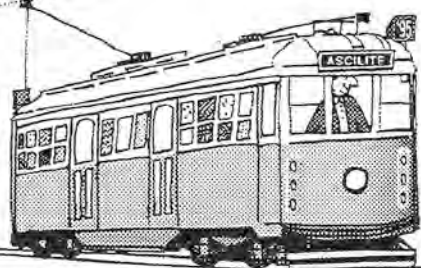


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WORKS IN

PROGRESS

Development of Interactive Multimedia: Some Experiences

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Developing interactive multimedia courseware in the university and keeping within the bounds of a budget has always been a challenge. At the Department of Mathematics and Computing, Central Queensland University, a minimalist team was engaged in early 1995 to implement a CAUT funded project: the development of an interactive multimedia package for diabetes education. The primary audience for the package is first and second year nursing students needing to know how to take care of individuals with diabetes. As with most such projects, the funding level was marginal and the project has competed for attention with other staff responsibilities.

The development team consists of a principal investigator (one of the authors), a content expert (actually several people, one of them a senior academic, due to job shifts), a programmer (a postgraduate student, one of the authors), and a graphic artist. As the team is made up of individuals with different background and expertise, each member contributes makes a unique and significant contribution to the development of the courseware. Like any other team project, problems and conflict of ideas among team members were inevitable, particularly since team members have teaching and other responsibilities as well. The project also has the support of a reference group and a technical advisory group, and other individuals are involved in many aspects of the project.

The initial design of the first case study took a very linear approach. However, after several reviews and evaluations a positive change was made from the linear design to a more flexible design with multiple entrance and exit points. User testing, conducted early in this first design stage, enabled the team to test both instructional and interface designs, and make changes before the project went too far ahead.

The courseware continues to progress from a working prototype to a more refined program. While much of the work occurs at an individual level, the team meets regularly to ensure that the project is progressing smoothly and that pieces will fit together in the final product. The development life cycle from analysis, design, and implementation to testing will continue to iterate until the delivery of the final product.