Computer education for secondary schools.

IBM HONG KONG'S PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

A secondary school in Hong Kong is catching up with computer education fast. March marked the beginning of a partnership program between IBM World Trade Corporation in Hong Kong and the Diocesan Boys' School to create a model classroom for computer studies in a secondary school.

The classroom will use a local area network of 20 IBM PCs linked to an IBM PC/XT which acts as server with networking software developed by the University of Waterloo, Canada. Two of the university's staff came to Hong Kong to help in setting up the network, train the Diocesan teachers and IBM Hong Kong's staff in the use of the network and to help revise the school's curriculum.

Under the two-year partnership program agreement, IBM will loan the hardware and software (including maintenance and training for teachers), while the school will provide teachers and facilities. Joseph F. Mottocci, General Manager of IBM Hong Kong said: "IBM is pleased to offer assistance to promote computer literacy in Hong Kong secondary schools. The objective of the program is to derive maximum benefit for the use of computers in achieving educational goals by increasing student interest and learning opportunities in a broad range of subjects. The computers can be used by the participating teachers as a tool for developing curriculum and educational materials. This partnership program demonstrates IBM's continuing support for a national objective in the field of education and information technology." About forty students participated when the project went "live" in April.

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MODEL CLASSROOM CONCEPT INTRODUCED

A "PC Network for Education" workshop was held at the University of Waterloo, Canada. The workshop was aimed at giving local teachers the opportunity to have access to the latest technology and to learn how to use it effectively.

The workshop was a success and the concept was introduced to other schools in the area. The concept was based on the successful JANET/2 PC Classroom System developed at the University of Waterloo, Canada. The JANET/2 PC Classroom System is a group of personal computers with one personal computer acting as a controller. The other personal computers must communicate with the controller to have access to files or to make printouts. This gives the teacher who operates the controller the advantage of monitoring student's performance.

Two instructors from the University of Waterloo, Shirley Penman and David Boswell, were invited by IBM Malaysia to conduct the workshop. Selected teachers, university lecturers and officials from the Ministry of Education attended the session. The workshop, the first of its kind in Malaysia, received wide press and TV coverage.

PUSH FOR QUALITY

System 36 sales and management quality team receive A/PG recognition.

One of John Opel's most ardent campaigns during his tenure as CEO was for better quality. To make the effort right the first time was infinitely less troublesome and less costly than fixing it later. His message to improve the quality and reliability of IBM products, service and administration was spread to all company locations.

The call for better quality was not lost on IBM Malaysia. The management saw the need for and the importance of the program and acted to implement it. A management team, OQIO, was formed to discuss areas of weaknesses and focus attention on improving work procedures. A quality manager was appointed to ensure that the pursuit for quality extended to every area, and quality facilitators were trained to provide employees with guidance to set up quality circles. Special emphasis was placed on data integrity, billing accuracy and timeliness as well as quality administration support for overall productivity.

This push for quality has won IBM Malaysia an A/PG Quality Award. It was given in recognition of the efforts put into projects carried out last year which improved work procedures significantly. The Quality Council, comprising ten managers from all functions, played a key role in helping to establish quality circles. So far, three quality circles have been formed. These circles have made substantial gains in productivity and have achieved significant cost savings as a result of their activities.

To quote John Opel, "We've learned that error-free performance is not some impossible dream. It's attainable. It's achievable. It's something we can and should expect." A second A/PG award went to IBM Malaysia's New Business Unit for their outstanding performance last year. The unit achieved the highest numbers for the IBM System/36 among SEAR countries. The award was presented to the New Business Unit Manager, See Chuang Thuan, at the Country Announcement Managers meeting in Tokyo.

The New Business Unit was established in 1983 as part of the General Marketing Group. The unit handles the sales of System/36 and System/38 to non-IBM users and to businesses that are not yet computerized.