

ICT IN SOCIETY

1 ICT IN THE UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENT

Information and communication technologies allow us to communicate information and knowledge quickly and widely, linking distant places and diverse areas of endeavour in new ways, and to create communities that just a decade ago was impossible.

Humanity has been through other periods of dynamic change before: innovations as such as steam, engine, rural road, telephone and aeroplanes. However never before have we experienced technologies that are evolving so rapidly [increasing in power by hundredfold every decade] altering the constraints of space and time and reshaping the way we communicate, learn and think.

Corporations and governments, being two important sectors in the information and knowledge-based economy are recognizing the role of ICT and are adapting their strategies and activities accordingly.

Ironically however, at universities probably the most knowledge-based entity of all, the pace of transformation has been relatively modest in key areas. Although research has in ways been transformed by info technology, and is increasingly used for student and academic communications, other functions in higher education have remained more or less unchanged. Teaching and learning largely continues to follow a class-room-centred activity.

2 VISION FOR A UNIVERSITY

- 2.1 E-learning within a model of flexible teaching and learning.
- 2.2 E-support systems: integrating all administrative support systems for students and academics.
- 2.3 Information and computer literacy skills for all students a compulsory part of all programmes.
- 2.4 ICT drivers licence for all staff members.
- 2.5 E-information/library service.
- 2.6 Research through e-collaboration.
- 2.7 Every university an e-strategy.

3 THE UNIVERSITY'S ROLE IN THE INFORMATION SOCIETY

Although universities have not made substantial progress in integrating ICT in their core business it has a critical role to play in the information society.

- 3.1 Lead by example: create new and more sophisticated academic technologies.
- 3.2 Educating students to operate in the information and knowledge society.
- 3.3 Create an understanding, positive outlook and implement life long learning opportunities.
- 3.4 Teaching and learning should be aiming at collaboration, communities of teaching and learning, communities of scholars.
- 3.5 Become part of the global higher education initiatives.
- 3.6 Not revolution but evolution.

Evolve! - The Song

Lyrics by Rosabeth Moss Kanter

[chorus]

Get ready for the next step,
Select the best step.
It's a leap in evolution
From the Internet revolution.
Just pick a direction.
In this world of connection.
So many problems to solve -
You've got to evolve.

i

When outcomes are uncertain, answers hard to devise,
That's time to form a team, tap dreams, and improvise.
Listen to your audience, build a scene on every hope,
Shake up thinking, see new patterns in the kaleidoscope.
You don't have to play alone, so start placing your bet
On links to lots of partners, near and far across the Net.
Join hand beyond tall silos, step out of the lonely cells,
Seek a common state, collaborate, for community wealth.

[chorus]

ii

Putting lipstick on a bulldog won't transform enough,
Makeup can't hide everything: change takes deeper stuff.
Shift the mood, adjust your attitude, before you go online;
Find new habits of mind, don't just dwell on what's behind.
Don't be trapped by old divisions, on a patch of tiny turf,
That means settling for less - there's more you could be worth.
Think big! Think bold! Think of new things to create.
First-rate prized go to leaders who can innovate.

[chorus]

iii

Why are you so silent, has the mouse got your tongue?
Tech talk is what the older folks can learn from the young.
But the Net generation must absorb from the past,
Enduring values of service, how to build things that last.
So rally people power, make the world a better place,
Because we live on the ground, not in cyberspace.
The computer can help us but it's only just a tool;
It's humanity's goals that should make all the rules.

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From: R. Moss Kanter, e-volve: Succeeding in the Digital Culture of Tomorrow