

# New Learning Tools

by Sacha Cohen

## MULTIMEDIA LCD PROJECTOR

Sharp's XG-E1100U LCD projection system can help trainers visually enhance course work. It can be connected to a PC or Macintosh computer so that trainers can reach a larger audience.

For example, trainers can use the projector to show a large group of trainees how to use the Web. The projector can also be used for video presentations.

Images can be projected from the system onto a screen with a maximum diagonal measurement of 10 feet.

For more information, contact Sharp Electronics, Mahwah, New Jersey, 201/529-8731, Web page <http://www.sharp-usa.com>.

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## WE'RE ON THE SAME TEAM VIDEO



CRM Films has revised its video, *We're on the Same Team, Remember?* The video, which shows how a lack of teamwork between departments can drive customers away, has an updated look and feel.

The video explains that, to customers, image is often as important as the product or service itself. The video teaches viewers these keys to organizational success:

- ▶ teamwork and cooperation throughout an organization
- ▶ individual responsibility
- ▶ individual and organizational dedication to customer satisfaction.

*We're on the Same Team, Remember?* also shows how communication, listening skills, responsiveness, and responsibility can affect a company's bottom line.

The 20-minute training video costs \$895, but it is available for a free 15-day preview. It also comes with a video discussion segments tape, an extended leader's guide, and one participant's workbook. For more information, contact CRM Films, Carlsbad, California, 800/421-0833.

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## EMPLOYEE APPRAISAL SOFTWARE



CompStar Appraiser Plus software from Questar InfoComm stores employee information and records comments by managers and employees.

The software is compatible with large HR systems, so employee data can be downloaded from existing systems. The program's graphic capabilities let users create charts, reports, and graphs for management presentations.

Other system tools include

- ▶ customization functions
- ▶ a password-protected database
- ▶ flexible rating schemes
- ▶ full-featured spelling and language checkers.

For more information, contact Questar, Salt Lake City, Utah, 801/324-5695; Web site <http://www.questar.com/compstar>.

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## POWERFUL AUTHORIZING TOOL

Authorware Interactive Studio 4.0 from Macromedia is a highly intuitive visual authoring environment, ideal for users who want to create interactive multimedia and learning applications without programming.

In this version, Macromedia has added Backstage Internet Studio 2: Enterprise Edition Web, a development tool to serve users delivering multimedia and training applications across intranets.

The package also includes

- ▶ Authorware 4.0 for integrating audio, graphics, Director movies, and text into interactive materials
- ▶ Director 6 for creating animation with synchronized sounds and graphics that can be controlled by Authorware

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- ▶ Macromedia xRes 3 for creating and editing high-quality images that can be imported into Authorware for use as illustrations, backgrounds, buttons, or logos
- ▶ SoundEdit 2.2 for Mac or Sound Forge XP for Windows for recording and editing professional-quality audio to run in Authorware applications
- ▶ Shockwave software for delivering a finished Authorware application via an intranet so viewers can instantly play back streaming graphics, sound, and animation.

Authorware developers can choose between incorporating media elements directly into Authorware files or storing them externally and linking the application to them.

Authorware 4 Interactive Studio for Windows 94, Windows NT, Macintosh 68K, and Power PC costs \$2,499.

For more information, contact Macromedia, Austin, Texas, 800/326-2128; Web site <http://www.macromedia.com>.

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### SLIDE-TO-VIDEO TRANSFER SYSTEM

Navitar offers VideoMate 7500xy, a 3-CCD, 750-resolution, slide-to-video transfer system with X-Y image positioning.

With this product, users can convert 35mm photo, text, and graphic slides to high-definition video images.

It features a motorized zoom lens and 750TV lines of resolution. The unit's RS-232 capability makes it ideal for use with advanced boardroom and auditorium control systems.

Random access lets users pre-program slide sequences or randomly jump between slides. VideoMate can be operated by punching slide

numbers into a control system.

For more information, contact Navitar, Rochester, New York, 716/359-4000; Web <http://navitar.com>.

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### MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT CD-ROM

*Realizing Change* is the latest in Harvard Business School Publishing's *Interactive Manager* series.

It is an in-depth, interactive management development program designed to help managers at all levels understand the difference between leadership and management, the impact of each on corporate change initiatives, and the behaviors that will help them embrace and lead transformation programs in their companies.

*Realizing Change* is divided into three main modules: Personal Itinerary, Leadership and Management, and The Stages of Change. Through



role play in research-based management scenarios, managers apply Harvard

professor John P. Kotter's eight-step action plan for successful transformation, and identify the techniques and behaviors that can either ease or undermine its implementation.

The CD-ROM also includes a resource section with relevant articles from the *Harvard Business Review*, a question-and-answer session with Kotter, and tools and checklists, which can be searched and printed.

*Realizing Change* runs on IBM-compatible PCs with 12MB of RAM recommended. Drivers must be compatible with QuickTime. Windows 2.0 and a SoundBlaster or compatible card and Microsoft Windows 3.1 are required.

The cost of the CD-ROM is based on the number of users. Prices begin at approximately \$450 per seat for 25 to 49 users.

For more information, contact Harvard Business School Publishing, Boston, 617/495-6700.

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### LITE TOOL



A new product, designed for road warriors, takes mobile computing to the next level. The Legtop

Podyum, from Rach Incorporated, is a combination working platform and carrying case. Its Velcro strapping system and contoured foam padding lets a computer user securely fasten a laptop to his or her leg.

Although it looks somewhat clunky, the Legtop Podyum is a good solution for those times when you don't have a desk or table available. It resembles a carrying case with soft, ergonomically shaped cushioning on the bottom that provides added set-down protection for a computer.

When not in use, the product can be transported by its handle or shoulder strap.

The Legtop Podyum costs \$79.95. It fits all notebook and laptop computers except for some "ruggedized" models. Standard features include a soft neoprene handle, an adjustable shoulder strap, a durable Codura shell, non-slip Toughtek fabric, and a separate rain hood. It comes with a lifetime warranty.

For more information, contact Rach, Ferndale, Washington, 800/942-4902; Web site <http://www.podyum.com>.

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### PORTABLE SVGA PROJECTOR

Proxima offers an SVGA ultra-portable notebook projector. It weighs 11 pounds and combines a compact design with SVGA support.

SVGA resolution (800x600 pixels) is standard, and VGA resolution is also supported. The Lightbook model LB20 displays 200 ANSI lumens, projects 16.7 million true colors, and supports a 4-by-14-foot diagonal image size.

The projector supports PC and

Macintosh computers and accommodates worldwide video standards, including NTSC, PAL, and SECAM. It also comes with an autoswitching power supply for U.S. or European electrical outlets.

Full presentation and projector control are provided through a backlit projector keypad and two infrared remote controls. The company's Cyclops Quick Remote offers complete projector control, presentation control, wireless mouse support, and two user-definable keys to program more than 25 special effects and presentation tools.

The Lightbook LB20 projector costs \$5,999. For more information, contact Proxima, San Diego, California, 619/457-5500; Web site <http://www.prxm.com>.

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## AN ENERGIZING GAME

Paradigm Learning has released Neon Buzz, a hands-on, four-hour simulation designed to help employees learn about high performance and teams.

The game, which was originally developed for IBM, places employees in a poorly managed company and teaches them to tap into their potential to help their organization succeed.

In this simulation, employees learn about the power of a team-based environment, customer-focused process improvement, and the importance of sharing information, knowledge, responsibility, and goals.

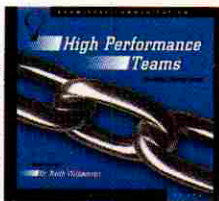
For more information about Neon Buzz, contact Paradigm Learning, Tampa, Florida, 800/749-0228.

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## HIGH PERFORMANCE TEAMS CD-ROM

Knowledge Communications offers *High Performance Teams: Building Strong Links*, an interactive multimedia CD-ROM.

In the program, a user has the task of leading a team towards the successful completion of a project for a troubled



company. Through a simulated, 3-D environment, a user has the option to manage the team effectively or ineffectively based on a dialogue that he or she uses. The CD-ROM helps trainees

- ▶ learn how to set team goals effectively
- ▶ resolve conflict among team members
- ▶ build trust with team members
- ▶ master effective decision-making and problem-solving techniques
- ▶ learn communication and motivation strategies for different personality types.

Minimum system requirements include a 486 processor, 8MB of RAM, Windows 3.1 or Windows 95, a double-speed CD-ROM drive, and a SoundBlaster-compatible sound card.

*High Performance Teams* costs \$995 for multiple-user licenses; single-user license programs are \$59.95.

For more information, contact Knowledge Communications, Wichita, Kansas, 800/851-4134; Web page <http://www.knowledgecom.com>.

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## FACILITATOR GUIDEBOOK

*The Compleat Facilitator: A Guide*, developed by Howick Associates, is a clearly written tool for facilitators. In chapter 1, for example, the guide answers such common questions as

- ▶ Why have a facilitator?
  - ▶ What does it mean to be a facilitator?
  - ▶ How is a facilitator's role similar to a team leader's?
- In chapter 2, Meeting Management, readers learn
- ▶ how to plan for a meeting
  - ▶ how to set an agenda
  - ▶ when not to hold a meeting
  - ▶ what are the stages of a meeting
  - ▶ how to close a meeting.

Chapter 3 covers problem solving. For instance, it explains how to generate ideas and creativity and how to structure decision making.

Chapter 5, Dealing With People, looks at the stages of team development. This chapter covers

- ▶ how to deal with difficult behaviors
- ▶ how to give constructive feedback
- ▶ how to deal with conflict.

The last chapter, Nine Steps, is a

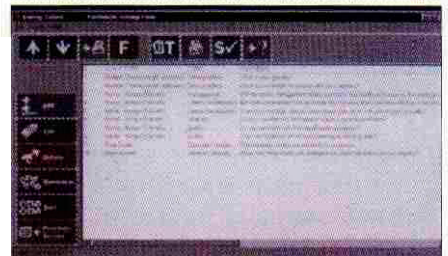
quick outline for facilitating an effective team. It is a basic summary of the previous eight chapters.

The book is illustrated with amusing illustrations and includes checklists, dos and don'ts, how-to tips, and guidelines.

*The Compleat Facilitator* costs \$29.95. For more information, contact Howick Associates, Madison, Wisconsin, 608/233-3377.

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## SURVEY SELECT



Survey Select version 1.5 software from Saja Software is a useful tool for constructing employee and customer satisfaction surveys, market research, and scientific and educational surveys. It was designed mainly for human resource professionals, association administrators, marketing professionals, and anyone who needs to gather and analyze survey data easily and fast.

The software lets users export survey answers to a variety of spreadsheet and database programs, including Microsoft's Excel and Access, and Lotus 1-2-3. Then, users can perform additional analysis in the database or spreadsheet tool of their choice.

"Survey Select 1.5 provides professionals with a highly intuitive tool to easily manage all aspects of creating, administering, and analyzing surveys," says Marcie Levine, president of Saja Software.

The product is Windows-based and can be administered on hard copy, at the desktop, or on a computer diskette.

Using the Survey Designer feature, you can create a survey from scratch or select from an extensive question database. This feature includes eight preconfigured survey templates and more than 500

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archived questions, which are categorized by topic.

Survey Select costs \$595. Minimum system requirements include a 486 PC running Microsoft Windows 3.1 or later version; 6MB of available RAM, with 8MB recommended for optimal performance.

A free, self-running demo can be downloaded from the company's Web site, <http://www.surveystelect.com>. For more information, contact Saja Software, Longmont, Colorado, 800/945-0040.

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### ASTD PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT GUIDE

The *Resource Guide* series, developed by the American Society for Training and Development Information Center, offers *Performance Improvement*, a selection of various resources compiled from ASTD's literature database, Trainlit.

The guide offers selected articles about performance from *Training & Development*, including "Performance for Beginners," "The Performance Consultant at Work," and "The Road to High Performance."

In addition to magazine articles, *Performance Improvement* includes a job aid, a bibliography of reference materials, and a resource guide order form. The job aid, Performance Readiness Checklist, was excerpted from an ASTD *Info-line* publication, *Linking Training to Performance Goals*.

*Performance Improvement* costs \$20 for ASTD members and \$30 for nonmembers. For more information, contact the ASTD Information Center, Alexandria, Virginia, 703/683-8184.

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### ONLINE WEB TRAINING COURSES

DigitalThink offers Web-based training courses that provide worldwide learning from any computer with a Web connection.

Subjects for the courses include Photoshop, PageMaker, Searching the Internet, and Java for programmers.

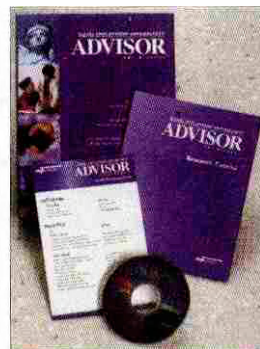
Trainees can register, pay tuition and take a course through the company's Web site.

Benefits of the courses include expert instruction, high participant interactivity, convenience, low cost, and detailed tracking. With database technology, DigitalThink provides detailed progress reports on how an individual's performance compares to that of others enrolled in the course. Tracking reports also can provide information about how many employees are enrolled in a course, how far they have progressed through course materials, and how well they are understanding course material.

For more information, contact DigitalThink, San Francisco, 415/908-1700; Web site <http://www.digitalthink.com>.

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### EEO ADVISOR



RIA Group's *Equal Employment Opportunity Adviser* CD-ROM is a compliance resource that contains detailed analysis and clear explanations that help practitioners tackle difficult situations that can occur in the workplace.

The CD-ROM is helpful in

- ▶ preventing compliance lapses
- ▶ avoiding discrimination lawsuits
- ▶ implementing effective policies and procedures
- ▶ recruiting and managing a diverse workforce
- ▶ meeting federal requirements for government contractors.

*EEO Advisor* avoids legal jargon. Supporting cases are summarized in plain English, placed in context, and used to illustrate specific points.

Sample forms, policies, checklists, and fact sheets are included in this single CD-ROM.

*EEO Advisor* costs \$895. For more information, contact RIA Group, New York, 800/950-1216; Web page <http://www.riatax.com>.

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### PROJECTOR WITH ANNOTATION CAPABILITY

The Aurora S500 from Chisholm is an SVGA projector that provides spontaneous projection annotation for video, computer, and other multimedia applications.

An electronic tablet and pen provide an interactive presentation environment. With that feature, a presenter can highlight, hide, or write notes over a projected image; switch to an electronic chalkboard mode; or use the pen as a mouse.

The projector offers single-chip video line doubler capacity. Dice technology bridges the gap from interlaced to progressive-scan video by performing temporal and vertical filtering, which produces a high-quality, deinterlaced video output image.

The S500 incorporates Lamp Management Intelligence by providing single-button, power-up/power-down operation. It combines a light source and triple polysilicon LCDs in a self-contained projector with a 12-watt, built-in stereo amplifier and speakers. Multiple data, video, and audio inputs can be switched from the single-level menu system using the projector's keypad, a hand-held infrared remote control, or an electronic tablet. The projector can also connect to six sources simultaneously, including PC and Macintosh data formats, VCRs, and DVD's laser-disc players and camcorders.

Other features include zoom, focus, and rear projection. The Aurora S500 costs \$8,995.

For more information, contact Chisholm, Campbell, California, 800/888-4210; Web site <http://www.chisholm.com>.

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*Send press kits and items of interest to New Learning Tools, Training & Development, 1640 King Street, Box 1443, Alexandria, VA 22313-2043. E-mail [tools@astd.org](mailto:tools@astd.org).*