New Learning Tools

by Sacha Cohen

UNLOCKING OUR POTENTIAL

"Unlocking Our Potential," an interactive CD-ROM, uses video, narration, music, and animation to help promote professional and personal growth. Users can explore how people with similar personalities react in different situations. They can also see how co-workers with dramatically different personalities may react to the same situation. Through Provident Ventures' World Wide Web site, participants can consult with the company's staff and discuss personal experiences with other users.

The course's 22 key topics include

▶ discovering your unique personal profile and natural learning style
▶ building confidence
▶ managing change and unlocking your potential
▶ improving memory
▶ setting goals
▶ resolving conflicts.

To use this program, users need a multimedia PC with a 486 or higher processor; Microsoft Windows version 3.1 or later, or Windows 95; 8 MB of memory/RAM; 10 MB of available hard-disk space; dual-speed CD-ROM drive; Super VGA; Microsoft mouse or a compatible pointing device; and Sound Blaster or other Windows-compatible sound card.

For more information, contact Provident Ventures, Inc., Bellevue, Washington, at 800/631-4988. Web site: http://www.provident.com.
Circle 269 on reader service card.

20 MULTIMEDIA CBT COURSES

So, you want to learn about programming, databases, and networks? Learning Tree International's 20 computer-based training courses can help. The courses are divided into the following two educational experiences:

▶ Knowledge-transfer courses, which provide a conceptual framework and a working knowledge of technology. Learners are assigned to a "virtual company," with a list of specific tasks to complete.
▶ Skills-transfer courses, which use simulated environments with overlays of training text, notes, and tips so that students experience the actual look and feel of the tool or product they are learning.

Each program includes a virtual instructor that verbally guides users through the program, a show-me button that displays a pointer to indicate where action needs to be taken, and fact sheets that include on-the-job checklists. The program's notes feature allows learners or trainers to leave notes in the program, and the search feature allows the user to search by topic throughout the course.

The company's LearnTrack tracking system is bundled free with every course. It lets trainers run the courses from a network server, download them to run from a workstation hard drive, or run them directly from a CD-ROM at a workstation.

For more information about these multimedia CBT courses, contact Learning Tree International, Los Angeles, California, at 800/THE-TREE. Web site: http://www.learningtree.com.
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INTERNATIONAL ETIQUETTE

Today's global economy means you may be traveling to foreign lands and experiencing foreign cultures. So, how can you learn the cultural dos and don'ts of countries such as Japan, France, and Taiwan? The *International Etiquette & Culture Primer*, published by Nick Crowder, is filled with answers to the often overlooked questions that are vital to polite social interaction in other countries. Each month the newsletter covers at least three different cultures to help you enhance your multi-cultural relationships.

One edition of the *International Etiquette & Culture Primer* addresses
▶ how to give and receive gifts in Japan
▶ how to act as a guest in a French home
▶ how Taiwanese celebrate the new year.

A year's 12-issue subscription is $26. Contact Nick Crowder, Phoenix, Arizona, at 602/957-3741. E-mail: nbc@primenet.com.
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YOU GOTTA BE FLEXIBLE

According to Catalyst, flexible work arrangements help organizations retain valuable employees. In addition, flextime is the most widespread form of flexibility in the modern workpace. The company's guide, *Making Work Flexible: Policy to Practice,* contains strategies, examples of real-life practices, and tools for creating and maintaining a flexible work environment. The guide says that establishing an environment where flexibility is accepted, successfully used, and consistently communicated requires a company to
▶ build internal support
▶ support managers and users
▶ internalize the practice
▶ sustain the commitment.

The book is designed to help employers and employees attain these goals.

For more information, contact Catalyst, New York, New York, at 212/777-8900. E-mail: info@catalystwomen.org.
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VIDEOCONFERENCING EQUIPMENT CATALOG
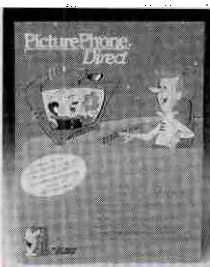
A free catalog of desktop videoconferencing equipment, peripherals, and accessories is available from PicturePhone Direct. The catalog is filled with products ranging from desktop video cameras and document conferencing software to complete turnkey desktop videoconferencing systems. Other items include whiteboards, scan converters, and audiovisual bridges.

The publication also features a glossary of terms that helps you distinguish between a hub and a handshake, and other videoconferencing terminology.

For more information, contact PicturePhone Direct, Rochester, New York, at 800/521-5454. Web site: http://picturephone.com/.
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Here are three new products that teach you how to surf the Net, access training information on a Web site, and put your training courses online.

SURF N' TRAIN

CareerTrack's Web site (http://www.careertrack.com) allows users to find detailed information on seminars in their area, training bites such as clips from selected tapes, and daily training tips from CareerTrack experts.

The site uses Netscape frames, a technology that lets visitors search through extensive catalog listings without getting lost. Other features of the site include a database of seminars and tapes, a newsletter with training advice, and motivational excerpts on RealAudio from tapes like *Chicken Soup Live*, by Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen.

For more information, contact CareerTrack, Boulder, Colorado, at 303/447-2323.
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INTERNET COACH

Members of the White House staff learned to surf with Internet Coach—so can you. Internet Coach for Netscape 2.0, available from Apte, Inc., is a disk-based program that features animation, graphics, and Internet simulations that help users at all levels navigate the Net. It teaches basics such as how to
- log on
- search databases
- join newsgroups
- download files
- browse the World Wide Web.

The software is geared toward "newbies" not computer mavens. A glossary of techno-jargon is included, along with shortcuts to easier navigat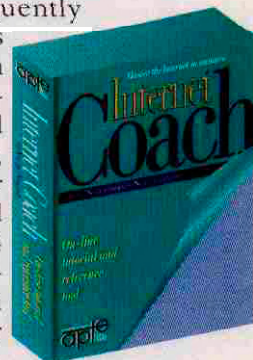ion and frequently asked questions (FAQs). System requirements include a 486-based PC or higher, Windows 3.1 or higher, 8 MB hard drive storage, 4 MB RAM, SuperVGA, and 3.5 inch disk drive. For Macintosh computers, the software requires a 68030 processor or higher and system software version 7.1 or higher.

For more information, contact Apte, Inc., Evanston, Illinois, at 800/494-1112 or e-mail to apte@nwu.edu.
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TRAINING ON THE WEB

Technology is growing faster than you can say gigabyte, and one of the hottest trends of the moment is Internet-based training. So how can you get your training programs online? By using IBTauthor, trainers can create full-featured interactive training courses that can be transmitted on the World Wide Web. Trainers can administer the courses to anyone with a standard web browser over the Internet or on private intra-company

networks (intranets).

The software was created for instructors, not computer wizards. Users can create a single document using word-processing software, Web-publisher editor, and graphics programs. The software automatically creates all required hypertext links, lessons, and question databases from an original file.

The departmental edition of IBTauthor costs $995 for a single-server license and supports 500 trainees. It is now available in a beta version. An edition that supports up to 100,000 trainees also is available. A sample of five IBT courses is available on Stanford's Web site (http://ibt.testprep.com). A free trial edition that supports one course and 10 trainees can be downloaded from the web server.

For more information, contact Stanford Testing Systems, Inc., Spokane, Washington, 800/233-4728. *Circle 276 on reader service card.*

MULTIMEDIA TOOLBOOK

The Multimedia ToolBook CBT Version 4.0 from Asymetrix is a courseware development tool that features
◗ visual basic control support that works through a visual drag-and-drop interface
◗ more than 200 professionally designed templates with a variety of layouts and colors
◗ new Internet features that instantly access Web pages, enabling integration with browsers to build applications that automatically access the World Wide Web.

With this product, the company says that trainers can
◗ create content, glossary, and quiz books with Book Specialist

▶ preview, modify, customize, or add page layout templates to the library
▶ automatically track and log student responses
▶ specify remediation options including pop-up text, media display, Open-Script function execution, and branching to any page in any book.

Systems requirements are Microsoft Windows 3.1 or higher, Windows NT 3.5, or Windows 95; CD-ROM drive; 386 processor minimum, 486 or higher recommended; and 25 MB free hard disk space.

The CBT-Edition costs approximately $1,299. For more information, contact Asymetrix, Bellevue, Washington, at 800/448-6543 or visit their Web site at http://www.asymetrix.com.
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CUSTOMIZED TRAINING COURSEWARE

Companies that use custom or proprietary software and need to train employees on the use of the software may want to investigate CustomDoc Composer. The software creates content used by CustomDOC 3.1, PTS's courseware compiler.

"CustomDOC Composer allows customers who like the look and feel of their existing PTS courseware to write their own training at the 'component level' simply by entering their outline and training content," says Mary Jane Goodman, product manager at PTS Learning Systems.

For more information, contact PTS, King of Prussia, Pennsylvania at 800/387-8878.
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THE SOUNDS OF MUSIC

Bring music to your presentations with the help of a CD-ROM audio library from Network Music. Presentation Audio was created specifically for users who put together computer-based presentations. It's designed and formatted for use with popular presentation authoring applications and allows you to score your work with fully orchestrated and professionally recorded music, sound
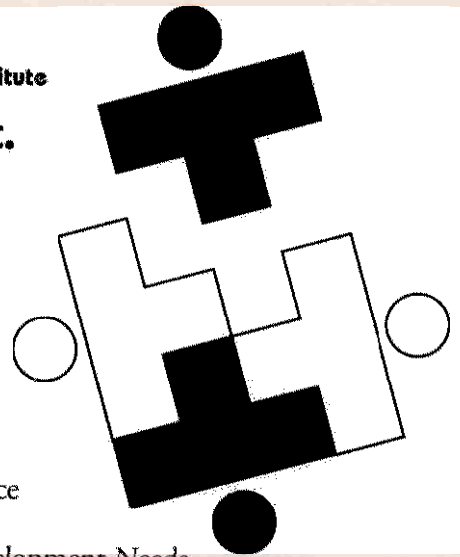
effects, and production elements.

The five volumes are
- Business/Office
- Pop Culture
- High Tech/Electronic
- Environments/Atmospheres
- Comedy/Animation.

Each volume includes 30 original music beds pre-edited in 60-second, 30-second, short tag and loop versions, as well as 100 sound effects and 100 production elements. The product's intuitive utility, Trakfinder, allows the user to select, audition, and edit audio selections for length, as well as add special effects such as fade in or continuous loop.

The suggested price of Presentation Audio is $49.95 per volume, which includes a royalty-free license for non-broadcast, computer-based presentations. For more information, contact Network Music at 800/854-2075.
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THUMBS UP FOR VIDEO SELECTION GUIDE

With *A Critical Guide to Management Training Videos and Selected Multimedia, 1996* you can read about more than 160 programs and make an informed choice. The evaluations focus on key topics such as:
- communications skills
- change management
- diversity
- leadership
- team building.

Selected titles include *Revitalizing Your Company, The Smart Workplace,* and *Tools of Total Quality.* Each selection includes the product's price, run time, and year of release. The sidebars that accompany each review rate the product's ability to sustain a viewer's interest, production quality, value of content, instructional value, documentation, ease of installation, degree of interactivity, and value for money. A directory of producers and distributors, and a product index are also included.

The guide costs $49.95. For further information, contact Harvard Business School Press at 800/545-7685.
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Send items of interest to **New Learning Tools,** *1640 King Street, Box 1443, Alexandria, VA 22313-2043.*

Do you have what it takes to be a business leader?

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