Abstract

**The Marriage of Technology & Distance Education: SP’s Experience**

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This presentation will outline SP’s experiences in the selection and implementation of various technologies to deliver its online distance education programmes. The focus will be on processes and strategies with respect to: a) the selection of the course management delivery platform, b) the integration of software delivery tools to enhance course contents, c) the application of formative and summative evaluations within the limitation of current technology, and d) the rollout of the selected technologies.

Guiding SP’s movement through each of these phases are these questions: how do we deliver effective online distance learning programme, ensure quality content and instruction, and respond to and anticipate an IT landscape that continues to change dramatically, making new and associated demands on our existing platform and delivery technology? For example, it seems that each new week heralds the introduction of some new and/or revised media rich technology designed to “make online learning easier, faster, and more exciting for both the teacher and the learner.” As well, educational research continues to advance associated pedagogical models, i.e., constructivist learning environments with their unique technological applications.

Given the above context, our presentation will highlight key SP milestones with respect to actual online distance courses, as well as student and staff reactions in SP’s journey from i) an in-house Course Management Delivery System (CMDS) to a commercial product, ii) pure asynchronous mode to a blended...
synchronous/asynchronous mode, and iii) text-based course content to the introduction of media rich materials.

And finally, SP’s adaptation and response to traditional “Pull technology” which has driven the market, to that of “Push Technology” and its inherent challenges to our existing CMDS platforms and pedagogy will be touched upon.