

# Technology

## Carleton Campus Goes Interactive

Prospective students from around the world interested in attending Carleton University now can take advantage of a virtual, interactive, online tour of the university. Based in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, the school's campus is now accessible 24 hours a day. The interactive tour allows Web site visitors to visit 20 campus destinations through 360-degree panoramic images.

The tour also features "day in the life" interactions with five undergraduate students from architecture, journalism, science, the arts, and business. For example, prospective business students can follow an undergraduate business major



named Ali as he attends a class, works on a project with other students, and goes to the gym for a workout. Or, they also can explore Carleton's academic, athletic, social, and residence facilities on their own.

The tour provides an online alternative for those who may not be able to make the visit in person, says Susan Gottheil, the school's associate vice president of enrollment management. "Choosing where to spend the next four years of their lives is a significant decision for students," she says. "Seeing the university campus is key in helping them

decide if they'll feel comfortable as part of the campus community."

The Web-based tour is intended to complement Carleton's current on-campus tour program. Students can visit one of two versions of the tour, one for high-speed connections and one for dial-up connections. It was completed as a joint project among Carleton's undergraduate recruitment office, new media company Digg Design, and three-dimensional imaging company XYZ-RGB, both based in Ottawa. The tour can be viewed online at [www.admissions.carleton.ca/Tours/vtour/](http://www.admissions.carleton.ca/Tours/vtour/).

## MERLOT: The Educator's Google

In 1998, a group of educators from the California State University System realized that each time they wrote a new lesson plan, they were reinventing the wheel. They knew, however, that the Internet and Google-style search engine technology could help them tap into the wide community of experience in their disciplines to improve their own teaching. As a result, they created the Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching,

### TOOLS OF THE TRADE

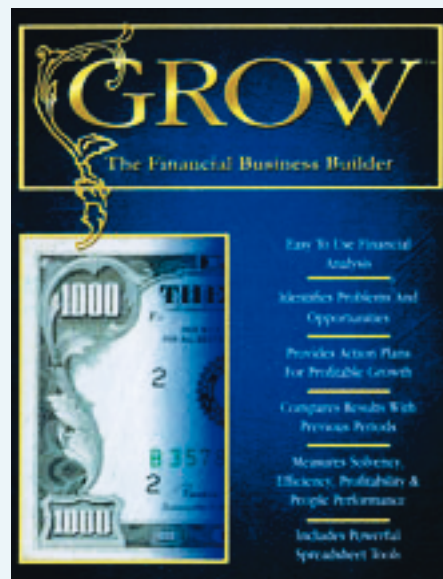
## Finance, Entrepreneurial Software for the B-School Classroom

GROW software, a financial management software package, has been designed especially for students with an entrepreneurial bent. The software was developed five years ago by Clifford Schorer, entrepreneur-in-residence and a professor at Columbia Business School. Since then, the software has been a mainstay in the school's finance and entrepreneurship classes to help teach future managers and entrepreneurs how to improve performance and achieve financial objectives.

Students use the software to set break-even points, project cash flow, and analyze business opportunities in their chosen markets. They also can input data to help them decide on the appropriate prices they should charge for products or consultant-based services.

The software is useful not only for students who want to start their own businesses, but also for those who plan to work in business units within larger organizations, says company representative John Fox. "Companies such as Sony, Lucent, and GlaxoSmithKline have used this software to train their own financial managers," he says.

An instructional video and 200-page manual accompany the software, as well as a tool kit providing ten formulas for helping students measure and predict business performance. For information on GROW, visit [www.grow-software.com](http://www.grow-software.com).





or MERLOT, a resource of teaching materials and ideas for college and university educators.

Visitors to the site can become MERLOT user members at no charge. After registration, they then have access to educational materials in seven major categories, including the arts, education, humanities, mathematics, science and technology, social sciences, and business.

MERLOT's database for business alone includes 1,400 class plans and other materials in ten business areas, including accounting, economics, finance, management, information systems, marketing, international business, e-commerce, business law, and general. Educators worldwide can nominate materials of their own or of a colleague and then provide a link to those materials online.

More than 300 people volunteer their expertise to MERLOT to evaluate and approve assignments and other support materials available on the site. Those materials are then peer reviewed. Once materials receive a positive review and the author has given permission, the peer review is posted to MERLOT.

Cathy Owens Swift is a professor of marketing at Georgia Southern University in Statesboro and an editor with MERLOT's business editorial board. "Generally, the site doesn't have modules with lower ratings that are peer reviewed because we're triaging them ahead of time,"

says Swift. "If we find one with a lower rating on the site, quite often the authors themselves pull it, so it maintains the site's integrity." However, she adds, authors of poorly rated materials often work to improve them.

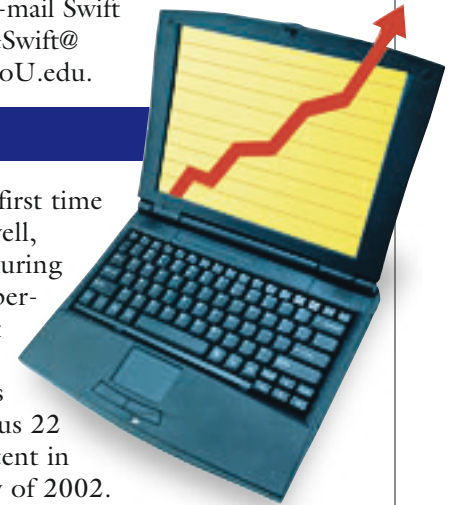
Additionally, she has found that even though some materials have been poorly rated during the peer review, they may be useful to others, perhaps at the high school level, so materials are rarely taken off the site.

Currently, individual schools or university systems can sign up to be campus or system partners to MERLOT, to provide funds, in-kind contributions, and other support to the endeavor. To sustain MERLOT over the long term, says Swift, "We need to have contributions to MERLOT

recognized as a service to the discipline. We are also looking at other organizational partners who can provide support for MERLOT."

Swift emphasizes that the site not only provides an invaluable resource of teaching ideas and materials for educators, but it also gives educators a reason to improve their work. Educators who receive five-star ratings on the site also can create portfolios of their work that can be used in their reviews at their schools. "MERLOT supports the scholarship of teaching and elevates it to the next level," she says.

For more information about MERLOT, visit [www.merlot.org](http://www.merlot.org) or e-mail Swift at [GSwift@GaSoU.edu](mailto:GSwift@GaSoU.edu).



## NEWSBYTES

### ■ YAHOO GOES TO BANGALORE

Yahoo Inc. has established a center for research and development in Bangalore, India, the first of the company's research centers outside the United States. The center, which will employ 150 engineers by the end of 2004, is part of Yahoo's global strategy to create data mining, e-commerce, network, and search engine technologies that are more applicable in the international market.

### ■ LAPTOPS GAINING GROUND

As a reflection of computer users' nomadic tendencies, sales of laptop computers have topped sales of the tried-and-true desktop in the U.S., according to *Computerworld*. Sales of laptops now make up 54 percent of computer retail sales, compared to 25 percent in 2000. In related news, flat-screen monitors are now outselling larger CRT monitors for

the first time as well, capturing 52 percent of sales versus 22 percent in May of 2002.

Decreasing prices are one reason for the figures, say analysts.

### ■ .EU COMING SOON

The European Union wants to add the ".eu" designation to the Internet's existing top-level domains, such as ".com" or ".org," reports EUbusiness.com. According to a statement, the EU hopes that .eu will "become the distinctive pan-European identification of Web sites and e-mail addresses, comparable to .org or .com." 