

Technology



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Online Course Focuses on Finance

At a time when more people than ever are interested in finance, Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, is offering a free course on the subject. The course is part of its “Open Yale Courses,” the school’s free online education initiative.

Finance used to be a very esoteric field understood by only a small group of people working in the world’s financial centers, but the field is now of interest to a much wider audience, says Robert Shiller, an economist at Yale who teaches the course.

“With each year that goes by, the concepts of finance are being applied more broadly and involving more people. With electronic technology, it’s becoming more economical to offer sophisticated financial services to everyone,” he says. The subprime crisis and subsequent financial collapse has made it more important than ever that everyone gain an understanding of financial fundamentals, he adds.

“Financial Markets” comprises 26 sessions, which include classes taught by guest lecturers such as Yale’s chief investment officer David Swensen,

U.S. Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers, activist investor Carl Icahn, and Blackstone Group co-founder Stephen Schwarzman.

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“Financial Markets” offers a searchable transcript, reading assignments, problem sets, and a closed captioning option, as well as video or audio files of the 75-minute courses. It is available to anyone through the Open Yale Courses Web site at open.yale.edu/courses.

Vote for Ideas to Change the World

In honor of its tenth anniversary, search engine giant Google unveiled a \$10 million project that asked users to submit ideas that could “change the world” by helping “as many people as possible.” Google’s Project 10¹⁰⁰ (pronounced “Project 10 to the 100th”) accepted submissions until October 20.

The categories included areas such as community, energy, environment, health, education, shelter, and employment opportunities. People suggested ideas that ranged from the Hippo Water Roller, an inexpensive 24-gallon container that can be rolled easily to help people carry water long distances, to a project that would

work to connect isolated communities to the Internet.

The company will choose 100 ideas to post on the Project 10¹⁰⁰ Web site and invites Internet users to vote on the ideas they find most promising. The top 20 ideas will become semifinalists, and an advisory board will evaluate those ideas before choosing five winners. The company pledges \$10 million to make those winning projects a reality.

Voting starts January 9 at www.project10tothe100.com.

How Big Is Your Carbon Footprint?

Clean Air-Cool Planet has released its updated Campus Carbon Calculator, a free tool designed to help campus administrators measure their emissions and determine long-term strategies to reduce their universities’ carbon footprints.

Clean Air-Cool Planet partnered with the University of New Hampshire in Durham to create the first version of the calculator. Campus Carbon Calculator Version 6 now offers projections and solutions modules, which help administrators create a cost-saving sustainability plan in formats designed to help them make the plan’s advantages clear to trustees.

In addition, it also provides educational tools that instructors can use to teach students about carbon management. UNH is now using the tool to develop a campuswide climate action plan over the next year.

For more information, visit www.cleanair-coolplanet.org/toolkit.



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NEWSBYTES

■ YALE DEAN GOES TO APPLE

Joel Polodny will leave his post as dean of the Yale School of Management in New Haven, Connecticut, to head Apple University, a new program at Apple that will promote the company's educational initiatives. Although the details of the program have not been released, it is likely that Polodny will be working on projects involving iTunesU as well as internal training.

■ NEW LIBRARY FROM ASPEN

A new Curriculum Library for Employee Ownership (CLEO) has been jointly launched by the Employee Ownership Foundation, Aspen Institute Center for Business Education, and the Foundation for Enterprise Development. CLEO will be housed on CasePlace.org, Aspen's free online resource for case studies, syllabi, and teaching materials on business and sustainability. With the addition of CLEO, CasePlace.org becomes one of the

largest collections of teaching materials about employee ownership available to business school faculty.

■ MBA GUIDE FOR VETS

Military MBA, an education and employment network for military officers and noncommissioned officers, has created a ten-month planning guide for prospective MBA graduate degree candidates with military backgrounds. The guide, available at www.militarymba.net/10monthplan.html, walks candidates through each step they need to take to start an MBA program this August. Military MBA also has added a social networking feature, available at www.militarymba.net/signup.php, that enables registered users to search and build their own networks with others who have similar backgrounds and interests.



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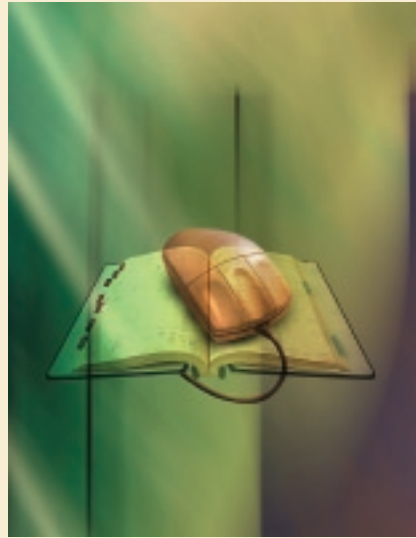
TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Textbooks Go Hybrid

A new line of business textbooks links the comfort of print with the flexibility of digital.

In an age when students communicate more by keystrokes than pen strokes, one would think that they'd demand electronic textbooks. But when one textbook publisher surveyed students, it found that they still aren't ready to give up the look and feel of textbooks on paper.

However, that doesn't mean students don't want publishers to give traditional paper-based



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textbooks a technological boost. In fact, Cengage's survey indicated that students wanted their printed textbooks to be more readable and portable. In addition, they wanted them to combine the best of printed and digital materials.

In response, Cengage developed 4LTR Press, a model that supplements printed textbooks with downloadable and printable flashcards, online quizzes, and audio/MP3 downloads. Students can access these materials through the company's Web site—or even have study questions sent to them on their mobile phones. By moving supporting materials onto the

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Internet, 4LTR Press created textbooks that are more lightweight than traditional textbooks. They adopt graphics, page layouts, and designs that make them look more like a magazine than a traditional textbook.

Titles for business that are available from 4LTR Press include *MKTG*, covering principles of marketing; *BUSN*, an introduction to business; *MGMT*, covering principles of management; and *ORGB*, a textbook that targets organizational behavior.


Once students purchase the textbook for around \$50, they establish a log-in and password on the publisher's Web site. Then, they

can log in to access supplemental materials until the end of the course. Because each textbook requires a special time-limited code to access online materials, students can't pass their textbooks on to other students at semester's end. If a student must repeat the course, professors can make arrangements to extend his or her access to the site.

Lois Bittner Olson, a marketing professor at San Diego State University's College of Business in California, started using *MKTG* for her courses in fall 2007. Olson says that she appreciates the fact that the textbook streamlines the material without leav-

ing out any concepts. Right before exams, many of Olson's students use their cell phones and laptops to do one last review of the materials.

Olson hopes that textbook publishers like 4LTR Press soon will integrate their textbook's online supplemental content with course management systems like Blackboard, so students will not have to go through separate log-in processes with the publishers of each textbook they own. Neil Marquardt, director of 4LTR Press, notes that the company is working on adding that capability.

For information and demos, visit 4ltrpress.cengage.com. 

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