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Charting the Future Course of Distance Education in the Western Pacific: Part II Distance Education Workshop

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One of the main barriers to social and economic development in the Western Pacific is the inability to obtain needed information and knowledge in a timely and cost effective manner. This problem impacts both the public and private sector. Teachers and students working in remote island schools have very limited opportunities for in-service training, have no access to courseware, degree programs or general continuing education workshops that are available in the district centers for Pacific professional and lifelong learners.

Several different types of audio and video technologies are available which are being used by many rural and geographically isolated schools as alternatives to face-to-face education making it possible to provide live instruction over long distances. Courses can be delivered in either one-way or two-way format depending on the hardware equipment available at both the original site and the receive site location. Currently, distance education courses are being delivered across Micronesia via the Internet or the PEACESAT GOES satellite network.



All participants receive training on the latest digital video applications and distance education techniques for instructors.

Recent advances in telecommunications and multimedia technologies combined with a decrease in the cost of those technologies have caused increased interest in using these new technologies for distance education. Less attention however, has been directed toward training much needed technicians, distance education facilitators and remote school instructors.

The beginnings of a more fully rationalized regional framework was created at a Micronesian forum held on Guam in August 2000 to help direct the different colleges and universities in the region to establish their own distance education policies and implementation strategies. Part II of this distance education project, a distance education operator and facilitator workshop, was held in January 2001 at the University of Guam.



The distance Education Workshop was conducted for a select group of program manager/course instructors and Micronesian PEACESAT technicians.

The objectives of the January workshop were to address the technical training issues and to teach instructors and trainers on how to develop and deliver quality and relevant content to Micronesian learners. The workshop was designed to equip the participants with the knowledge and skills needed to package and deliver distance education courses. The Workshop was conducted for a select group of program manager/course instructors and Micronesian PEACESAT technicians. All participants received training on the latest distance education techniques for instructors and on digital video applications. All participants completed a short edited digital video production for their University of Guam Continuing Education Certificate. PREL and the University of Guam instructors designed and implemented the workshop.

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