



Innovative Technologies to Improve Teaching and Learning



October 2006

ALTEC Expands Its Professional Development Services

More than 15 years ago, a small group of educators at the University of Kansas began an exciting journey.

They recognized early on that new and innovative technologies would have a significant and positive impact on student learning. They then made a commitment to develop new technologies that would enhance the learning experience of and be available to all learners via the Internet and distance learning.

The first step was to partner with other like-minded organizations and apply for federal programs that would help them achieve their goals. Organizations like Apple, Classroom Connect, and Genera-

tion YES provided help and inspiration for these goals. Then came the Regional Technology in Education Consortia projects. ALTEC partnered with educational organizations in Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Texas for a federal grant and became the lead for the South Central R*TEC, a program whose main goal was to develop innovative ways to help educators integrate technology into education, improving student learning and performance.

South Central R*TEC recruited a talented team of programmers, designers, educators, and students who set out to create resources to empower learners of all ages. Those resources developed by the staff and students at South Central

R*TEC were just the beginning of what has now become an extensive suite of online tools and resources that are accessed by more than 20 million users each month.

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ALTEC Provides Services to Support Your Existing Projects

If you have an existing or proposed project, ALTEC can develop and host your web site, support your online community with discussion boards, set up your video conference, or custom-design a software application to meet your needs. Propose stronger projects and programs using ALTEC's over 15 years of expertise in educational technology, special needs, professional development, and evaluation. Please call us at 785 864 0699 to set up a free consultation. We're happy to assist you with all your technology needs.



After five years of focusing on the south central region of the U.S., SCR*TEC became High Plains R*TEC and expanded its reach to Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming, serving 2.7 million students and 173,300 teachers.

The five years spent as the High Plains R*TEC allowed ALTEC to continue to grow and what had been a small staff of educators and students grew to a team of more than 50 innovative people working toward the same goal: helping teachers enhance their curriculum and learn to integrate technology into the classroom in effective ways.

Now that the R*TEC projects are complete, ALTEC continues to grow and evolve to stay on the cutting edge of technology in education. Online resources such as TrackStar, RubiStar, ProfilerPRO, and QuizStar are used by educators worldwide and yet represent just a fraction of the valuable online resources available to educators all over the globe.

For more than a decade ALTEC staff have traveled to educational conferences as well as public and private schools to provide high quality professional development to educa-

tors. ALTEC's talented team of trainers includes Intel Master Teachers, Apple Distinguished Educators and experienced distance learning professionals who have dedicated their lives to providing engaging and active learning experiences for all educators using onsite and online professional development.

The professional development services at educational conferences and schools throughout the R*TECs' region have been so successful that ALTEC has recently decided to expand its offerings to districts across the United States. Public and private schools and districts across the nation now have access to an entire suite of onsite and online courses designed to meet the needs of your school or district.

If you have a specific need and don't find the exact course you are interested on our regular list of courses, don't worry! ALTEC is happy to provide custom training on a wide variety of software and technologies. To schedule online, onsite, and custom professional development services for your school visit the new ALTEC Professional Development site at <http://pd.altec.org>.

ALTEC Professional Development

Listed below are the online and onsite sessions we currently offer:

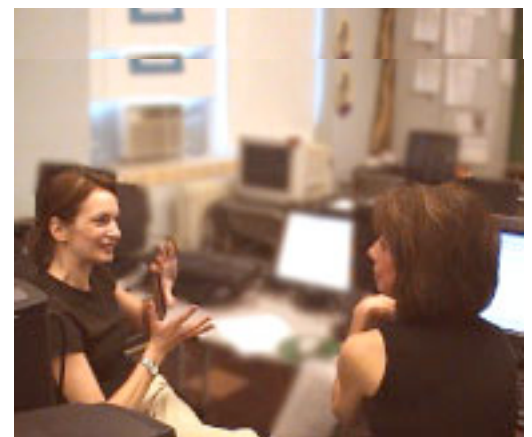
ONSITE SESSIONS

- An LCD Projector in the Classroom
- An Interactive Whiteboard in the Classroom
- The Power of Video-based Learning
- Math Illustrated: Using Geometer's Sketchpad
- Advanced Microsoft Office
- Creative Thinking Skills Using Handhelds
- Strategic Technology Planning
- Technology Integration Academy
- Podcasting: Educational Applications
- Custom Staff Inservice Days

ONLINE SESSIONS

- Online Project Based Learning
- Online Inspiration, Kidspiration, Kidpix
- Online Interactive Whiteboard Intensive
- Online Annenberg Math Resources
- Online Microsoft Access

Please visit the ALTEC Professional Development Web site at <http://pd.altec.org> for complete details. An ALTEC representative will be happy to assist you with pricing, registration, and custom training options.



An Innovative Technology Program



A small private school in Missouri finds creative ways to fund their state-of-the-art technology program.

Lynn Wilson's enthusiasm for technology began years ago when she became interested in desktop publishing. She was in the healthcare profession at the time and she began exploring different software programs on her own. She became intrigued by the versatility of technology. She began taking classes little by little and decided that education was the best place for her. Since she's joined Incarnate Word Academy, the school's technology program has grown by leaps and bounds.

Incarinate Word Academy currently serves 550 students on its campus. Three years ago they began a project to reengineer the technology portion of their institution to provide the best possible learning environment for their students and the best possible working environment for their faculty and staff.

Three of the four buildings on the campus were built in 1932. Creating a modern technology environment in multi-story buildings with no elevators, and access too difficult for portable hardware and carts took creative planning. They decided they needed to create a multimedia lab for each building that would be an environment rich with resources that would stimulate participation and enhance learning.

To do this, they began to collect a wide variety of technologies including: Desktop PCs, LCD projectors, and Tablet PC's for instruction and demonstration. They also purchased a number of software applications such as: Inspiration,



Macromedia MX Suite, Microsoft Office Suite, Geometers Sketchpad, and other industry standard software.

Securing funding for a project of this magnitude is one of the biggest challenges that the school faced. Funding came from a variety of sources including the Smartboard Grant, a Fund-the-Need Auction, and Title II.D funds. The PC's for the labs were purchased with capital funds, and a local company donated three servers

Q What has made this project a success?

"Professional development has been the key to our success. In fact, in order for technology to be transferred effectively to our students, teachers must master the same skills that they expect of their students. You cannot separate the technology, the learning, the teaching, or the professional development. Technology integration is all of those things combined."

that they no longer needed. Professional development funds were donated by the Parent's Club who have been extremely generous with their time and talents.

Once the technology was in place, staff were trained in software, hardware troubleshooting, and classroom integration. The training extended the capabilities of the teachers and provided them a necessary first step for effectively integrating technology into their classrooms.

The faculty and students have embraced the use of technology. One of the favorite tools of the staff is the Tablet PC. "They have found the virtual whiteboard capability of the Tablet PC something they can no longer live without," says Lynn.

Teachers use the pen function on the tablet to present their notes via PowerPoint, Photo Story, or Windows Journal. They then post these notes online so that they are available to students for day or night study. Assignments and activities are posted online. Students can email assignments to the teacher who then uses the pen function of the tablet to grade assignments and send them back to the student who benefits from the immediate feedback.

Students in the science department use computerized probes to collect physical data about objects in motion, sound, and light. The technology provides an accuracy of position and provides more data points than doing the same experiment by hand. Students also complete webquests, design Web sites, and will soon execute online debate's using blogs.

The changes in the school environment have been dramatic. Every day teachers come to Lynn with excitement in their faces talking about how well the students are listening because they are so interested in their lessons. The excitement is evident in student's faces when you hear them say "You can do that? When they ask how and are listening intently to your response, now that is an accomplishment!" says Lynn.

When asked if technology has impacted learning in a positive way, she smiles and replies with confidence, "Only good teaching improves learning, but technology can be one of the strongest tools for improving learning. The ultimate goal is to help students graduate from high school with the foundation skills that will enable them to participate in a technology-rich society and become life-long learners."



FREE Time-saving Resources on the Web

You don't need expensive software to do great things with technology. There are plenty of free user-friendly resources on the Web that can help you integrate technology into your classroom and save you a lot of time! One such Web site is called 4Teachers.org.

4Teachers.org has a suite of free online tools that are designed especially for busy teachers. Thousands of resources are right at your fingertips whether you're looking for online lessons or creating rubrics, quizzes, classroom calendars, or even take-home notes. Many of the tools allow you to create in both English and Spanish! Listed below are just a few resources you'll find at 4Teachers.org



Gone are the days when you spend hours creating rubrics for your classroom projects. RubiStar allows you to create customized rubrics in minutes. Templates are available in Eng-

lish as well as Spanish, and you can go in and edit, save, and print the rubrics you create.



Visit TrackStar to find more than 100,000 ready-made online lessons searchable by grade level and topic. You can edit an existing lesson or create one of your own with this user-friendly tool that has been tested by thousands of teachers around the globe!



With QuizStar you can create online quizzes complete with graphics and media files. This is also a great way to provide students with a way to review for exams from home. They can login to QuizStar from anywhere with an Internet connection.

These are just a few of the tools available for you at 4Teachers.org. Visit the Web site to find more time-saving resources that allow you to create take-home notes in English and Spanish, project-based learning checklists, simple Web pages, to manage student research projects, and much more!

Find More Funding for Technology

Finding enough money for professional development and technology is a challenge that many schools face. But when those dollars don't stretch far enough, creative ways must be found to secure funding for your projects. Here are a few funding sources that may help you get started:

TITLE II PART A - TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL QUALITY

These funds are available to provide professional development to teachers and staff. To access these funds, contact the public school district in which your school resides and let them know you would like to use your Title II, Part A funds for professional development.

SMARTER KIDS GRANT

<http://www.smarterkids.org>
Visit this Web site to apply for grants for SMART products, NEC presentation products, professional development, and eInstruction products. Grants provide discounts from 12-57 percent off the retail price of the product you are interested in purchasing.

MICROSOFT FRESH START FOR DONATED COMPUTERS

<http://www.microsoft.com/education/FreshStart/FreshStart.asp>

This program allows public and private K-12 schools to ensure that donated computers are properly licensed to run a Windows operating system. Just complete a short application and if approved you receive license documentation and Windows Installation CDs at no cost. Visit the Web site for complete details.

EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY CONSERVATION EXCHANGE PROGRAM

<http://www.fundingfactory.com>
Collect empty printer cartridges and used cell phones from your community and redeem them for new equipment or funds for your school.

TYSON A+ PROGRAM

<http://www.tyson.com/projectaplus>
Clip and save project A+ labels from participating Tyson products. Your school can redeem them for cash, each label is worth \$.24. Visit the Web site for complete details.

BOX TOPS FOR EDUCATION

<http://www.boxtops4education.com/>
Clip boxtops from hundreds of your favorite General Mills products such as Cheerios, Totinos, and Ziplock. Your school can redeem them for cash. Each label is worth \$.10. Visit the Web site for a complete list of eligible products.

COMPUTERS FOR LEARNING

<http://www.computers.fed.gov/public/aboutProgram.asp>

This program donates surplus federal computer equipment to schools and nonprofit education organizations. Any public, private, parochial, or home school serving Pre-K through 12 students is eligible.

CONTACT US

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