

Issue 57

March 2003

ISSN 1521-9275

About INFOBITS

Infobits is an electronic service of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill ITS Teaching and Learning's Center for Instructional Technology. Each month the CIT's Information Resources Consultant monitors and selects from a number of information and instructional technology sources that come to her attention and provides brief notes for electronic dissemination to educators.

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E-EDUCATION PAPERS

The latest *Journal of Digital Information* (vol. 3, issue 4, March 2003) is a special issue on "E-education: Design and Evaluation for Teaching and Learning." Papers in this issue include:

"E-nhance Lectures," by Larissa Naber and Monika Kohle, Vienna University of Technology, reports on a learning environment designed for usability by both lecturers and students.

"E-Book Technology and Its Potential Applications in Distance Education," by Norshuhada Shiratuddin, Monica Landoni, Forbes Gibb, and Shahizan Hassan, University of Strathclyde, provides information on acquiring and creating e-books and an evaluation of e-book compiler software.

"Personalising Electronic Books," by James Ohene-Djan and Alvaro Fernandes, Goldsmiths College, University of London, discusses how e-books could be "designed to possess characteristics that in some ways supersede those of paper-based books."

The *Journal of Digital Information* (JoDI) [ISSN: 1368-7506] is a peer-reviewed electronic journal published only via the Web. *JoDI* is currently free to users thanks to support from the British Computer Society and Oxford University Press. Current and past issues are available at <http://jodi.tamu.edu/>.

THE PROCESSED BOOK

"The intriguing aspect of electronic publishing is not simply whether we will all someday dump print in favor of screens or what file format will become the standard, but how electronic publishing will affect what goes inside of books. It is my view that our current notion of books is naive, raw, and that what electronic publishing will give us is something that is highly thought out, cooked and processed. To the world of processed food and processed hair, we now add the processed book." Joseph J. Esposito, President and CEO of SRI Consulting, defines it (in "The Processed Book," *First Monday*, vol. 8, no. 3, March 2003) by its content, rather than physical, attributes. These attributes include:

- the book as portal, encouraging readers to use it as a link to other resources;
- the book as network node, connecting it with other books, commentary, catalogs;
- the book as self-referencing text, changing its organization to create new versions of the content.

The paper is available online at http://www.firstmonday.dk/issues/issue8_3/esposito/index.html.

First Monday [ISSN: 1396-0466] is an online, peer-reviewed journal whose aim is to publish original articles about the Internet and the global information infrastructure. It is published in cooperation with the University Library, University of Illinois at Chicago. For more information, contact: First Monday, c/o Edward Valauskas, Chief Editor, PO Box 87636, Chicago IL 60680-0636 USA; email: ejv@uic.edu; Web: <http://firstmonday.dk/>.

PERSONALIZED ASSIGNMENTS AND ONLINE HOMEWORK SERVICES

"While the Internet is now a global research library of previously unknown power, it also enables enterprising would-be cheaters to cut and paste material for easy and relatively thought-free composition of essay assignments." In "Influence of Non-Moderated and Moderated Discussion Sites on Student Success" (*The Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, vol. 7, issue 1, February 2003), Deborah A. Kashy, et al., "reports the educational outcomes for introductory physics students [at the University of Michigan] who used two web sites, one designed by the course instructor to provide assistance to students and the other a site designed by a third party to provide students with the solutions to problems." The authors' study indicates that when instructors take the time and effort to design personalized assignments, students may be less likely to copy homework from answer sites. The article is available at http://www.aln.org/publications/jaln/v7n1/v7n1_kashy.asp.

The Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks [ISSN 1092-8235] is an electronic publication of The Sloan Consortium (Sloan-C). Current and back issues are available at <http://www.aln.org/publications/jaln/>.

Sloan-C is a "consortium of institutions and organizations committed to quality online education" funded by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. For more information, see <http://www.aln.org/>.

PLANNING FOR SUCCESSFUL DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMS

In "Six Factors to Consider when Planning Online Distance Learning Programs in Higher Education" (*Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, vol. 6, issue 1, Spring 2003), Suzanne Levy explains what is required for a successful program. Factors that Levy covers include providing training and support for both staff and students, not overlooking needed student services, and establishing intellectual property rights policies. The article is available online at <http://www.westga.edu/%7Edistance/ojdl/spring61/levy61.htm>.

The *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration* is a free, peer-reviewed quarterly published by the Distance and Distributed Education Center, The State University of West Georgia, 1600 Maple Street, Carrollton, GA 30118 USA; Web: <http://www.westga.edu/~distance/jmain11.html>.

See also William H. Riffée's article, "Putting a Faculty Face on Distance Education Programs" (*Syllabus*, vol. 16, no. 7, February 2003, pp. 10-13). Riffée believes that successful programs are created by "using

a hybrid model of distance education that involves the electronic delivery of content coupled with face-to-face contact by a faculty facilitator or mentor." Having human contact with their instructors helps students feel greater connection with the program, the institution, and their fellow students, all of which results in a better distance education experience. The article is available online at <http://www.syllabus.com/article.asp?id=7233>.

Syllabus [ISSN 1089-5914] is published monthly by 101communications, LLC, 9121 Oakdale Avenue, Suite 101, Chatsworth, CA 91311 USA; tel: 650-941-1765; fax: 650-941-1785; email: info@syllabus.com; Web: <http://www.syllabus.com/>.

Annual subscriptions are free to individuals who work in colleges, universities, and high schools in the U.S.; go to <http://subscribe.101com.com/syllabus/> for more information.

In "Blended Learning -- What Is It and Where Might It Take Us?" (*Sloan-C View*, vol. 2, no. 1, February 2003, pp. 3-5), Richard Voos provides information on which institutions are implementing the hybrid model that Riffie advocates. Voos' article is available online at <http://www.aln.org/publications/view/v2n1/blended1.htm>.

Sloan-C View is a free online publication of the Sloan Consortium intended to provide useful information about online learning, commentaries about the field, and pointers to more details about the work of the Consortium. For current and past issues, go to <http://www.aln.org/publications/view/>.

Recommended Reading

"Recommended Reading" lists items that have been recommended to me or that *Infobits* readers have found particularly interesting and/or useful, including books, articles, and websites published by Infobits subscribers. Send your recommendations to kotlas@email.unc.edu for possible inclusion in this column.

The Columbia Guide to Digital Publishing, edited by William E. Kasdorf (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003; ISBN: 0231124996; \$34.95 paperback)

For anyone involved in electronic publishing, this reference work will explain every aspect of the technologies to organize, format, publish, distribute, and archive content. The guide is also available in an online version at <http://www.digitalpublishingguide.com/> that includes links to a glossary, bibliography, and indexes. Libraries, academic institutions, and corporations can purchase network-wide access to the online version.