

## **Progress Report – New Initiatives with Microsoft**

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### **Abstract**

For the past several years, Lynchburg College has developed Microsoft tutorials for use with academic classes, and faculty, student and staff training. The tutorials are now used internationally by a wide variety of people in both the academic and business worlds. After the 2002 ASCUE Conference, Joanne Salas, Olympic College, Bremerton, Washington, requested a training session/visit to their campus to work with selected faculty on using the Office XP Tutorials. While in Bremerton, visits with Microsoft personnel were arranged during which several new initiatives were discussed. One initiative includes the tutorials as a part of the Microsoft K-12 (Innovative Teachers) and Higher Education websites. The server on which the tutorials reside will be provided by Microsoft. New tutorials will be available when Office 2003 is released. In the meantime, Office tutorials will be created using Beta Office software supplied and supported by Microsoft.

In addition, we are working on a free Microsoft Office Certification for students, faculty and staff at K-12 and Higher Education institutions. Another initiative, "Best Practices," for K-12 and Higher Education, is also under study. This will be a Microsoft forum where faculty/staff will be identified as having created "something" applicable to Microsoft software, which can be of wide application to everyone, and available at no charge. It is contemplated that "winners" will receive a Tablet PC, Microsoft software and cash. This presentation will furnish the latest information on all of these initiatives, as well as some others which are "unfolding" at this time.

Each participant at this session will receive a copy of the current tutorial CD.

### **Microsoft Office Tutorials Website**

In early January 2003, Microsoft contacted Lynchburg College and indicated they would fund a website to host the Microsoft-Lynchburg College Office Tutorials. Both Lynchburg College and Randolph-Macon Woman's College are recipients of Verizon-Council for Independent Colleges

in Virginia (CICV) funding grants. Because of this, Verizon was contacted and became the Internet Service Provider (ISP) for the tutorial website. The website is now active at:

**<http://www.officetutorials.com>**

The website is funded by Verizon and Microsoft. Since ASCUE members have been so significant in the dissemination of the Microsoft-Lynchburg College Office tutorials, permission was received from ASCUE to create a hyperlink to the ASCUE website. A thank you message to ASCUE members, thanking them for their contributions, was also included.

### **Microsoft Professional Development Site**

Approximately one month after the Office Tutorials website was activated, Microsoft announced that Lynchburg College had been awarded a 2003 Microsoft Model Professional Development Site award. The award included:

- A Pocket PC
- Microsoft Class Server License and 200 Student CALs
- A copy of Microsoft Office XP
- A copy of Encarta Reference Library 2003
- Model Professional Development Site Public Relations Template
- Model Professional Development Site Award

The letter also indicated that Lynchburg College would be featured in the Microsoft Education website with a webpage detailing the contributions of the tutorials to education.

### **Equipment**

As the tutorials have evolved, Dell Computing has taken an interest in installing the tutorials on each Dell Education system sold. This summer, Dell will place the Office XP/2002 or 2003 tutorials on each computer sold, by Dell, to a Private College Campus in Virginia. Depending on the response to this initiative, a decision will be made to expand this installation geographically. Since the authors give Office Tutorial presentations at a number of computer meetings, training sessions, and conferences, Microsoft, Dell and Motion Computing funded a Motion M1200 Tablet PC on which to create the Office 2003 tutorials and from which to give presentations. Microsoft desired that, in addition to presentations on the tutorials, that the new Windows XP Tablet PC software be demonstrated as well. The generosity of Microsoft, Dell and Motion Computing is acknowledged in the Office Tutorials website.

### **Microsoft Office 2003 Beta Software**

To make sure that Office 2003 Tutorials will be available, when Office 2003 is released in July 2003, Beta software and support have been furnished to the authors of the tutorials. In the past, once the software had been released, the tutorials were created. Now, the tutorials will be available on the Office Tutorials website when the software is released - and available on CD as well.

A number of people have asked why the Office 97/98 tutorials are still available. The authors have found that, since many charities, churches, volunteer literacy centers and job centers receive “old” computer hardware donations, this equipment is not capable of supporting Office 2000 and beyond. So, the tutorials will remain as long as there is a need for them.

At this conference, the authors will preview the Beta Microsoft Office 2003 programs and tutorials. The tutorials will be available when Office 2003 is released by Microsoft.

### **Microsoft Office Certification**

Currently, the authors are working with Microsoft on a “no cost” certification program for students, teachers and staff at K-12 institutions. A higher education certification is envisioned as well. As this certification program proceeds, ASCUE members will be kept informed of its progress.

### **K-12 and Higher Education Best Practices**

Another initiative envisioned by Microsoft is a program tentatively identified as “best practices.” Schools and institutions that have, in place, some form of Microsoft initiatives which are applicable to an international audience will be awarded a “best practices” incentive which will include hardware, Microsoft software and cash. These institutions will be featured on the Microsoft Education website as they are announced. As this program proceeds, ASCUE members will be kept informed of its progress.

### **Conclusions**

A CD containing the “current edition” of the Microsoft-Verizon-Lynchburg College tutorials will be available to each participant at this presentation. The CD will contain all of the tutorials, in the 97/98/2000 and XP/2002 format.

All of the Microsoft-Verizon-Lynchburg College Office tutorials can be downloaded from:

**<http://www.officetutorials.com>**

Microsoft Office 2003 tutorials will be available at the above web site this summer.