

Multimedia Boot Camp: Adventures for the New Millennium

Multimedia Boot Camp: Adventures for the New Millennium responds to the severe shortage of skilled workers for the nation's multimedia/entertainment industries. It encourages faculty to create and to collaborate on multimedia projects and curriculum that is pertinent to their classrooms and their areas of expertise.

When a consortium of four California community colleges, Creative Technologies Institute (CTI), expanded its successful "Accelerated Multimedia Curriculum" development effort (funded by a U.S. Department of Labor Demonstration Grant) by implementing statewide and regional curriculum and staff development in multimedia technologies, it proposed implementation of a hands-on and online experience in which faculty with expertise in diverse disciplines develop instructional multimedia curriculum that enhances student learning and creates multimedia experiences in the classroom. This project uses alternative delivery methods such as online courseware, distance learning via video conferencing, and the Internet as an instructional tool. It focuses on staff and curriculum development using multimedia tools in traditional classrooms as well as electronic delivery of multimedia instruction to students. Since multimedia lends itself to interdisciplinary project-based activities, the focus is on project outcomes and collaboration of faculty throughout California.

Implementation of Multimedia Boot Camp

In late 1997, CTI solicited brief applications from California Community Colleges interested in participating in the Multimedia Boot Camp demonstration/"beta" project. In the first demonstration of the project, in the spring of 1998, a total of 35 faculty (five from each of the seven participating colleges) comprised the first "virtual" class. Five cross-disciplinary applicants

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were recruited from each of the participating colleges to participate in the training program. One of the five faculty at each college was designated the lead faculty coordinator to help with information dissemination and project coordination. These participants made up the "virtual class."

The demonstration project consisted of a two-day hands-on multimedia workshop entitled Multimedia Tool Kit followed by an eight-week online course with four "adventures."

The Two-Day Hands-on Workshop

The hands-on workshops at two sites in Southern and Northern California by regional program introduced faculty participants to the Multimedia Tool Kit hardware, software, scanners, digital cameras, and A/V equipment that they would need to develop instructional multimedia. After the workshop, the faculty coordinators from each of the seven colleges introduced the faculty participants to their own school's facilities (instructional and digital labs) for support of this course.

Each faculty participant left the workshop with a Web site (minimum of two pages) designed and posted to a Web server as well as an interactive electronic presentation. Adobe Acrobat and Pagemill allowed the faculty to create Internet-ready content using familiar and available applications such as word processing, MS Powerpoint, and desktop publishing applications. In Acrobat, they were able to add multimedia elements such as audio, QuickTime, video, QuickTime VR, animations, and branching links to internal text, graphic images and charts, URL sites, and email addresses. They learned how to print a PDF file, embed a PDF file in an HTML document, project an interactive electronic presentation created in Acrobat, and download their interactive multimedia presentations in

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PDF format to their classrooms, auditoriums, libraries, and students.

The Online Adventures

After the hands-on workshop, four online adventures were scheduled every two weeks beginning the first week in March. The four adventures focus on the following topics:

Adventure 1 Searches on the Internet
Adventure 2 Good Design
Adventure 3 Navigation: A Trek Through Content
Adventure 4 Putting Multimedia to Work in the Classroom: The Final Ascent

In Adventure 1, participants are oriented to Top Class, the online instructional delivery system and introduced to how to participate in various aspects of an online course. The objectives of the online adventures are:

- To allow faculty from a variety of disciplines to create multimedia projects and content that is pertinent to their classrooms and areas of expertise.
- To develop multimedia instructional strategies and skills in multimedia tools and applications.
- To not only experience alternative interactive multimedia courseware via the Internet, but also to help each instructor develop four interactive multimedia lessons that can be demonstrated with their students.
- To focus on curriculum activities that routinely integrate interactive multimedia presentations in traditional classrooms.
- To enhance and support instruction with dynamic Web sites created by faculty.