Current Status and Prospect of Promotion "The Development Plan of E-Learning for Culture and Arts Program" in Taiwan

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Abstract:
Culture and arts could be very much of hi-tech. The Development Plan of E-Learning for Culture and Arts Program (the Plan) planned by the Council for Cultural Affairs (CCA) will update domestic arts and literature information online form year to year. It will not only benefit industry workers to check the index, but will also further design and plan the e-learning curricula related to arts and culture. Under the Plan, there are five sub-plans, which includes; 1) set up of related curricula and e-learning contents in conjunction with related national plan; 2) integration of arts and cultural information, enhancement and development of contents standards for arts and culture through e-learning; 3) development of design for multimedia e-learning databank, inquiry interface and indexing system; 4) promotion of digitalization of literature and arts learning information, and holding of seminars on intellectual property right related to e-learning; and 5) setup of e-learning databank, compile and add-value to the related original information for subsequent exhibitions and the basis for collection of information.

By using the above-mentioned information on literature and arts, design various e-learning classrooms for literature and arts training of interdisciplinary specialists good at both arts and literature. The courseware for arts and literature is divided into basic promotion and advanced stage to meet the requirements of arts and literature professionals with different background. In general, through the cluster effect of the arts and literature information portal, the goal of attracting interested parties to form a community of arts and literature fellow can be achieved.

Keywords: CCA e-learning culture arts

1 Introduction

In order to help promote the National E-learning Program, the Council for Cultural Affairs, Executive Yuan has organized various e-learning activities since 2002. Integrating the nation s wish to develop digital learning and make true its own conception and policy, and in collaboration with Chinese Culture University, the Council established CASE (Cultural Affairs, School of E-learning). Five sessions have hitherto been given, the curriculum schedule including E-culture Policy, Integrated Community Building, Cultural Creative Industries, Culture of Taiwan, Civic Esthetics and Cultural Citizenship. Moreover, the School has also invited National Taiwan Craft Research Institute to develop cultural courseware for two sessions. In all, 97 subjects or 217 hours of courses have been launched, with more than one million visitors among whom over 60 thousand were enrolled. The professional and elaborate e-courses, the teachers   online

direction, the perfect management of the internet community and the teaching mode which aggregates the   virtual and the actual, all these conduce to the establishment of fresh atmosphere for cultural learning.

This program is considered as a concomitant of the "E-learning Park of "the National Science and Technology Program for e-Learning promoted by the National Science Council, Executive Yuan. It is intended to accelerate the establishment of the Cultural Databank, the Cultural Learning Information Portal, the Cultural Classroom as well as the Cultural Community.

This program is expected to offer lively and interesting cultural courses to ordinary people and to supply them with spiritual nurture. To students it supplies information on cultural learning and their career project. To professionals it can give integrated and in-depth information on the culture and art of the whole nation. And teachers can also

benefit from this plan and find up-to-date cultural and artistic materials fit for their subjects while cultural groups get a platform where conceptions, ideas, technologies and topics can be communicated and exchanged, and where cultural creation and learning can be animated. At last, this program can help cultural offices at all levels not only with policy publication and execution but also with the propagation of local cultural information so that the best use of it can be achieved both in information industry and in education.

2 Literature Reviews

E-learning is a term that means something different to almost everyone who uses it. Some use it to refer to packaged content pieces and others to technical infrastructures. Some think only of asynchronous self-study while others realize e-learning can encompass synchronous learning and collaboration. Almost all agree that e-learning is of strategic importance.

E-learning is typically defined as learning using a computer and the Internet. Synonyms and/or related terms include learning that is: online, virtual, web-based, technology-assisted, distributed, open and distributed learning, tele-learning. Related terms include distributed learning, computer-assisted learning, distance education, blended learning, computer-managed learning, learning management systems, and others.

Therefore, what is exactly mean for e-Learning? NCSA (the National Center for Supercomputing Applications) e-Learning group provided a general definition: "e-Learning is the acquisition and use of knowledge distributed and facilitated primarily by electronic means. This form of learning currently depends on networks and computers but will likely evolve into systems consisting of a variety of channels (e.g., wireless, satellite), and technologies (e.g., cellular phones, PDA's) as they are developed and adopted. E-learning can take the form of courses as well as modules and smaller learning objects. E-Learning may incorporate synchronous or asynchronous access and may be distributed geographically with varied limits of time. "[1].

Rosenberg says, "E-Learning refers to the use of internet technologies to deliver a broad array of solutions that enhance knowledge and performance. It is based on three fundamental criteria:

e-Learning is networked, which makes it capable of instant updating, storage / retrieval, distribution and sharing of instruction or information.

It is delivered to the end user via a computer using a standard internet technology.

It focuses on the broadest view of learning– learning solutions that go beyond the traditional paradigms of training." [2].

In Taiwan, due to the "E-learning Park of "the National Science and Technology Program for e-Learning promoted by the National Science Council, Executive Yuan. Those programs have been using "e-learning" as the program formal definition. Therefore, this research used the same definition.

3 E-learning Development

E-learning present four advantages: (1) Low cost of teaching and training (2) Elevation of learners interest (3) Association of knowledge learning and new know-how. (4) More interactive channels and more flexibility. [3] In view of them, in developed countries, such establishments as governments, schools, and enterprises all allocate funds and resources to encourage research in learning and educational training. In Europe, the Commission of the European Communities announced the guideline of e-learning policy "The e-Learning Action Plan-Designing tomorrow's education" in 2001. [4] In 2002, The Secretary of Commerce in the United States addressed "2020 Visions-Transforming Education and Training through Advanced Technologies" report. The report was written by experts and scholars from Microsoft, HP, Harvard University, U.C. Berkley, Carnegie Mellon University, etc. [5] Within this framework, our Executive Yuan passed the National Science and Technology Program for E-learning and decided to allocate four billion NTD to promote this project in the five following years. In the "Challenge 2008: National Development Plan conceived by the Council for Economic Planning and Development, this National Science and Technology Program for E-learning is in the first part of the " E-life initiative which is in its turn part of the " E-Taiwan Program .

4 Promotion Process

For the promotion of the program and in light of the principle of digitization of Taiwan local culture determined in the Online Culture Building and Development Plan, the Council for Cultural Affairs encourages academia, industrialists and cultural organs to develop cultural & artistic teaching

materials and to make improvement in scope and profundity. Within the framework of the promotion program itself; there are five sub-plans that will be concretized year by year.

As to the execution, four steps are to be followed, namely, infrastructure construction, training & formation of the staff, application and marketing & promotion. The infrastructure construction consists in developing teaching and learning materials within local cultural offices under the Council for Cultural Affairs. The second step will be ensured by digital learning and training in cultural establishments accompanied by digital organization of international seminars and digital artistic learning in elementary and secondary schools. The application lies in good

running of CASE (Cultural Affairs, School of E-learning), in the realization of the craft-learning plan elaborated by the Craft Research Institute and in the development of CASE databank publications. As to the last one, on the one hand it consists in producing and promoting teaching materials merging practical information, and on the other hand cross-ministry and cross-council exhibitions should be organized so that Taiwan will be able to link up with the world and advertise its exquisite culture & art to the world. The CASE plan is the prime task to accomplish for the execution of the whole program of the Council for Cultural Affairs. See Table 1 for more points.

Table 1: CASE plan

Items	CASE plan of the Council for Cultural Affairs
Contents offered	Culture of Taiwan Taiwan Craft Culture School Cultural Creative Industries Advanced Courses on Community Culture Basic Courses on Community Culture Online Culture Construction and Development Culture Policy
Sum of Courses (hr) and Teaching Materials	Total Courses: 159hrs Total Materials: 519 copies

Data Source: Council for Cultural Affairs, Oct. 2005

Advantaged, the Council for Cultural Affairs cooperates with the Ministry of Education for the development of the approach merging information into teaching materials. The execution mode is first of all conceived by academic establishments and then put into production by factories. The teaching

effect will be studied and statistic research will be made on it. The findings will serve as references for after planning. Measures and modes taken by the Council for Cultural Affairs vary with different objects. See Table2.

Table2: Variation of modes with different people:

For Ordinary People	-Establishment of Culture & Art Learning Databank and Development of E-learning Databank in Accordance with the Teaching Staff s Character. -Integration of Culture and Learning in Response to the Call of the Ministry of Education to Merge Information into Teaching. -Teaching in Context and Development of Similar Materials.
For Professionals	-Developing Management Network of Various Subjects -Training Website Chiefs and Encouraging Professional Know-how Sharing -Referring to BBS Mode in the Incipient Time and Developing It into a Knowledge Management Website -Taking Example by *Cyberstage* (www.cyberstage.com.tw) -Accumulating Cultural Teaching Materials of the E-learning School and Putting Them into Knowledge Databank to Establish a Cultural Information Portal
For the Staff of the Council for Cultural Affairs	-Issuing Public Functionaries Learning Passport -Determining Subjects -Building a Learning Unit Plan -Resorting to Blended Learning

-Forming Inside Lecturers

Data Source: Council for Cultural Affairs, Oct. 2005

In response to the future demand, the Council for Cultural Affairs (CCA) also made another program, which is composed of three parts: E-learning school, exterior environment and interior environment.

To carry out the E-learning school plan, it is necessary to associate cultural organisms of different counties and cities of the whole country, to transform cultural and historical data into digital teaching materials so as to enrich the latter. The second part is to plan sharing digital learning platforms which are intended to afford local cultural organisms resources and technology and to help them as well as professionals make full use of the factors like texts, pictures, graphics, audios and animated cartoons when they design. It is as important to help them develop all-around and smart contents. All those actions lay the basis and framework for the promotion of E-learning.

As concerning exterior environment and resources, ministries and councils will join efforts and exchange experience and resources to solve puzzles that digital learning has to confront, such as infrastructure building, normalization of users software and hardware and computer ability.

The integration of interior resources involves a lot of work and cost, so it requires close collaboration between the central and local authorities concerned. The development of the learning contents on websites in Chinese should move toward multimedia. That is the only way to attract more and more people. Evidently, it is costly; however, it can maximize the overall utility.

The problem is that, usually, local authorities do not have sufficient finances and the cultural expense budget is still lower, let alone the information budget. Hence the CCA will assist local cultural centers and cultural establishments to produce, pool and digitize courses fit for e-learning so that cultural and historical data will be transformed into teaching materials and enrich teaching stuff of liberal arts.

5 Introduction to CASE

CASE was opened in March 2002. Its objectives are as follows: (1) Establishment of software & hardware (websites, teaching materials) for E-learning (2) Elaboration of digital cultural teaching materials (3) Supply and transfer of cultural knowledge (4) Increase in cultural population (5) Formation of cultural bodies and

virtual communities. The following tasks need to be accomplished.

5.1 Construction of a Teaching Platform/System

This platform is a Learning Management System (LMS). It has the following functions: (1) Teaching management including contents of courses, teaching data, collection of homework, experience sharing, result management and announcement (2) Course management including contents of courses, management of teaching materials, announcement, questionnaire and management of teachers and students (3) Functions concerning teaching staff like "the same teacher   function, "new course function and "new comer   function, which is an assistance to e-learning activities and which can improve teaching & learning efficiency.
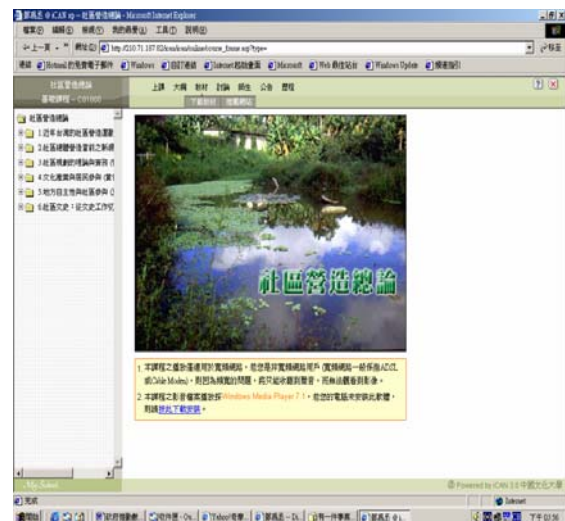

Fig.1, Platform/System of Case

5.2 Programming of Digital Teaching Contents

The "Basic and Advanced Courses on Community Culture   of the first and the second sessions attracted 110000 visitors or so, among whom over 2600 were enrolled. This marked the first step forward in the course of digital learning promotion. Sustainable development in other cultural areas is also expected.   And the objective, so to speak, to enhance the general cultural and artistic quality of the nation will be at last attained.

The courses on "Cultural Creative Industry   of the third session were very popular. The promotion

of cultural creative industries is an important part of "Challenge 2008 —Council for Economic Planning and Development Plan of the Executive Yuan. Its goal is to propose an integrated system which may cater to different cultural or artistic industries in fields like staff training, research & development, information integration, financial aid, space supply, industry and university cooperation interface, marketing & promotion and tax exemption. Through E-learning, talents of the whole nation in creative industries can gather themselves together and push the cultural creative industry commenced and supported by the local and central authorities. The courses attracted 165000 visitors and the number of the enrollees amounted to over 2600.

The fourth session covered such units as " What Is the Culture of Taiwan , "Features of the Culture of Taiwan , "Taiwan s Repository of Cultural Heritage "Beauty of Taiwan s Traditional Arts , "Ecologic Beauty of Taiwan and "Community Culture in Taiwan . Through the courses, the students know better the culture of Taiwan and its future orientation. The knowledge about our cultural heritage has also aroused their thought. The success of this session proved that of the others. 600000 visitors browsed our site with over 20000 enrolled.

Fig.2, Curriculum schedule of CASE

5.3 A/V Multimedia and Electronic Journal

This allows CASE to become a teaching website with three dimensional function. In addition to video streaming (VOD) courses, there are CASE TV units. Every week is produced and published campus headlines, key points of the courses and local news. Numerous photos of the community are also taken and sent to the students. Those are part of the efforts exerted to make CASE not only a learning website

but also a lieu of communication and exchange of the community.

Fig.3, Webpage of the CASE

5.4 Blended Teaching

CASE has its special teaching mode—blended teaching or in other words blended learning. That means online teaching and actual face-to-face activities like opening ceremony; completion ceremony and community meetings are blended. Face to face teaching (community craft for example) and online communication (bbs, instant message, voting, etc.) are also blended together. The flexible teaching mode permits a multiple way of displaying and sharing knowledge, information and experience. Both explicit and tacit knowledge can be efficaciously managed by teachers and optimally absorbed by students.

CASE has organized four sessions of courses. Its blended teaching, on the one hand, resorts to the network and on the other hand is dependent on actual study, actual lectures, actual studios and actual visits. The actual and the virtual well blended: students can get a better feel for the context. The mixture of culture and technology makes art and culture more contagious.

5.5 Criterion for Course Completion

All the students of CASE cannot get their certificates of completion. Here are the criteria for completion: (1) For each subject, no less than eighteen visits must be affected. (2) For each subject no less than two comments or two answers should be published on bbs. (3) Homework must be done and turned in once a subject at least. (4) Questionnaires must be turned in. (5) A report on his learning experience with CASE must be turned in.

6 Benefit Drawn from the Promotion of the Program

The work on digital promotion started by the CCA in 2003 is really fruitful. CASE is a more prominent case. The current number of students amounts to 37000 and that of discussers on the bbs 16000 while 600000 people have visited the website of the school. An online learning community has already been constructed. Here are more detailed results:

6.1 Beneficial ness

The curriculum schedule of CASE covers six subjects, namely Culture of Taiwan, Taiwan Craft Culture School, Cultural Creative Industries, Advanced (Courses on) "Community Culture", Basic (Courses on) "Community Culture", Online Culture Construction and Development, a total of 84 courses and 133 hours. Digital learning materials are also developed to reflect local cultural features: shadow play of Kaohsiung, Nan-Ying culture of Tainan, creativity of the Children of Taichung, Hakka culture of Miaoli, wood cutting of Sanyi, Min architecture and Wind Lion God of Kinmen, etc. Besides, near 100 materials are disposable and can be downloaded. CASE is now an art & culture digital learning site well known all over the country. On this virtual platform are gathered amateurs and talents in art & culture, in community building and in education. They kindle the whole nation with passion for general community building. Sustainable enrichment of CASE's learning contents is on the program and it is wise to open up the prospect of becoming the first portal of the cultural realm.

6.2 Originality

Nowadays, commercial learning websites all concentrate their efforts upon languages (Japanese, English), commerce (MBA, EMBA) and computer training (computer certificates or professional courses) while governmental learning websites are addressed to the public employees so that their courses are only dedicated to administrative training.

The originality of CASE is that it is the only learning website of the whole country that contributes to the general community building. Hence it is for people who love their homeland. It is their very character (just, fervent) that vivifies CASE: establishment of student associations in each community, formation of reading associations and other collaborative activities (Wu Chiou Photo Exhibition).

CASE also does some innovations: after opening its CASE TV, it surpassed another website and has become a three dimensional multimedia website. In addition to campus headlines, key points of the courses and local news, CASE TV published many pictures describing communities and transmitted live seminars on culture and creation industry. All those make CASE a special website.

6.3 Practicability

The cultural knowledge transmitted by CASE covers Culture of Taiwan, Taiwan Craft Culture School, Cultural Creative Industry and Community Building. Policy promotion and online culture building program are also important activities of the CCA. In addition to knowledge transmission, CASE is brewing a vogue of online culture learning in Taiwan. With cyber-technology, individual points will compose a net covering the whole country. The authorities' policies are expected to be carried out and e-culture is expected to take root in our society.

6.4 Comments of Students

CASE has opened four sessions and has conciliated approval and praises of its students for the teachers' quality, for the interesting courses and teaching materials, for the practical platform operations, for the beautiful exterior display, for the excellent system, the rich contents and for the electronic journal.

6.5 Responsible Online Teachers

CASE invites experienced experts to teach on our site. They are in charge of devising topics of the bbs, of orienting and correcting communities' reflection, of uploading instant references, of directing students' learning, of answering students' questions posteriorly and of estimating students' learning effect. They stay online four hours a day. The success of Wu Chiou Photo Exhibition was due to the help and collaboration of online teachers.

6.6 Adhesive Management

CASE's goal is to construct an active and united online community. In addition to the newest information and other things that the students deserve, interesting discussions are also launched.

Teachers, the bbs chief and the chairman of the reading association collect topics online. Then these topics are discussed and shared under the direction of teachers or in senior communities. Through this kind of discussions, students' sense of belongingness and cohesion can be strengthened. Activities organized by the Studies Program Office like solicitation of articles, voting and online gift are all for the benefit of the students too.

7 Conclusion

CASE's main activity is to open smart and diverse courses but it also considers it as its vocation to gather and connect talents and amateurs in art, community building and education through network's omnipresent influence. The influence is spread to the remotest corners and to ordinary people's life. The Photo Exhibition mentioned above reflects the attention paid to the remote isle's development. CASE also managed to change the life of Ano, a child who had discontinued his study. There are also many other touching examples coming from this virtual platform vivified by culture knowledge and art life.

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