

Information Age Technology and Adult Education: Implications for the Future

Critical and Contemporary Issues in Adult Education

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The Internet

Where do we stand today?

- **Over 75% of U.S. households have Internet service**
 - **Over 80% of U.S. population have been online at least once in previous 30 days**
 - **The rate of high speed Internet access has nearly tripled in the past two years (Verizon FIOS, Time Warner's High Speed Internet, Sprint's 4G network, etc.)**
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Emerging Strategies

Dolence says, “The 21st Century is not a century of either online or classroom learning, but both. It is a century of vastly expanded choices. For learners this means any time, any pace, any path, any place. For educators it means transformation!”

Dolence, M. G. (2001). *Emerging strategies for 21st Century learning systems*. [On-line]. <http://www.mgdolence.com/>

Digitization Trends

- **New ways for delivering courses and supplementing learning materials (web pages, Blackboard, Google Hangouts, podcasts, YouTube, blogs, wikis, PDAs, etc.)**
 - **Wireless connections to the Internet and cloud computing**
 - **Continuously increasing bandwidth/speed**
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Emerging Trends That Will Impact our Work with Learners

- **Learner Centered Environments**
 - **Virtual (online) Learning Environments**
 - **Mobile computing (PDAs, cell phones, iPads, etc. – see slide 8)**
 - **Enhanced uses of social networking, online simulation games, etc.**
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Learner Centered Environments

- **Accommodates learners' constraints**
 - **Accommodates individual learning styles**
 - **Self-paced, self-directed, and self-motivated**
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Virtual (online) Learning Environments

- **Access to a networked system of learning resources**
 - **Learning content, access, communities available electronically 24 by 7**
 - **Computer mediated interactive dialogue (synchronous or asynchronous)**
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Mobile Computing

- **PDAs, cell phones, iPads, etc. becoming pervasive, less expensive, more powerful**
 - **Information collaboration and access in new ways now possible (voice, video, etc.)**
 - **Multicasting becoming common at high speeds**
 - **Partnering means research/knowledge sharing worldwide**
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Enhanced Uses of Social Networking

- **Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc. revolutionizing how we interact with others**
 - **Online simulation games, building avatars, etc. expanding on how to relate to others in learning activities**
 - **Shared common interests can be powerful motivators for learning , teaching, and training**
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Why use Technology as Adult Educators?

- **Access to almost limitless information**
 - **Facilitates and extends learning opportunities and resources**
 - **24 by 7 classroom possibilities**
 - **Increases motivation for some learners**
 - **Enhances access to learning resources**
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Why use Technology as Adult Educators? (cont.)

- **Addresses some of the limitations of our increasingly mobile, busy, and stressed society**
 - **Can improve cost effectiveness with skillful planning and management**
 - **May reach new audiences (disabled, isolated, from great distances, etc.)**
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Today's adult educators must prepare learners for a different world

It really is up to us and I believe we are up to the task. I hope you will embrace technology as one of the ways of meeting the many needs we face as professionals.
