

Trends that Impact Customer Spending and Your Company's Future

Moderator

Sue Collins

Panelists

Kevin Custer, ARC Capital Development

Jeanne Hayes, The Hayes Connection

John Kenny, e-Luminate Group

Julie Evans, Project Tomorrow

The panel identified three areas of concentration at this discussion: primary needs, economy and technology.

Julie Evans gave SpeakUp data which asked administrators what most disturbed them about the current state of their school systems. The most pressing issues were:

1. Test scores
2. Funding
3. Parents
4. Safety
5. Ed tech
6. Diversity issues

Similarly, the biggest challenges facing educational technology were:

1. Funding for new technology
2. Professional development
3. Funding to update information
4. Evaluating emerging technology
5. Technology support

Kevin Custer discussed the speedy growth rate (30%) of the Pre-K market and the money being spent on this area of education. Custer also touched on increasing staff development, curriculum and the construction of new buildings.

Jeanne Hayes reported that white boards, a teacher-centered technology, were the fastest growing technology. 85% percent of respondents in a recent survey reported utilizing them.

Many producers, John Kenny reported, are beginning to see students as clients and customers. He described the K-12 student as the driver of the technology, which requires and benefits from a partnership between learner and teacher.

Evans elaborated on the influences of bad economy:

- o Availability of money
- o Research of best practices
- o Demonstrated effect
- o Support and resources
- o Ease of use
- o More money going directly to schools

Hayes said that a bad economy encourages more reliance on the best practices; therefore, technology won't suffer catastrophically. Custer believed that fewer dollars produce smarter consumers and that economic downturn forces schools to problem-solve creatively. Kenny supposed that online education would grow during economic downturn. Evans responded

that principals trying to hire teachers realize that it is easier to attract teachers if they have technology in the classroom.

Evans then discussed the kinds of applications and devices that would most benefit the learning process, including:

- Online components with feedback loop
- Handheld devices
- Personalization of devices
- Digital content

These products and services utilize the iTunes Model—students learn when they need to learn.

Hayes thought the most exciting element of burgeoning educational technology industry was the individualization of learning as well as the diverse array of assessment tools it has produced. Support for mobile devices has come from English Language Learners (ELL), at-risk, reading-challenged and special learning students.