The National Archive of Educational Computing

The development of educational computing in the UK began in the early 1970s. This has resulted in a wealth of knowledge, experience and artifacts. It is timely now to look at these materials and to represent them as an accessible and substantially complete collection of one nation's pioneering and world-renowned innovation.

Aims

The proposal is to use information and communications technology (ICT) to:

1. expand the archive so that it represents the range of innovations and practice in educational computing past, present and future.
2. enhance the archive by using emulation, video digitisation and virtual reality techniques to provide access to old technology which has become difficult to operate and maintain.
3. disseminate the archive to allow a wider audience to view past successes (and failures) and become better informed about the potential for learning with ICT.

Audience

Most of an inquiring population will have an interest in this archive.
Specifically:

1. Public - parents concerned with home and school learning with ICT, individuals with interests in social, technological and educational history;
2. Learners - children researching projects about technology and learning;
3. Teachers or trainers - in initial and in-service professional development;
4. Researchers - engaged in educational technology and pedagogical research worldwide;
5. Educational managers - institutional decision-makers when considering purchase and implementation of ICT learning resources;
6. Policy makers - regional and national decision makers when considering effective deployment and application of ICT strategies.

Online visitors and face-to-face viewers of the archive will be encouraged to add their comments and recollections of educational computing experiences turning the archive into a vibrant community.

Methods

The project will enhance and broaden access to the archive in four ways:

1. using multimedia, emulation and virtual reality techniques to provide interesting and stimulating representations of the artefacts;
2. procuring and recording in digital formats the experience of many of the participants in educational computing innovation in the form of oral and video histories;
3. digitising existing video materials from the collection and indexing them for viewers to see how educational computing has been pioneered;
4. categorising and recording in a publicly-available database its collection.

The project will also create specific interpretations and representations for existing and new audiences including the public, the learner, the teacher or trainer, the researcher, the educational manager, the policy maker.

Objectives in 2007

1. preserve the existing collection;
2. create an organisation with charitable status to permit a long-term self-sustaining mechanism for funding development and dissemination;
3. plan a representative, substantially complete national archive of UK educational computing which is open to the public;
4. establish a world-wide-web site which publishes the searchable database of the archive collection and a selection of representations of software and hardware artifacts, personal records and official documents.

If you would like to support the archive, please contact:
Richard Millwood, Director of Core Education UK, richardmillwood@mac.com, 0779 055 8641, January 9th 2007