

Managerial applications for information technology

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Multimedia combines powerful learning tools and these technologies have a great impact on curriculum; while making allowances for both immediate enhancement and further curriculum development. As with all other educational organizations, it has become apparent that there is need for some kind of learning tool that will enable learners to be able to use modern technology to obtain the desired results while establishing their foundation for achieving.

Ross university School of Medicine being no exception, they have embarked on finding a solution to their growing problem in an effort to help further establish and maintain the place in the market while at the same time making full use of technology to help in their learning process. Definition of Multimedia Multimedia can be defined generically as any combination of two or more media which combines the five basic types of media into learning environment: video, sound, images, text, graphics and animation.

For educational technology purposes, multimedia refers to computer-based systems that allow the use associative linkages In order to allow users to navigate and retrieve Information stored in a combination of text, sounds, graphics, video, and other media. (Pearson 1 995) A multimedia learning environment would involve a number of elements In order to enable the learning to take place. Howard Gardener's theory of multiple intelligences establishes a theoretical framework for using multimedia in instruction.

His theory relates to other widely recognized theories on learning styles and modalities of learning. (Gardner 1983; 1993) Howard Gardner viewed intelligence as the capacity to solve problems or to fashion products that are

valued in one or more cultural setting' (Gardner & Hatch, 1989). Multimedia literacy is a growing concern among educators as American society continues to depend on image technologies such as television, video, and film. Educators need to prepare children to live and function in a society that relies heavily on multimedia for information storage and dissemination.

Brief background of the organization offshore medical schools in the West Indies is located on the North of the island at Picador in the Commonwealth of Dominica. Its primary function is to create holistic and positive individuals through its learning environment. The school currently has approximately 1200 learners enrolled with an estimated 255 employees and 65 members of faculty. The school was founded in 1978 and has graduated more than , 600 physicians with roughly 85% being U. S or Canadian citizens.

The faculty is recruited from leading medical institutions around the world and they do have outstanding credentials in teaching and research. While they do conduct research, their primary responsibility is teaching. This is order to maximize their availability to their learners. The learners can begin their studies at Ross University in September, January or May semesters and applicants are generally expected to have earned a bachelor's degree from a North American or similar baccalaureate program ND a broad, general education of at least 90 college credits are required.

The learners continue to choose Ross because of its faculty, curriculum and technically advanced campus. During the four (4) semesters of foundation of medicine, the learners experience integrated curriculum addressing the processes of health and disease. Upon completion, the learners take part in

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an Advanced Introduction to Clinical Medicine and this one semester program can be completed either in Dominica or at the Ross University Imam's facilities and other nearby hospitals and clinics, with rotations being done in the United States.

There is also an attractive health benefit insurance fund and education prospects that enables its employees to be able to attend Diver Online University and its extended to spouse and offspring. IRISH provides all the services that are required through its campus services in an effort to being able to have a one stop shop while allowing the learners' time to concentrate on their studies. Current Business Issues IRISH a fast growing medical university has been faced with the many difficulties experienced by organizations in the same field as it continues to grow and extend its orders.

With the recent addition of the Bahamas campus, the university has had to look at a number of issues arising from its intake of learners to its capability to maintain its standard. The growing demand for space, the request for admission to the school, the number of learners on the waiting list for attendance and the requirements of the Dominica Medical Board, the university sought to find ways that would assist in eliminating the growing difficulty.

As a requirement it called for additional faculty/instructors that would be able to provide the necessary educational resources for both campuses. The quality of the teaching and learning facilities were quickly diminishing and immediate steps had to be taken in an attempt to avoid any catastrophic occurrence with the operations of the University. This was proving to be

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difficult because the instructors were constantly moving between the two campuses.

It was becoming extremely expensive for the operations of the University and it was also evident that to reduce costs and simultaneously provide the necessary educational requirements, the University had to devise a strategy that would encompass most if not all of its current difficulties while creating concern for the number of learners present at the University. The University has embarked on a drive to ensure that the space requirements are obtained within the specified time allotted by the medical board and evidently are well on the way to achieving the objective.

With the introduction of the Bahamas campus there is additional pressure on the management to ensure that there is adequate faculty to provide the necessary teaching instructions that are required by the learners. This will definitely add to the operating cost of the university which in turn would need to find creative ways to provide the additional without excessive cost. The growing demand of the faculty in terms of accommodation, salary and requirements for relocating are also of concern to the management of the university and this gives rise to the growing operational cost and rising demands.

The increase in learners and those witnessed willingness to attend the university also gives rise to the fact that there needs to be the appropriate facilities, faculty, learning materials and acquirement in place to be able to sustain the learning demand. It gives rise to the concerns for proper and efficient learning materials and study space to be available to all those who

are required to utilize the services provided in the course of their time at the university.

Proposed Solution In an effort to be able to address the concerns of the University, there are alternatives that can be looked at to be able to make the maximum use and capitalize on the opportunities of this successful venture there are areas that can be addressed. To be able to meet the demands, it would be advisable to ensure that the introduction of new learning methods would help in reducing operational cost and create an enabling and learning environment for all concern. Because of the areas of concern one proposal that would enable the university to meet the requirements is multimedia.

With its introduction, the following would be addressed: (1) meeting the requirements of the medical board by providing additional faculty as they will be able to provide lectures to both campuses simultaneously (2) it would make available additional study space on both campuses and surroundings - learners would be able to study from home and also view their lectures from home which would allow for additional learners to accurately seat in a classroom, (3) it would provide for students on both campuses to be able to view lectures simultaneously and (4) it would make available more classroom space to accommodate more learners than is currently enrolled at any given semester. Recommendations for Executive committee
Employing multimedia tools into the learning environment is rewarding but can be complex and challenging. Its entire format is available and can be explored by instructors and learners with a variety of information.

Giving learners the ability and opportunity to learn and produce their documents will provide for several educational advantages as it allows for them to work with the same information from four perspectives and can be classified as follows: writers, designers, authors and researchers. Its application is easy to use with minimal training or self-learning. The need for well designed human-computer interface which can be audio or screen based is well accepted. When defining the appropriate medium to be utilized, it is conical specifications requirements. It is important to also bear in mind the nature of the audience especially their age group and culture mix.

A critical catalyst for the Internet's evolution was the development of the World Wide Web, a hypertext- based and multimedia-based software system for establishing and sharing information resources. Through user-friendly Web browser software, individuals and groups throughout the world can access and share information on a system with standard protocols. The second of Moor's interaction categories which focused on the instructor-learner interaction. Research indicates this dimension is vitally important for distance learners without onsite instructor support (Braggart et al. , 1995; Brown, 1996; Stephenson, 1997-98). The communication between the instructor and the learner may employ any combination of the nine media/technology categories in two-way in nature, rather than one-way.

Thus whether the student and the tutor exchange messages via mail, email, phone, vocalism, or participate in ideographic sessions, videoconferencing, or even in real-time virtual reality activities, they are engaged in an interchange of information in two directions. Some instructor-learner

exchanges are synchronous and others asynchronous in nature. All the learner-content interactions are synchronous, but in many of the instructor-learner engagements time delays add a further complicating dimension. Usually the longer the time delay, the less effective the feedback, as shown in the exchange of distance education materials (Binder et al. , 1997) and feedback on assignments (Roberts, 1996).

So it appears the asynchronous mode is less desirable, but the possible time delays in many types of tutor-student meeting systems- even with the cost modern technologies, such as email exchanges, online newsgroup discussions, etc. - may have some real advantages. When complex issues are discussed, for example, the participants need time to thoroughly digest new information and formulate considered replies. Thus both asynchronous and synchronous tutor- learner sessions need to be considered in planning total distance education programs, as well as the characteristics of the media to be utilized. In the choice of the instructor-learner interaction mechanisms the evidence from the multimedia research needs to be considered.