President's Column

Strategically Speaking, We're Right on Track!

By Pat Miller
AECT President

AECT leaders meeting in Bloomington in June confirmed that the Strategic Plan adopted by the AECT Board in 2007 remains on target for the direction of the organization. Not only is AECT membership increasing, but AECT is fiscally sound, having finished the year in the black, with a healthy surplus to start a reserve fund.

The AECT Strategic Plan, adopted by the AECT Board in 2007, identifies three main goals to be addressed over three years, 2007–2009.

- Advocate innovative, effective, and ethical uses of educational technology.
- Sustain an organization of professionals who study and use technology for training and education.
- Establish an attractive and appealing professional presence that advances knowledge in the field.

AECT activities over the past year have addressed the action plan that specifies implementation of these goals.

Our advocacy for best practices in the classroom and in research is expressed in our journals, *TechTrends* and *ETR&D*, both of which have demonstrated dramatically increased readership over the past year. A series of AECT Webinars in important issues to our field attracted significant national participation as well.

Leadership in our profession is at the heart of the newly launched FutureMinds initiative to assist in transforming pre-K–12 education systems. The AECT presence on SecondLife, including virtual seminars focused on important issues in the profession, also serves the advocacy of AECT as the place to learn and grow professionally.

Both our Executive Director and the AECT Board have worked over the past few years to establish a robust financial plan, including increased recruitment of corporate sponsors, establishment of a reserve fund, and development of a close relationship with the accounting services of our host agency, AIT. New revenue streams such as our revised online Job Center have been identified. And membership increased by more than 150 in the past year, thanks to newly restored attention to member recruitment and reinstatement.

Leadership development meetings in the summer and at convention have been enthusiastically received and productive in identifying new opportunities for AECT divisions and other interest groups. The 2008 summer meeting generated ideas for several new activities and initiatives including a proposal for a new juried Journal of Instructional Design.

Excitement for the 2008 On the Horizon: Rays of Change convention in Orlando is evidence of continued professional need for this annual event. Planning the convention is AECT's largest single leadership development activity, with division officers and other emerging leaders serving on the planning committee led by Mary Herring, AECT President-Elect.

So what's left to do? Fortunately, while we have a great start on our Three-Year Strategic Plan, there remains much work to do.

Division leaders reported in their mid-year reports that they were focused on division member services, both with special events and sessions at convention and in communication services year round. Divisions report little interest in continued use of their listservs for dissemination of division information. Rather, the interest seems focused on new technologies that allow interactivity. The popularity of the AECT activity on SecondLife will only increase, evidence of interest in a new world for 21st century teaching and learning.

With examination of the accomplishments of the past year and the changing professional environment within which they occurred, it's not surprising that the most urgent need for AECT in the near future is final design, promotion, and launch of our new website, *AECTnow*, with appropriate links and services for divisions and other interest groups. The division reports also noted a definite trend toward collaboration among their groups. Again, updated communication resources such as *AECTnow* will serve this need. As initiatives such as AECT in SecondLife and FutureMinds increase, a robust website with rich content will play a crucial role in providing a "front door" to AECT.

Yes, there's plenty to keep us busy as we continue definition of our field and support of our AECT professional community. Of all the "C" words we could identify to describe our core values—caring, community, collaboration, creativity—the most important today (and most likely tomorrow as well) is communication. And here's another—conversation! If we continue to talk with each other, to embrace change, and to take the risks required for moving within what promises to be an amazing future for educational technology, the work will continue to present itself. Would we want it any other way?

AECT Employment Opportunity

Job Desription

Job title: Web Editor
Department: Administration; Contract
Reports to: Executive Director
Supervisory Poition: Yes

JOB SUMMARY: The Web Editor is responsible for design, development and usability testing of the AECTnow Website, management of content, and utilization of the site for communication among the AECT Board and current members, promotion of AECT membership, and other appropriate business of the site. An annual stipend of $5,000 will be paid to the Web Editor for editorial services.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:
- Promotes AECT through design, development and management of a professional Web presence.
- Keeps AECT Web presence up to date, effective, and secure.
- Helps to generate AECT revenue through promotion of AECT membership, convention registration, publications, and event participation on the Web.
- Oversees maintenance of the Web presence to ensure accuracy, foster consistency, and encourage regular contributions to content.
- Administers the systems that constitute the AECT Web presence outside of AECT Headquarters middleware and services.
- Works with the Executive Director and board regularly to identify and integrate appropriate communications tools and technologies to enhance the AECT Web presence.
- Follows best practices in public relations, imaging and branding on behalf of AECT.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:
- Excellent writing and visual communications skills.
- Knowledge of public relations strategies.
- Working knowledge of Apache, PHP, mySQL, and Drupal, or access to such expertise.
- Experience with a variety of content management systems, Web-publishing technologies, and system utilities.
- Proven experience in design and management of organizational Websites for business, industry, non-profit, and/or education organizations.
- Independent working skills.
- Understanding of the various roles, positions, and entities that comprise AECT in order to facilitate effective communication with the various stakeholders.

QUALIFICATIONS:
- Degree/s in instructional design, information science, education technology, or equivalent
- AECT member.

CONTACT: Phillip Harris
pharris@aect.org • 877-677-AECT • 812-335-7675