

## Reviewed by Kate McClendon

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*Kate McClendon is an editorial intern at TSTC Publishing. She is a senior at Baylor University and plans to graduate in May 2006 with a degree in journalism and studio art. McClendon grew up in Waxahachie and enjoys music, drawing, painting, writing, running and photography.*

EDUCAUSE.edu is a helpful Web site aimed at bridging the gap between traditional teaching methods and current educational technology. Staff members and subscribers seek to advance the use of information technology in higher education through the introduction and management of information resources in teaching, research, learning and institutional management.

Many of the EDUCAUSE programs, which include professional development activities, strategic initiatives, publications and online services, serve to bring people and information together to encourage learning, action and development.

EDUCAUSE is an international nonprofit association formed in 1998 after the merger of CAUSE and Educom, two professional associations with more than 60 years of combined service in promoting information technology in the higher education community. The organization was created with the intent to “offer a coherent, coordinated set of programs to serve all dimensions of campus information technology functions; develop comprehensive, timely services to support the professionals within the membership community; and provide leadership on key policy issues affecting higher education.”

The EDUCAUSE audience is made up of 2,020 member organizations, of which 1,747 are institutions, 198 are corporations, 52 are associations and 23 are state agencies and others. About 99 percent of doctor/research-extensive institutions are EDUCAUSE members and 83 percent of doctor/research-intensive institutions are members. Membership for colleges and institutions range from \$445 to \$7,350 per year, depending on the size of the institution.

Navigating the visually appealing site is an effortless task. There is an immediate and easy-to-find menu located in the middle of the home page asking what the user wants to do. User options include: administer your .edu domain, become a member, explore corporate opportunities, answers to frequently asked questions, find or list a job opportunity, manage your profile, search for resources or tour the Web site. Creating a member profile allows access to the core data service, special research and an itinerary builder for conferences.

On either side of the main menu there is a “what’s new” area and an “upcoming events” menu. Along the top of the page is a list of special areas within the site with detailed submenus. These include: Major Initiatives, Professional Development, Community, About EDUCAUSE and Resources.

In the first section, Major Initiatives, the different programs EDUCAUSE offers

to its members are detailed. These programs focus on various topics including research, development, networking and learning all geared toward information technology in higher education.

The EDUCAUSE Center for Applied Research, included in the Major Initiatives section, is aimed at encouraging better decision making through conducting research and analysis about information technology in higher education. This program serves

to bring many of the challenges in educational areas brought on by information technologies into the spotlight so the problems can be solved. The EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative is a group of higher education organizations and institutions focused on encouraging learning through information technology.

Net@EDU is a program that serves to promote the development of networking in higher education through activities for members.

These activities include projects for local, state, regional, national and international campus networks.

The section titled Professional Development mainly provides opportunities for members to get involved in various activities, volunteer opportunities, seminars and even see job opportunities. This section lists when

and where seminars, conferences and conventions are and gives users the ability to register online. There is also the ability to sign up for leadership training or apply for a fellowship or scholarship. A detailed and extensive job listing lets users view and post more than 250 job opportunities, which list the name of the position, where it's located and when it's available. Most of the jobs are at colleges or institutions.

In the Community section, users and members have the opportunity to get involved in many different areas. Included in these opportunities is a hurricane relief community exchange that would allow institutions needing specific information technology describe their needs and let institutions help and offer service to those in need. There is also a peer and member directory, a list of organizations EDUCAUSE is affiliated with, community blogs and discussion groups.

The About EDUCAUSE section gives a short history of the organization and profiles of the more than 60 staff members. EDUCAUSE has two offices, one in Boulder, Co., and one in Washington, D.C. The Boulder office houses the administrative and communications departments, holds conferences and information and member services; the Washington office is the center of the association's government relations and policy initiatives departments. This section also describes the benefits of being a member or corporate partner and how corporations can donate and support to the program.

In the Resources section, users can find information about all the publications EDUCAUSE offers. Every publication is in the resource library and some are available to download for free, but others have to be ordered through the organization. The

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library houses many articles users can browse through, sorted by new content, popular content or topical content, and there are directions describing how members can contribute articles of their own.

EDUCAUSE organization members publish two journals, the *EDUCAUSE Quarterly* and *EDUCAUSE Review*. More of a practitioner's journal, *EDUCAUSE Quarterly* publishes articles discussing managing, evaluating, developing and using information resources in higher education.

This journal is distributed quarterly in print form to about 8,500 individuals on more than 1,300 campuses. The last issue of *EDUCAUSE Quarterly* contained interviews with two leaders and three practitioners about ideas in instructional technology, details about a three-phase program that taught instructors how to integrate technology in lesson plans, and an article encouraging interaction in online courses through discussion boards.

*EDUCAUSE Review* is more of a general-interest magazine with a publication base of 19,500 sent to EDUCAUSE member representatives, corporations and university and college faculty and staff. This bimonthly magazine serves to review current developments and trends in information technology and how it affects higher education. The last issue included topics about changing libraries into virtual destinations, 12 habits of successful information technology professionals and an interview with Homero Lopez about providing flexibility in academic spaces to encourage student success.

Under the Resources menu is also a section for e-books. This contains a series of EDUCAUSE leadership books, the Forum for the Future of Higher Education series and miscellaneous books available to download in PDF format or order as a hard copy.

Overall EDUCAUSE.edu is generally positive in helping faculty and serving to join information technology with higher education. EDUCAUSE does a good job in promoting the benefits of being a member by detailing every addition that could be accessible if the user subscribed. However, the vivid and engaging Web site was easy to navigate and find information and had useful tips for both members and visitors.

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