

THE BELLE PROJECT

Fact Sheet

Purpose of the BELLE Project

- Address structural barriers to online learning
- Digitize and distribute new and existing interactive multimedia education materials and store these in repositories of educational objects
- Make these materials available to educators and students via inexpensive workstations
- Share applications, information, resources and standards to ensure interoperability
- Enable video conferencing with multiple sites across the country
- Provide financial and human resources to support and develop the test bed
- Overcome barriers which impede the development of educational repositories by designing standardized processes for sharing and searching content, installing interoperable workstations, and increasing bandwidth

Technical Components

- 1) Client Learning Environments – Internet based workstations specifically designed for video conferencing, streaming video and sharing applications
- 2) Object Repositories – servers to store and manage content
- 3) Content Repurposing Facilities – workstations for preparing content for the object repositories

What is an Educational Object Repository and How is it Used?

- Provides a single point of access to multiple sources of educational materials
- Repositories are collections of digital educational material, ranging from single documents, images, videos, animations, to more sophisticated objects that combine many digital elements
- Objects are metatagged so they can be stored and searched according to categories that are appropriate and relevant to educators and researchers
- Used to complement traditional teaching tools in the classroom and for online courses
- Used to illustrate research at conferences and presentations

What is a Client Learning Environment and How is it Used?

- Internet-based video conferencing workstation that supports access to educational repositories, application sharing and video conferencing
- Configured using off-the-shelf technology in a standardized set up to ensure interoperability
- Used for high-quality video conferences with several locations at once, to stream high-quality multimedia content, and to collaborate at a distance on shared documents

Why is the Client Learning Environment Unique?

- Mobile workstation eliminates need for specialized rooms and dedicated phone lines
- Transmission is free
- Hardware is less expensive than older setups
- Multiple simultaneous connections, as well as point-to-point connections are possible
- Uses H.323, a widely accepted standard for video conferencing