

Conference Review

IADIS International Conference on:

e-Learning 2010

www.elearning-conf.org

About IADIS

IADIS – International Association for Development of the Information Society is a non-profit association.

IADIS has the following goals:

- To develop the cooperation and solidarity between its associates, by developing initiatives in the Information Society domain;
- To promote the study, research and dissemination of news related to the Information Society;
- To make available to its associates information and bibliography about the Information Society;
- To organize working groups, to research, study, develop and analyze issues related to the Information Society;
- To publish magazines, journals or other documents of significant interest;
- To organize meetings, seminars and conferences;
- To promote people training with the goal of integrating them in the Information Society;
- To promote the exchange and cooperation with national and foreign associations and entities, which seek the same goals.

e-Learning 2010

Held over four and a half days, **e-Learning 2010** brings together a wide range of e-learning researchers and professionals from Universities and Academic institutions world-wide, along with a sprinkling of other individuals from private sector training businesses and government agencies.

Conference Committee

The Program Co-Chairs are Dr Maggie McPherson, University of Leeds and Dr Miguel Nunes, University of Sheffield who are responsible for the academic quality of the conference and the General Conference Co-Chairs comprise Piet Kommers (University of Twente, The Netherlands), Pedro Isafas (Universidade Aberta/Portuguese Open University, Portugal) and Dirk Ifenthaler (Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, Germany).

Breadth and depth

The IADIS EL Conference follows a number of themes:

- Participation and Motivation in e-learning
- Virtual Learning Environments
- Evaluation of Learning styles and cognitive styles
- Innovation in e-assessment
- e-learning pedagogical strategies
- Research and evaluation of e-learning technologies
- Primary and secondary education
- e-learning curriculum development issues
- Creating e-learning courses
- Case studies
- e-skills and information literacy for learning
- e-delivery in differing contexts
- Pedagogical models
- Higher and further education
- Blended learning
- Technological issues
- CPD for educational and training staff
- Designing e-learning settings
- Learning management systems
- Designing e-learning tasks

Listen and Learn

Each of the 24 sessions is composed of typically 4-6 papers indicating the breadth of topics covered and the amazing depth of research and innovation that is going on into e-learning across the world.

Key notes and high points

In addition there were a number of Key note presentations, David Patterson (the author of this review) spoke of “e-learning, Regeneration, Research and Innovation – the Story of Learning Light”.

Professor Colla Jean MacDonald of The University of Ottawa spoke of “Denial to Hope: E-learning Experiences from the Trenches” and delivered a fascinating presentation peppered with excellent models and methodologies used to develop e-learning and this was illustrated with some innovative and compelling e-learning she and her team developed for the Canadian healthcare system.

Dr Bob Barrett Jr. of the American Public University spoke on “Preparing online teachers: Transforming Traditional Classroom Strategies and Techniques into the Virtual Learning Environment”.

My Five favourites

1. Kazuhara Toyokawa from Nihon University, Japan, addressed the difficulties in teaching English in Japan, and I was delighted to learn that the Japanese admit to be being equally as bad as the English when it comes to learning a foreign language! Crucially it illustrated how the blend is crucial, and how a wide range of flexibility of learning options, along with close student monitoring produces results.
2. Len Webster from Monash University, Australia delivered a great interactive overview of a “NOT an LMS” but a “PLE – Personalised Learning Environment” a much lighter and elegant application which was utilised to support and deliver CPD for the academic teaching staff – Creating a Personalised e-learning higher education teaching qualification. The interface was light and elegant and I am sure would have great application for talent management in smaller knowledge led corporates.
3. Myunghee Kang from Korea’s Ewha Womans University and colleagues delivered an insightful piece of empirical research that should be noted by educationalists worldwide, given that it comes from one of the worlds most advanced ICT usage societies - Korea. ICT usage and its impact upon learning with New Millennium Learners must be considered in a three dimensional context – Cognitive, Affective and Socio cultural, and when so done produced some interesting results, especially the impact ICT for entertainment usage has on ICT for learning performance.
4. The Educational usage of Blackberry phones in King Saud University was detailed by Fahad N. Al-Fahad. The study detailed a pilot study in using Blackberry phones by 63 female students studying medicine. The study identifies six key factors that influence the behavioural intentions of the users in adopting mobile learning technologies. Interesting stuff – BBM has a lot to do with it!
5. A Finnish project MoVie from The University of Tampere presented by Pauliina Tuomi brought together video production on mobile devices for delivery in a social networking environment to teach biology and geography with interesting results, including lots of laughter and bad language. The conclusions make interesting reading.

Why go?

For many of the conference delegates the opportunity to present their research finding and meet other professionals is a powerful attraction to attend. To be invited to deliver a key note presentation is a terrifying honour (in the authors view), but the real value in attending is to listen to the research and learn, to see where innovation is emerging from University led research and understand how this will impact upon the e-learning market. To see what trends are emerging in e-learning worldwide truly offers a great way to take in and consider trends and new ideas.

How to get value

Delegates are given copies of the papers delivered and leave with a mass of information, as well as enjoying the opportunity to meet and discuss with researchers from all over the world

This is a conference that is not in anyway commercial and is characterised by one of openness and sharing of knowledge.

It is not possible to listen to every paper, but careful selection of topic themes (the organisers do a pretty good job with topic headings and paper groupings) allows someone to get a good insight into a number of differing topics.

There were a number of interesting developments in e-assessment that I believe will percolate into the corporate market. The usage of video in learning was also of note, and appears to be a development that is taking place worldwide and right across the e-learning market space – corporate and education markets moving in parallel. The You Tube affect is global as well! Learning and gaming was widely noted and a number of exciting innovations are again being developed worldwide to address a wide range of learner needs.

More about IADIS

- JOURNAL-

The IADIS Journal on <http://www.iadisportal.org/digital-library> (on-line version) is included in your annual membership. It is a highly-refereed, scholarly journal that presents papers dealing with theoretical and practical applications of WWW/Internet.

- CONFERENCES -

IADIS hosts and sponsors several major conferences: the IADIS International Conference on WWW/Internet, the IADIS International Conference on e-Society, the IADIS International Conference on Applied Computing, the IADIS International Conference on Web Based Communities, the IADIS International Conference on Cognition and Exploratory Learning in Digital Age, and the IADIS International Conference on e-Commerce. Here you can present a paper or just attend the technical sessions. These sessions are designed to provide a cross fertilization environment, where you may benefit from the professional exchange of information, and also from the associated social events. Besides the academic environment, you'll also benefit from corporate showcases and company exhibitions. Invited Speakers, well known in their fields also contribute to the IADIS conference uniqueness.

- PUBLICATIONS -

IADIS Press publishes Conference Proceedings, both in book (with ISBN) and CD ROM.