
EDITORIAL

The field of continuing engineering education is experiencing rapid changes. The need for continuing engineering education is growing fast in all organizations. The requirements of educational productivity have been highlighted in many recent reports throughout the world. However, simultaneously with these developments, there is a rapid dispersion of organizations and their workforces. The rapidly changing environment can lead to one conclusion: new approaches are urgently needed in education and training.

This special issue of the IJCEE concentrates on new technologies for continuing engineering education. In the papers collected here, authors from around the world highlight various ways to deliver education and training in non-conventional ways.

We would like to stress that using new technologies in education and training should always be primarily a strategic, content-driven choice. Delivering education and training is not simply a question of choosing between different media; the decision to utilize new technologies in education and training has wide impacts throughout different organizations and entities.

Education and training by new technologies can be a valid solution to world-wide training needs. Many different media (such as broadcasting by satellite, computer conferencing, etc.) have already enabled global real-time communication in education and training. It is also obvious that education and training will utilize in the future, even more than today, these modern information technologies.

On many occasions education and training by new technologies have been seen to be especially beneficial for the developing countries. They can give better access to high-level education, as well as reducing remarkably the capital costs of educational systems. Thus distance education and training have many possibilities to offer for different national educational policies. Also, many examples show that by good design the production and realization of education and training can be done by international partnership. New options for creating truly international training concepts and programs present a particular challenge.

We believe strongly that education and training by new technologies have in practical terms many advantages to offer compared with conventional training and education. They can be more cost-effective as a consequence of economies of scale in the production of the material; courses run by distance education often do not incur costs of travel and accommodation; and what is most important for professional development: distance education is quite independent of time and location.

We have been able to gather for this issue a number of articles by international experts, who have been willing to share their wide experience with us.

In addition to the invited articles, some of the most important papers dealing with new technologies for continuing engineering education presented at the 5th World Conference on Continuing Engineering Education, held in Espoo, Finland, in June 1992, have been included as a separate section to this special issue of the IJCEE.

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