

LIGHTSPAN'S ROLE AS A TECHNOLOGY PARTNER

Powerful technological and economic trends are currently reshaping the U.S. telecommunications, computing, and entertainment industries, with huge implications for the ways in which information and media will be accessed in the late 1990s and beyond. One of Lightspan's core missions is to help schools position themselves to take best advantage of these trends to achieve real educational progress.

Thus, while The Lightspan Partnership is first and foremost a curriculum company, we also have invested in creating substantial in-house expertise in media and telecommunications technology and its future direction. This capability is complemented by alliances with leading telecommunications and computing companies, many of which are literally reshaping their respective industries—and with them the landscape all schools and businesses occupy.

When schools implement the Lightspan service, we are there to help with technology planning and implementation. Frequently we advise how Lightspan programming and other next-generation instructional tools can best be integrated into school technology plans. At the request of our school partners, we can provide systems integration services for network deployments of our programming.

IMPLEMENTING THE LIGHTSPAN SCHOOL-HOME CONNECTION SERVICE

Lightspan's interactive curriculum programming is the first of a new generation of instructional materials. Thanks to the new standard of MPEG digital video, we can integrate live-action film, traditional cel animation, and cutting-edge computer-generated animation in a format that combines the quality of broadcast television with the engaging interactivity of CD-ROMs and video games. Impossible to deliver just a short time ago, this breakthrough programming is available now on several very affordable hardware configurations that have already emerged as industry standards.

Lightspan programming also is unique because from the beginning it was designed to be distributed via the wide area interactive digital video networks. These networks are currently being developed by telephone and cable television companies for deployment throughout entire communities in the late 1990s. Schools using the Lightspan curriculum via "free-standing" platforms or local area networks today are well-positioned to take advantage of emerging networks to create direct, video-based school-home connections tomorrow.

Although Lightspan programming is unique, its technical requirements are far from unusual. On the contrary, Lightspan's interactive programming is engineered to give schools maximum flexibility to take advantage of many existing delivery mechanisms, as well as those that are on the way.

THE LIGHTSPAN PARTNERSHIP, INC.

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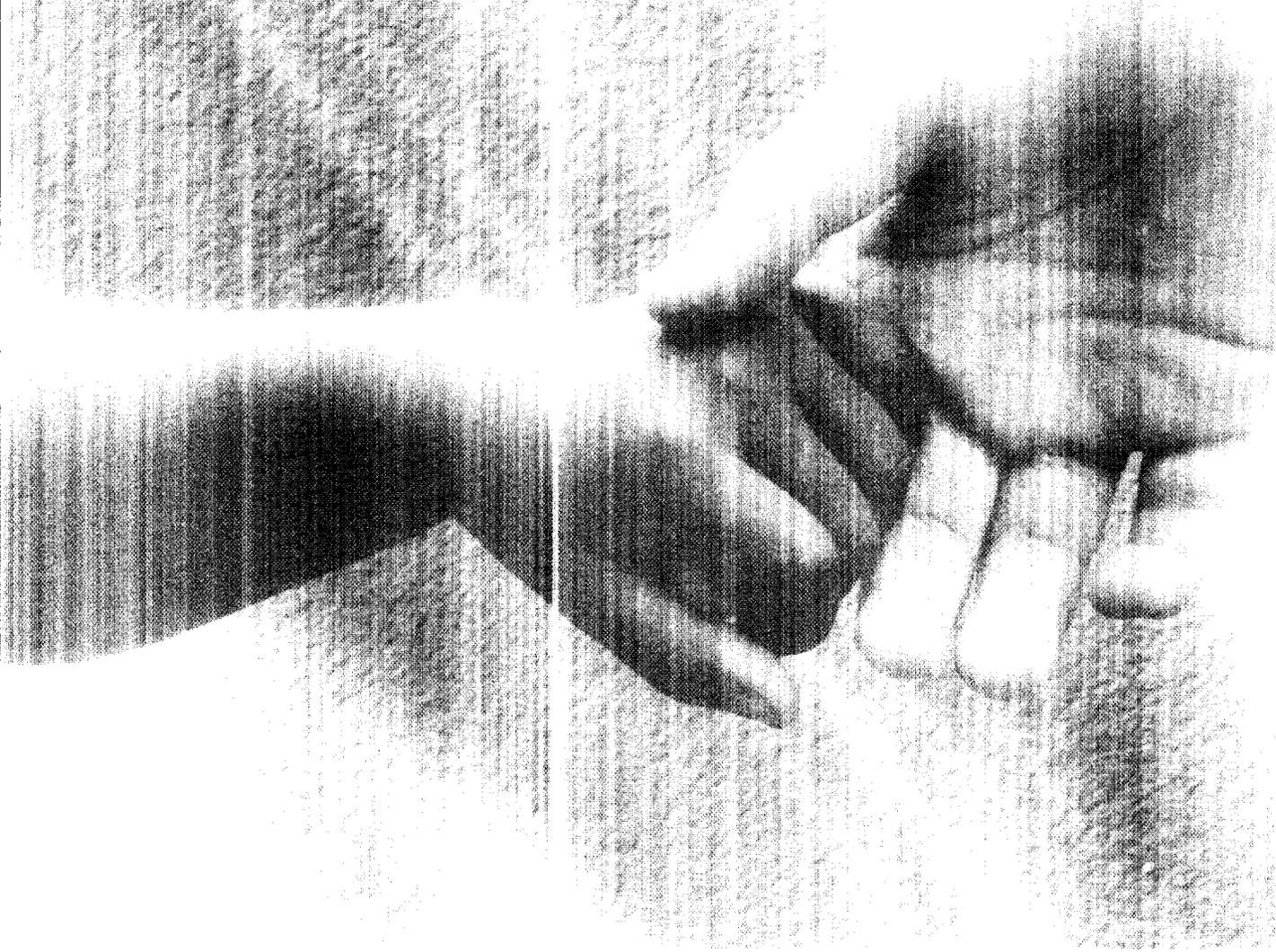
QUESTIONS

and Answers

About The

Lightspan

Partnership, Inc.



LIGHTSPAN IS ONLY TWO YEARS OLD. IS LIGHTSPAN READY TO SUPPORT FULL-SCALE DEPLOYMENT, AND WHAT GUARANTEE DO I HAVE MY INVESTMENT WILL BE SUPPORTED?

The Lightspan Partnership has already successfully deployed its educational programming in fourteen school districts throughout the county and is available for full deployment in communities nationwide.

The Lightspan Partnership has assembled an outstanding management team consisting of nationally recognized leaders in the fields of elementary education, the software industry, telecommunications, and entertainment. The company is a well-funded startup whose investors include the Microsoft Corporation, Tele-Communications, Inc., and Comcast Corporation, all multibillion dollar corporations at the top of their fields.

WILL LIGHTSPAN PROVIDE ITS PROGRAMS TO INDIVIDUAL FAMILIES FOR GENERAL USE OR HOME SCHOOLING?

No. Lightspan's business model does not allow for the sale of our curriculum to individual families. We are 100% committed to our work with educators to build school-home connections.

DO WE NEED A MANAGEMENT SYSTEM TO IMPLEMENT THE LIGHTSPAN PROGRAMMING, AND HOW CAN WE ASSESS STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND PROGRESS?

Lightspan believes a management system is not necessary for optimal use of our instructional programming. Schools who desire one may purchase a technically certified optional manager from a third party.

Lightspan incorporates advanced game theory and techniques in the product development process to construct learning activities that allow students to move from introduction to mastery, increasing their understanding of the material during each step of the process.

Off-line, Lightspan's Instructional Support Materials extend the curriculum programming and provide a variety of assessment tools. An Adventure Map or Progress Chart is available for each adventure and is designed for use by students to track individual progress and share results with teachers and family. These tools provide a simple record of tasks completed, the levels at which they were completed, and the objectives addressed. Journals provide families and teachers with a quick view of how a student is responding to the games and activities within an adventure. Assessment Matrices supply activity descriptions, enabling objectives, performance guidelines, and suggestions for extending instruction. When combined with other assessment methods, these materials may be used to construct a comprehensive and balanced analysis of student achievement.

HOW CAN OUR DISTRICT BE ASSURED THAT LIGHTSPAN'S PROGRAMMING MATCHES THE SCOPE AND SEQUENCE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE CURRICULUM USED IN OUR DISTRICT?

The district will be provided with a validated correlation prepared by a respected independent research organization that will match Lightspan's interactive instructional programming to the district's objectives. Lightspan's national target for correlation is 75 to 80 percent. These targets are attainable because of our careful prior analysis of the current instructional materials market, state tests, and frameworks.

HOW DO WE INTEGRATE THIS NEW TECHNOLOGY AND LIGHTSPAN'S INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMMING INTO OUR DAILY INSTRUCTION?

Lightspan's programming provides teachers with powerful and flexible learning tools that can be used to enhance current curriculum instruction. Lightspan's programs are modular in nature, so a teacher can select the sequence that best enhances the current classroom instruction. Generally, teachers set aside an area of the classroom for up to four interactive workstations and reserve one unit for use as a teacher station. With this configuration, teachers use Lightspan programming for whole-class discussion and lesson introduction or assign small groups or individuals to practice particular skills at a student workstation.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IS A KEY AREA OF FOCUS FOR OUR DISTRICT. WHAT DOES LIGHTSPAN OFFER TEACHERS IN THIS AREA?

Lightspan provides several opportunities to expand the resources available for the professional development of your teachers. First, Lightspan's programming is available to teachers 24 hours a day, in both their classrooms and homes. They can access our video-based programming at their convenience and review proven instructional strategies and incorporate them into their current classroom instruction. In addition to the curriculum programming and support materials, Lightspan's affiliate programming provides additional professional development resources, such as AIT's series *Every Child Can Succeed*.

Finally, Lightspan offers teachers opportunities for collaboration and development with our on-line Internet service, LightSource™. In addition to standard features, such as discussion groups and lesson and project exchanges, LightSource offers discipline-based features hosted by education experts that explore, in-depth, topics relating to instruction in reading, language arts, and mathematics.

WHAT TYPE OF FUNDING MIGHT BE AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASING LIGHTSPAN PROGRAMS?

To acquire Lightspan programming, districts should look beyond technology funds to several other funding sources. Where state law allows, we believe districts could use ancillary instructional materials funds typically used to purchase items such as workbooks. By using these funds to purchase Lightspan's engaging interactive programming instead of less-motivating print materials, districts will increase the ability to achieve their goals of more time for learning. Other funding sources such as Title 1, Even Start, and Eisenhower Professional Development funds also should be considered. As schools move towards further reform, revised priorities could provide additional funding for the purchase of Lightspan.

WILL LIGHTSPAN'S PROGRAMMING AND REQUIRED DELIVERY SYSTEM WIDEN OR NARROW THE EQUITY GAP?

Lightspan is committed to narrowing the equity gap by providing universal access to powerful interactive learning programs for all students. Our entire business is designed to pioneer new, lower-cost delivery methods that will allow schools to extend the best tools to all their member-families, regardless of socioeconomic status.

We work with districts of all socioeconomic types, paying special attention to making the school-home connection a reality for less affluent districts. Many less affluent schools find this is a compelling and real opportunity, when categorical funding is included in the total economic picture of the school.

LIGHTSPAN'S SERVICE IS DESIGNED TO BE READY FOR DELIVERY OVER FULL-SERVICE INTERACTIVE VIDEO NETWORKS, WHERE APPLICABLE. HOW SOON CAN I EXPECT MY CABLE SYSTEM TO DELIVER LIGHTSPAN IN THIS WAY? AND WHAT CAN OUR COMMUNITY DO TO GET OUR CABLE AND TELEPHONE COMPANIES READY TO DEPLOY LIGHTSPAN?

Every cable operator and telephone company has its own timetable for deploying full, interactive networks to schools and homes. In most communities, we do not expect these full-service networks to be available for three to five years. This is a delay relative to earlier announced plans by these industries, largely due to higher-than-expected infrastructure costs.

In many markets, however—particularly those where new competition is vying for local home subscribers—cable operators and telephone companies soon will be ready to begin testing with schools as a means of initiating a school-home connection partnership. Means for this testing may include:

1. stand-alone set-top boxes with a CD-ROM player
2. PC/TVs equipped with cable TV modems
3. fiber connection from a cable central office to the LAN in several schools, providing remote access to interactive video

In these markets, two methods have proven effective for accelerating the process of establishing the school-home connection: initiating three-way discussions involving Lightspan, which has national-level relationships with many of the leading providers, and initiating trial deployments of home workstations—even in low volume—to demonstrate the school's commitment as a pioneer of the school-home connection.

**WHY IS THE COMPANY CALLED
THE LIGHTSPAN PARTNERSHIP?**

Lightspan's mission is to build "bridges of light": connections that span schools and homes with new sources of learning and intellectual energy.

This aim is accomplished through partnerships between schools and families; between professional educators; between children as collaborative learners; and between schools and telecommunications providers. Finally, the term "Partnership" best defines the relationship we aim to create with schools as we work on long-term initiatives to expand learning opportunities.

**WHY DOES LIGHTSPAN USE CHARACTERS, STORY
LINES, AND THEORY AND TECHNIQUES FROM THE VIDEO
GAME INDUSTRY AS PART OF ITS CURRICULUM DESIGN?
HOW CAN I KNOW THAT QUALITY LEARNING IS GOING
ON WHEN STUDENTS ARE HAVING SO MUCH FUN?**

We believe the best learning takes place when a child sees relevance and meaning in the task or concept at hand, is sincerely motivated to master it, and experiences both challenge and encouragement along the way. That process is naturally joyful to children. Lightspan is about providing more opportunities for this process to take place. Characters, stories, and sophisticated interactivity are time-proven means of achieving this aim.

Lightspan helps educators use characters and stories in exactly the same way that teachers have used them throughout history: to provide a rich context for new ideas and to bring those ideas to life. Furthermore, Lightspan characters help

students by modeling the very attitudes they will need to be successful in school and beyond—attitudes such as intellectual curiosity, respect for self and others, and industriousness, among others.

Sophisticated interactivity is a means of facilitating "learning by doing"—another time-honored method of engaging, challenging, and motivating a learner—as well as rich opportunities for addressing various learning styles. Some of the most effective applications of game theory and practice can be found in the interactive game industry. Lightspan has carefully incorporated this research into its programming to create serious instructional tools that students love to use—and actually choose to use during time previously spent on entertainment.

**ARE THERE OTHER CURRICULUM COMPANIES THAT
PROVIDE PROGRAMS SIMILAR TO LIGHTSPAN'S?**

No. Some other curriculum-based software vendors offer K-6 curriculum coverage as extensive as Lightspan's. But their programming is generally not built in a way that makes it appropriate for home use. It is not built for the new, highly affordable digital video delivery systems. Nor does it include the story, interactivity, or design elements that allow Lightspan to capture substantial learning time in addition to traditional homework.

Several companies offer products for home use that also are used by some teachers. Often known as "edutainment," these products have little in common with the Lightspan offering, which is designed to rigorous standards of comprehensiveness, educational depth, and standards correlation by teams of instructional experts.

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