name because it emphasizes content over process.

P._U._R._P._O._S._E._

The overarching goal of the University of the World is to advance free speech and thought and to promote worldwide literacy and scholarship. We believe that a better-educated world will yield improved international understanding and lead to a better chance for peace and prosperity among all people.

From the start students have been the main focus of the University of the World. The student is the principal user and the ultimate beneficiary of its services. Preliterate, primary, secondary, baccalaureate, and graduate education will be available, for credit or not for credit, to meet the requirements of individual students.

It is not expected that the University of the World will grant academic credits or degrees of its own. Rather, it will make arrangements to allow established institutions of higher education, willing to give credit for learning by instructional technologies, to do so internationally.

Most of the world's population growth in the foreseeable future will occur in the developing countries, many of which cannot now afford adequate primary and secondary education by traditional means. They cannot train a sufficient number of teachers even to minimal standards. Unless mass education by modern technologies is employed, these countries may never be able to take their proper place in the world and provide a reasonable quality of life for their citizens.

The University of the World, therefore, has been designed to use electronic telecommunication to disseminate educational resources to students and faculties in all countries, especially the less developed nations. We believe computer-aided instruction systems and video information sys- tems are now sufficiently advanced to enable the multiway sharing and delivery of course material, called courseware, in a broad set of academic fields.

[end of Prospectus excerpt]

NEW UNIVERSITY OF THE WORLD 1989 PROJECT

A new project being developed by the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) involves satellite transmission of telecasts using the vertical blanking interval (VBI) to deliver information. VBI is the first 21 lines at the top of each television picture, and can be used to convey other information than that on the screen to multiple destinations using the broadcast signal but not affecting the television image. Receiving this information will require a VBI Data Receiver- Controller box attached to a computer and a printer to access the information as it is broadcast. Each VBI line can support transmission at the rate of 9,500 bits per second, approximately 28 pages of text per minute.

This will be one of the best possible means of delivering information and learning materials to educational institu- tions internationally. These materials could include all relevant material for each specific course such as teaching guides, student workbooks, computer software, bibliographies, research findings, and many other types of related information. VBI could also offer access to materials in other educational institutions and professional development information for educators to enable them to keep up to date in their disciplines, pedagogical skills, and management techniques.

In the 1970s, PBS Engineering created the Emmy-Award-winning system of closed captioning for the hearing impaired, using line 21 of the VBI. Since then, PBS has developed other ways to use VBI, including the Direct Access Communications System (DACS), an internal communication system for public television member stations and National Datacast, a commercial application for high-speed delivery of data for PBS Enterprises.

The University of the World hopes to be able to use one or more of the VBI lines in the near future to transmit educational and research materials and other information to its member nations.

ITEM #4

VOICE MAIL MAKES ITS APPEARANCE IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

by DONALD FRICKER (GBP71R0@ECNCDC) &
S. PRESCOTT (GHL29R0@ECNDC),/CENTER>

A popular computer magazine recently proclaimed "While you were out voice mail stepped in." The sudden popularity of voice mail can be attributed to the rapid drop in prices of this high technology add-on. A good unit can be purchased for as little as $150.00 and quantity purchases drop the price further. Their appearance in higher education has been very limited the last two of years, but their appearance is on the rise. As one distance education course syllabus states to students ,"The use of voice mail in distance education will increase;use this course to become familiar with how it works.!"

The main idea of voice mail is the convenience for students and faculty of obtaining timely and accurate information. Voice mail does this by providing each distance learner with his/her own telebox inside a computer where digitized voice messages are stored.

We introduced voice mail last year on our campus, and immediately found many applications. Those who saw voice mail demonstrated quickly understood that voice mail will rapidly change many campus operations. The pace at which institutions will adopt voice mail and just how applications will evolve remains to be seen. On our campus we have used it in the following ways.

A large and popular telecourse incorporated voice mail. From the start the students received printed

instructions on how to use the voice mail system. A video taped orientation by the instructor which was available to students also explained voice mail and how to use it. Voice mail makes information available to students easily (over the phone) at times convenient for both the student and instructor (once messages are stored in the computer, they can be retrieved whenever the computer is turned on and phone lines are not down.) One student called at 3:00 am to retrieve information. Other called at times other than normal working hours but at times that were good for them.

Voice mail was also used to call students in the telecottages. Messages were pre-recorded and sent several times during the term. Students were reminded of the dates and times of the course orientation before the course actually started and they received advance reminders of exam dates, times and locations. Near the close of the course students who had not turned in assignments were called and reminded to turn in work before the course deadline.

Students were also able to leave messages. This function is like that of an answering machine. Voice mail is digitized sound and clearer than tape based phone machines. From the point of view of the instructor however, the voice mail procedure, unlike an answering machines can show on the PC screen which student has been called (identified by telebox number) when they were called and the message's length.

Students responded well to the innovation; since they were familiar with answering machines and phones, the addition of voice mail was readily adopted (except rotary phone users who found using the DTMF tone generator which simulated a touch tone phone to be awkward. Completion rates for the course were compared with other courses the same term that had not used voice mail. The telecourse with voice mail had a higher completion rate (82% versus 74% for the others.) These results should be replicated and their potential impact on future enrollments should be estimated.

There are many other applications not discussed here and drawbacks and cost are not discussed. To get a feeling for the system and how it works, call in the USA 1 312 534-1664. Interrupt the message by punching #999 in order to preview our system. This system will be up and available until December 31,1989.

ITEM #5

S C I E N C E B Y M A I L

by Stephen Brand, IN%"sbrand@SH.CS.NET"

I'd like to introduce to you a program based at the Museum of Science in Boston, MA called Science-By-Mail. This program, which is presently mail based, brings together thousands of children grades 4-9 and scientists in all fields as pen pals.

Children around the world receive 3 science challenge packets a year that focus on subjects that are generally interesting to kids (ie. space, ice cream, special effects, science detectives) . Working in groups, alone, or with their families, participants explore scientific issues through hands-on activities and interesting design problems.

The program is non-competitive, non-judgemental, open ended, and encourages children to work in small teams of four. With this design, we hope to foster intrinsic motivation to learn within each group of participants.

Children send in their solutions in the form of reports, video and audio tapes, drawings, etc. Scientists review the children's solutions to the problem packets and send a note of encouragement and support to the children.

Due to the tremendous success of the program, we have expanded and established chapters in Nashville; Richmond, VA; New York City; New Jersey; Charlotte, NC; Louisville; and Derry, Northern Ireland. Within the next year new chapters will open in Knoxville, TN; Kansas City, MO; Augusta, GA; Akron, OH; Minnesota; Anchorage; and Auckland, New Zealand. Due to the postal aspect of the program, those living in other geographic areas can participate through the Boston chapter.

The future of the program will include Science-By-Modem and Science-By-Fax. Some of the obstacles to this addition of technology are cost, accessibility, and ease of use of communication media. We are carefully discussing these additions to the program.

Feel free to contact me if you:

1. Have any questions or comments
2. Would like to volunteer as a scientist
3. Would like to sign up any participants

The deadline for applications in October 15th and the cost per group is $40.

Limited scholarships are available on a financial need basis.

Stephen Brand
sbrand@sh.cs.net
1-800-729-3300
Head of Public OutreachV Museum of Science
Science Park, MA 02114-1099
Acknowledgement sent to JFJBO

ITEM #6

Excerpt from REPORT FROM LISDEC (Library and Information Science Distance Education Consortium)

by Dan Barron, N400005@UNIVSCVM

Editor's note: The entire report is available from Dan Barron at the above ID.

First Organizational Meeting of the Library and Information Science Distance Education Consortium (LISDEC or Consortium)

REPORT

21 August 1989

Introduction

On 22 June 1989, 31 people representing 19 American Library Association (ALA) accredited program

schools, the ALA Committee on Accreditation (COA), and the Medical Library Association convened prior to the ALA Annual Conference in the Convention Center in Dallas, Texas, to organize efforts that will eventually lead to the establishment of a consortium to provide Library and Information Science (LIS) education courses through distance education delivery systems.

The following is a report of the background to that meeting, the deliberations and outcomes of that meeting, and the future activities and events related to the development of the Consortium.

Purpose of the Meeting

The purpose of the Dallas meeting was to provide an opportunity for representatives from ALA accredited program schools to develop a better understanding of distance education and the systems involved in making distance education possible; to discuss personal, professional, and institutional capabilities and concerns related to the use of distance education in library and information science; to develop a draft of an organizational structure for a consortium of ALA accredited program schools to provide distance education; to determine what, if any, additional information should be gathered and/or what activities should be undertaken to develop a long-range plan for the Consortium.

Background and History of the Consortium Concept

The concept of the Consortium had its origination in conversations over a period of years among LIS educators as they struggled with the problems facing qualified persons who are not able to attend traditionally delivered LIS education programs. The problems most often include commitments to jobs, families, and other personal responsibilities that make it difficult to impossible to participate in higher education programs in residence.

Further discussion led to the conclusion that the real problem was not just one of persons not being able to attend existing programs for initial and continuing education; rather there is an increasing shortage of well educated professionals, initially prepared and assisted in their continued development, to meet the library and information needs of the nation's people. The problem, therefore, is of a global nature, affecting society as a whole and the profession specifically, with the potential of further eroding the image and service capabilities of institutionalized library and information service.

The problem has been recognized previously by LIS programs. Responses have ranged from evening classes, weekend classes, summer classes, and intensive on-campus classes to extension classes delivered by full-time and adjunct faculty at sites other than the home campus of the LIS program. A review of the annual ALISE Library and Information Science Education Statistics Report shows that all but a few ALA accredited program schools provide for part-time students, about one half offer some courses away from their home campus, and a few are exploring and using telecommunications technology to deliver LIS education.

The majority of reports from LIS programs using telecommunications technology as well as similar reports from other professional groups such as engineering, medicine, and business indicate a positive degree of success and acceptance for the new delivery systems. This fact, coupled with the increasing availability, encouraged the original discussion group to explore the limits of telecommunications technology as a possible solution to the problems of educational isolation.

[end of excerpt]

ITEM #7

CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Subject: ICCC-90 Conference is in India...November 1990.

Reply-To: iccc90%shakti.uucp@uunet.uu.net

ICCC-90

SECOND CALL FOR PAPERS

Tenth International Conference on Computer Communication

November 5-9, 1990, New Delhi, INDIA

ICCC-90 is the tenth conference of the International Council for Computer Communication (ICCC). ICCC-90 will provide an important and prestigious forum for presentation, discussion and debate. Topics discussed will include all aspects of computer communication, including technical, scientific, social, policy making, business and legal aspects.

The Advisory Committee

Clayton Andrews, USA	Ashley Goldsworthy, USA
Carl Hammer, USA	Mohan Kaul, UK
Yasuo Makino, Japan	Michael R. Miller, UK
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S. L. Mehndiratta, India	Louis Pouzin, France
S. V. Raghavan, India	S. Ramakrishnan, India
S. Ramani, India (Chairman)	S.I. Samoylenko, USSR
K. R. Srivatsan, India	Ronald Uhlig, USA
T. Viswanathan, India	S. G. Wagle, India

Topics: Original papers are invited on the following topics. Papers in related areas are also welcome.

- Communication aspects of: Distributed Operating Systems, Expert Systems, Office and Factory Information Systems, Robotics, Security and Privacy, Standards, Videotext, Work Stations

- Electronic Funds Transfer, Human Factors, Legal Aspects, Regulatory Issues

- Data Communication in ISDN, Optical Data Transmission and Switching, Packet Radio, Protocol Specification and Verification, Protocol Conversion, Satellite Data Communication
- Academic Networks, Corporate Networks, Local Area Networks, Networks Management and Operation, Packet Switching, Open Systems Interconnection (OSI)

Address for Correspondence S. Ramani
Chairman, Programme Committee, ICCC-90
National Centre for Software Technology
Gulmohar Cross Road No. 9
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Phone: +91(22)6200590/6201606
Telex: +81(11)78260 NCST IN
E_mail: iccc90%shakti@uunet.uu.net OR iccc90@ncst.in

Deadline: Full papers for refereeing must be received by January 20,1990.
Papers for refereeing can be submitted by E-mail (ASCII, TEX, LaTEX, or nroff).

Accepted papers should be in camera ready form.

Subject: First Annual Meeting of the University of the World
From: Millerj@Sdsc.BITnet (James Grier Miller)

Editor's note: A detailed agenda for the meeting as well as University of The World's Newsletter is available from James Grier Miller at the ID above

FIRST ANNUAL MEETING OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WORLD

On Saturday, October 14 through Monday, October 16, the First Annual Meeting of the University of the World will be held in Ann Arbor, Michigan, at the Sheraton University Inn.

Immediately following this meeting, the annual EDUCOM Conference will be held on the University of Michigan campus.

On the evening of October 14, a reception for all the University of the World meeting attendees will be held at the Mental Health Research Institute, the location of the first office of EDUCOM in the 1960s.

Members of the Board of Trustees, UW officers, Chairmen of national Councils, and others involved or who wish to become involved with the University of the World will participate in meetings and discussions during this three-day period. There will also be demonstrations of new electronic technologies and educational and research hardware and software. Particular attention will be directed to the exchange of instructional materials among educational institutions internationally.

REGISTRATION FORMS MAY BE REQUESTED BY CONTACTING:

First Annual Meeting
University of the World

1055 Torrey Pines Road, Suite 203, La Jolla, CA 92037
(619) 456-0103
BITNET: MILLERJ@SDSC

ITEM #8

READER REQUESTS

REQUEST #1:

Subject: Videotape and videodisc
From: CALC2C@IMIBOCCO

We use A Tencore authoring system and we would like to do something using videotape and videodisc; we are looking for experience in this field (problems, suggestions) not only under Tencore.

Thanks in advance.

Stefano Renzi	Phone: +39-2-8384.5040
Universita' Bocconi	Fax: +39-2-8384.2000
Via Sarfatti 25	Telex: 316003 - UNIBOC
20136 Milano - Italy	E-mail: calc2c@imibocco

REQUEST #2:

FROM: Don Watkins, V076GZHB@UBV

Paraphrased by the editor:

I am looking for distance education opportunities for the handicapped. Thanks in advance.

ITEM #9

DISTANCE EDitorial: MISTAKES WE ARE BOUND TO MAKE
by the editor, JFJBO@ALASKA

[Editor's note: Recently I was interviewed by AECT for an article for their journal, Tech Trends. My interviewer wanted to know about pitfalls that awaited us as we developed distance education networks. What follows is my response.]

Although I think distance education has great potential, there are, as your question suggests, pitfalls to be aware of. I'll address just a few of them here.

Technology almost always serves the power structure, preserving the status quo. When it doesn't it's considered revolutionary. Distance education will be both, revolutionary and preservational.

I've talked about some of the problems distance education's revolutionary nature will cause. As a preserver of the status quo, we should expect it to amplify problems or inequities that already exist in the education system. For example, gender or cultural biases built into an approach to a particular subject which is adopted for distance delivery simply become institutionalized for a larger audience.

American history comes to mind. How many women or native Americans do you remember studying in history class? Unless we are careful, we simply end up broadcasting that kind of myopia on a wide area, rather than local area, basis.

Endangered is the preservation of cultural diversity, already at risk due to the overwhelming influence of commercial (business and entertainment) telecommunications. This, incidentally, should not be viewed to be in conflict with pursuing a global perspective which ideally allows the maintenance of diversity while focusing on what is cross-culturally universal.

Another example: in the near term, many distance education services promise to be expensive. Thus, inequities that already exist between poor and better off school districts will just be amplified, widening the gap between those who have access to opportunity and those who do not. A new and exciting approach to education does not necessarily mean that it is based on new and exciting thinking. We should be vigilant in this regard.

From a very practical point of view, major errors are going to be made in terms of institutional adjustment to the demands of distance education. Distance education is not, as some mistake it to be, the simple translation of content from one delivery medium to another. Distance education touches every facet of an educational organization, not just teaching. Counselling, administration, student registration, all have to make adjustments. And distance education brings with it new pedagogical demands not anticipated in the face-to-face model. For instance, most evaluation in K-12, and in many cases post-secondary as well, goes in one direction, from teacher to student. It is an evaluation model without a feedback loop. This makes the establishment of community in any real sense impossible. For distance education to be truly successful, there has to be feedback to make up for the lack of face-to-face give and take. (Incidentally I would argue that it is necessary for local education as well, but that is an entirely new topic.)

Another example: distance education generally requires much more thorough lesson preparation. Classroom teachers who become involved in distance education are often shocked by the amount of extra works it requires.

Just a word about the creation of learning networks. I fear we will learn the hard and expensive way that we should be creating multi-purpose, cooperatively designed networks rather than a series of stand alone networks to separately serve education, government, business, what have you. The benefits of creating multi-purpose networks, sharing of intra and inter-state and even international resources, and consulting a cross section of people (teachers, students, administrators) to help design them will, in many cases, only be appreciated in hindsight.

ITEM #10

ABOUT THE ONLINE JOURNAL

WHAT IS THE ONLINE JOURNAL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION ?

[What follows is an excerpt from the first issue of the Journal. Feel free to send suggestions to the editor.]

This first issue will be primarily concerned with the Journal itself. Once we provide an idea of the Journal's identity and direction, we hope you will contribute to this rapidly growing field of education and communication.

THE MEDIUM

We want short contributions, 4 screens maximum. Rather than trying to compete with a paper-based magazine which does a much better job of presenting long articles, we want contributions that present overview information. Based upon information gleaned in contributions, readers can directly contact the author for more details.

THE MESSAGE

The issues that the Journal is concerned with fall into four basic content areas:

1. Content Area #1- Distance Education

   The Journal is interested in distance education as the organized method of reaching geographically disadvantaged learners, whether K-12, post secondary, or general enrichment students. Areas of interest include:

   - delivery technologies,
   - pedagogy,
   - cross cultural issues implicit in wide area education delivery,
   - distance education projects that you are involved with,
   - announcements, workshops, or programs of study,
   - anything else regarding the theory and practice of distance education.

2. Content Area #2- Distance Communications

   The Journal recognizes that education encompasses a broad area of experience and that distance education includes distance communications that fall outside the domain of formal learning. The Journal welcomes contributions that deal with serving people at a distance who aren't necessarily associated with a learning institution. The Journal welcomes information about, for examples:

   - public radio and television efforts to promote cultural awareness,
   - governmental efforts to inform a distant public about social issues,
   - or the many training programs run by private business to upgrade employee skills.

3. Content Area #3- Telecommunications in Education

   Once the distance education infrastructure is solidly in place, local learners will want to tap into it, because they simply prefer learning in a decentralized setting or because they want to expand their learning opportunities and resources beyond those immediately available to them. This phenomenon, which we call 'bringing distance education home,' will grow in the coming years and we look forward to hearing from people about telecommunications in education, as a tool or a content area.

4. Content Area #4- Cross Cultural Communication Efforts
   Particularly Between the US and the USSR

   The Journal is interested in projects concerned with overcoming cultural barriers through the use of electronic communication. The Journal particularly looks forward to contributions concerning:

   - efforts to improve electronic communication between the USSR and the US
   - international electronic conferences
   - cultural domination through the inappropriate use of media
   - the use of telecommunications to promote understanding of the human condition

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All contributions should be sent to JADIST@ALASKA

Any other questions about DISTED can be sent to: Jason B. Ohler, Editor

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Disclaimer: The above were the opinions of the individual contributors and in no way reflect the views of the University of Alaska.

End of the Online Journal of Distance Education & Communication