

E-learning, ICT, and Learning Portals for School Education

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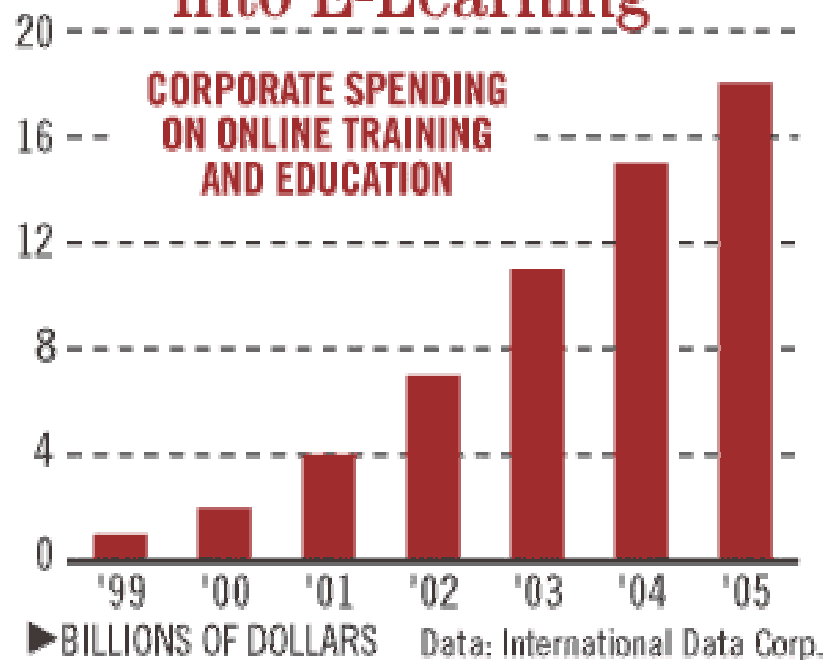
ICT and the Teacher of the Future

IFIP-Melbourne Conference, January 27-31, 2003

The hype about e-learning

- “e-learning is the next major killer application”
- A world-wide business of many billions of US\$
- Business in which many expectations are placed

Corporations Are Charging into E-Learning



e-learning in companies

- It is aimed at:
 - delivering just-in-time knowledge and training at the desktop
 - facilitating adaptation to changing environments while sharpening workforce skills
 - avoiding interferences with working time
 - reducing training costs

e-learning in universities

- Networks that provide content and communication are widespread
- Tendency to go digital
- Issues:
 - students and faculty participation
 - control of course content and faculty performance
 - intellectual rights of authors

Online learning portals

- Consolidated websites that offer and manage access to learning services
- Core assets: catalog and content
- Instruments for the delivery of (sophisticated) programmed instruction
- For-profit business
- Non-profit, funded institutionally

The broad aims of ICT in schools

- Integration of ICT in education since 80s
- Schools define, experiment and assess ways of accomodating ICT in different school situations and pedagogical perspectives (bottom-up approach):
 - to support skills' development
 - to foster constructivist approaches to learning
- The business of e-learning is top-down

Young learners (vs adult learners)

- Have limited capabilities of independent study and of setting long-term goals
- Learn interacting with classmates, teachers and other people
- Don't need to follow automated courses nor track them in online catalogs
- Are not in the business of just-in-time learning for retraining and re-skilling

The young e-learner...

is any student which uses ICT and the Internet at some extent:

- to work with any type of productivity tool or specialized environment
- to access, retrieve and use any type of digital content with learning purposes
- to communicate or to interact with teachers, other learners or experts

with the guidance, the support, and the assessment of the teacher

Need of a specific development

“The voice of education is not always heard. Education users do not articulate their needs: tools and services developed for consumers, business or universities need considerable modification before they are suitable for young learners”

Equipped, trained ... and now what?

European Schoolnet, EUN Office, 3 Sep 2002

Teachers' needs for e-learning

- Facilities to create and manage a private repository of teaching instruments
- Flexible activity assignment and agile grouping of students
- Easy management of students' inputs
- Combine online, offline, synchronous, and asynchronous activities
- Not be imposed frequency or style of use

Roles of regional governments

- To continually foster and support innovation in education:
 - they are close to the needs of citizens
 - they can allocate resources effectively
- To articulate concerted actions on the many “digital divides” of education:
 - students vs students; teachers vs students;
 - students vs parents; affluent schools vs less affluent schools

Hints on ICT in Catalan education

- Investment in infrastructure since 1983
 - 2 Mbit/s ADSL in all schools by April 2003
 - 1 PC / 8 students in 2004 (1/11 in 2002)
- Sustained action in:
 - in-service teacher training
 - curriculum & content development
 - information and support services
- ***xtec.es*** Internet service for teachers & schools since 1995
- ***edu365.com*** portal for students (2001)

Basis of the *edu365.com* portal

- *eEurope* initiative of the Catalan Gov.:
 - Secretary for Telecoms. and Inform. Society
 - Department of Education
- Aims:
 - empower learners and foster their ICT skills
 - support the school curriculum
- Public funding and management
- Private provision of specific contents, applications and services

The *edu365.com* portal is ...

- for every student of every school
- for the whole school education
- for families and citizens as well
- free of charge
- developed specifically to cater for young e-learners and schooling needs

Features of *edu365.com* /1

- Curriculum content:
 - interactive didactic units
 - drill & practice, simulation, self-tests
- Personal digital desktop:
 - word-processor embedded in the browser
 - personal workspace and file manager
 - symbolical & graphical calculator
 - communication tools
 - information resources & agenda

Features of *edu365.com* /2

- “Ask a teacher” (365 days, 24 hours):
 - individualized help and support on curriculum, learning and guidance matters
 - team of consultant teachers & specialists
- Information for students & parents
- Tools for teachers:
 - personal repository of teaching instruments
 - flexible student grouping
 - activity assignments and learning agendas

A portal for quality of education

- ***edu365.com*** aims to increase the quality of education by:
 - being available to every student and family
 - paying attention to the specific characteristics of the young e-learner
 - meeting the needs of the teachers
 - generating confidence: ease of use, privacy, academic freedom, reliability

Challenges

- Ensure teacher involvement
- School directors, inspectors and administrators should play an active and informed role
- Intensify communication with families
- Get ample feed-back, espec. of students
- Long-term committment of all partners: suppliers, users, and decision-makers