What Role Does Technology Play in Starting Your Digital Media Program?

Moderator
Mark Thomasson (Savannah College of Art and Design)

Panelists
Angela Stukator (Sheridan College)
Pam Hogarth (Gnomon School of Visual Effects)
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In the last few years, the numbers of schools offering digital media programs has exploded whether it being 4 year college and universities offering terminal degrees to other schools offering certificate programs or continuing education classes. In planning programs such as these, there are obviously concerns of accreditation, faculty recruitment and curriculum development, however the role of technology in supporting such endeavors should not be discounted.

At SIGGRAPH 2005, I propose a forum featuring some of the more successful schools to discuss the various issues technology issues that they have faced in their program. The forum would feature individuals from various perspectives from those programs that have made significant investments in technology and infrastructure to those that enjoyed success without the same level of investment. The participants would be from academia as well as from the technical side. What the forum will not be is an opportunity for the participating schools to sell their programs. As a moderator, I would to find someone from industry who has strong ties to education that can keep the discussion going and on track.

Some of the issues that are worthy of discussion include:

1) Are there minimum investments in technology you need to make to support starting a digital media program?
2) How much is the success of your program tied to your technology budget?
3) How aware must you be of industry trends in technology planning for emerging curriculum?
4) Are there advantages or penalties in early adoption of technology?
5) What is the challenges higher education faces beyond budget concerns in providing the technology?
6) Does an investment in technology give your students a competitive advantage when graduating?
7) Is technology a selling point for admissions to your program?
8) Is the adoption of technology a collaborative effort?
9) Who sets the technology vision for your institution?
10) Does concept and art suffer when technology is considered?