

MINDS, A NEW WAY OF LEARNING*

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NCOLSA and the Indiana State library have worked the last few years on creating a video conference network among Indiana Libraries. Today, there are 18 sites around the state using state of the art equipment, paid for with LSTA (Library Services and Technology Act) funding, to interact and train the staff and public via Distance Learning. These sites include 16 public libraries, INCOLSA and the Indiana State Library.

In addition to the units, each of the sites have been granted a membership to MINDS. MINDS is the Multimedia Instructional Network Delivery System. The MINDS Web site is located at <http://www.minds.tv>. It is dedicated to educating pre-kindergarten thru higher Ed using the latest technology and multimedia.

MINDS is a collaborative site that allows members to engage in learning using the resources that students are accustomed to in today's high tech world.

The IRC (Interactive Learning Cooperative) collects assets for the MINDS web site from the members of MINDS and other available resources. All assets are documented for copyright permission to use on the site. Assets can be videos that are streamed, lesson plans, web sites, photos etc. Many of the assets are items the members have produced. Others are commercially produced but have been granted copyright permission to use on the site. There are currently over 9000 assets in the database at this time.

One of the agreements with the 16 Indiana Public Libraries with LSTA funded video conferencing equipment is that they will produce a program that can be used by MINDS. This can be as simple as setting up a video conference with an author at a distance site. Making a videotape recording and obtain copyright permission is all that is required. That video can be digitized and loaded onto the MINDS server. Once logged, it can be searched and available to the members. Videotaping a children's program that can be used by MINDS can count as a useful asset as well.

All of the assets are available to the members on the web site in the MRC (Multimedia Resource Center). In this area you can search for different items. Once you find something you want to use, you can store it in your online backpack. These items can be prepared for use at a later time, for example a class or presentation.

You can use an edit function to store a 5-minute segment from a 20-minute video. You can also find other segments and store them. When it comes time for the presentation, it will automatically link these segments together to show exactly what you wanted them to see. This can be viewed from any PC with an internet connection.

MINDS has divided their resources into four main areas: Video on Demand, Interactive Learning, Video conferencing, and Web Casting. Video on Demand allow for searching of the various videos stored in the MINDS database for video streaming. Interactive Learning is a set of online courses that teach students and adults concepts and ideas as they view content and answer questions relating to the content. The video conferencing area contains a database of video conference sites and the type of programming available from those sites. Web Casting is the live web streaming of a particular presentation or event. The Indiana State Library presented its first Web Cast from the Indiana Library Federation Conference in May, 2002. Dr. Robert Martin, Director, Institute of Museum and Library Services, gave a 50-minute presentation on the status of LSTA and the future funding options for libraries and museums. This program has been archived and is available at <http://isl.minds.tv/>.

The video conference coordinators at each of the library sites have been trained in the use of MINDS. A new training session is beginning to train the programming staff of each library. It is important that we educate the programmers of the library about MINDS so they can take advantage of its great resources during their next event.

Patrons in the library can also use MINDS. It is one more resource they can use to obtain information on a particular topic. MINDS Multimedia Resource Center is password protected so various library staff can have access to the site and set up a session for a patron at a needed time.

For more information regarding MINDS, go to the web site at <http://www.minds.tv/> or contact Adam Weber (aweber@minds.tv).

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