Instructional Technology

See, Hear, and Teach Your Way Through the Latest Computer Learning System

Interactive Teleconferences

Buying the Right Computer System

Designing a Video Classroom

Innovative Programming to Empower Adult Learners
20

Empowering Adult Learners: NIF Literacy Program Helps ABE Accomplish Human Development Mission

Mary E. Harler

Designing Video Classrooms

Michael A. Price

24

Stopping Out Is In!

Elmor H. Greenberg and Lois J. Zachary

How adult learners and institutions can plan for and benefit from the reality of periodic non-enrollment

DEPARTMENTS

President's Podium

The Vision Is for Days Yet to Come

4

Directions for Research Educators and High Tech—Love It, Hate It

6

Marketing Clinic

How to Make the FAX Work for Your Registration Process: How Many Cancellations Are Too Many?

27

Practice Notes

PALS: A Computerized Adult Literacy Program

28

Resources

Writing Articles: A Guide to Publishing in Your Own Profession

29

Training in America: The Organization and Strategic Role of Training

29

Time Out

Continuing Education—Does Anyone Care About Community Commitment Anymore?

30

INNOVATIONS

Information on Demand

Jack Brickley and Wayne Smith

The University of Missouri-St Louis conducts participant were more engaged in the learning process when they conducted a nationwide telephone conference that called for participants to interact with the media.

20

Going High Tech: Computerized Literacy Instruction

Marilyn Flachta Fink

How to choose a computer system that will fit your budget and your client's needs.

ADULT LEARNING

January 1991

Volume 1 Number 6

American Association for Adult & Continuing Education
Editor: Jeannine E. Smith


Contributing Editors: Jerold W. Apps, Bruce M. Rehlen.

Publications Standing Service Unit Chair—Pamela H. Burke, Marcia Bach, Michael Collins, and William Cox.

Contributing Editors: Jerold W. Apps, Bruce M. Rehlen.

AACACE Officers

President: William B. Craven
President-Elect: Elizabeth Sproule
Secretary: Beverly Cerny
Treasurer: Thomas Yost
Past-President: Kate Sproule
Editorial and Business Office

111 6th Street SE

Washington, DC 20006

Telephone: (202) 458 6131

Executive Director: Judith A. Kolasinski

January 1991 © 1991 by the American Association for Adult & Continuing Education. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.
Innovating with Telecommunications

John A. Henschke

Although educators and trainers continue to find new ways to use telecommunications in distance education, one of the ongoing challenges is to provide programming that transcends the typical style of one-way communication from instructor to student. However, a telecourse offered last year by the University of Missouri-St. Louis combining video satellite transmission and live, participant and instructor teleconferences provides an interactive model that can assist other adult educators in overcoming this communications barrier.

The program, Foundations of Adult Basic Education, included nationwide satellite transmission (a special grant made it possible to defray the high costs of uplinking the video by the Educational Satellite Network (ESN)) of thirty, pre-taped, video lessons and four, hour-long audio teleconferences. During the teleconferences, participants were able to share processes they had used in their own programs and to discuss whether or not they agreed with ideas presented in the videos and in the three, required, course textbooks.

The course focused on methods and techniques for teaching adult basic education (ABE) including basic reading, word recognition, listening, job skills, and goal accomplishment. It also addressed learner characteristics, diagnosing needs and interests, identifying community resources, and evaluation. Course participants included ABE teachers and program administrators from eight states, including Missouri—teachers who completed the course were able to earn three hours of undergraduate or graduate credit, with Missouri teachers also receiving credit for certification.

Interaction with Technology Was Key

As our planning for the course evolved, various options were considered. From the beginning, we were aware that two components helped to ensure success when using media in education integration of human and non-human resources and collaboration between educators and technologies. In addition, we wanted to give top priority to interaction, task-centeredness, individualization, and self-directed learning contracts. For this reason, we rejected an initial plan that called only for videotapes, printed reading materials, and assignments, in favor of one that added teleconferences to the above because of the advantage in the latter of live interaction.

Saturday Morning Telecasts and Pre-Taped Videos Produced Savings

The University of Missouri-St. Louis's Video Instructional Program (VIP) aired the telecourse via satellite throughout the U.S. for two hours on eight consecutive Saturday mornings, beginning...
Get the Best!

• Materials and Methods in Adult and Continuing Education

by Chester Klevins, 446 pp, $21.45

To order send check (orders under $25 must be accompanied by payment), to AAACE, 1112 16th St., N.W., Ste. 420, Washington, D.C. 20036, 202-463-6333

Interestingly, although Group C was the smallest group, it generated the longest periods of interactions. The participants agreed with conventional wisdom that the interactive arrangements helped to overcome telecommunications barriers, saying that the audio interaction made the course more productive for them.

Based on our experience, we would suggest adding more “instructor talk” for (1) praising or encouraging participants’ ideas in evaluating them as right, good, and appropriate, (2) accepting or using ideas of participants in the areas of diagnosing learning needs, designing learning experiences, evaluating results, and summarizing needs and (3) motivational lectures. We would also suggest having the audio conferences later in the course to allow participants more lead time to digest and apply the material in their own contexts before discussing it. We also encountered production problems—large amounts of unproductive time because of equipment peculiarities—that need to be surmounted for future courses. We would advise users of older audio bridges to consider the feasibility of obtaining state-of-the-art equipment. The bridge system we used was voice-activated, which required participants to speak in clear, strong voices or the sound would clip—out and out. This was bothersome to the users and impeded communications. However, as the participants grew accustomed to using the equipment, the percentage of clipping decreased, although it didn’t stop entirely.

The question could legitimately be posed whether an equal amount of learning could be accomplished if only audio interaction were used with printed materials. The cost would certainly be less without the use of the satellite component. However, our experience suggests—in spite of the production problems encountered—that participants greatly enjoyed interacting with media and were more engaged in the learning process as a result.