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DEVELOPING A MEDIA CENTRE

a study of the development of the  
Instructional Media Centre  
Canberra College of Advanced Education

by  
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## DEVELOPING A MEDIA CENTRE

### ABSTRACT

The Instructional Media Centre at the Canberra College of Advanced Education has been developed in the belief that teaching and learning are performing arts - particularly when they take place together - and that they are greatly enhanced by an understanding, and appropriate use, of the media.

This Centre was established to provide media services to the whole College, and to teach media courses in its School of Teacher Education. Its development entailed the procurement of equipment, the employment of staff, the organization of administrative procedures, the devising of courses, the production of materials, and later the design of a building to house the operation.

In the absence of any comprehensive, coherent and cogent theory this development was essentially pragmatic. Factors such as the availability of money and material resources determined its lower limits; the skills and beliefs of the people involved its upper limits.

Designing, producing and delivering media materials, teaching, and evaluating the outcomes of those activities are however susceptible to theoretical examination, if not completely to prediction and control. Media producers, managers, teachers and students require an artistry that goes beyond theoretical insight and technical competence. Traditional theoretical frameworks have not adequately encompassed this quality.

The study examines the development of this Centre and the complex of factors which have influenced it, in the light of the available theories. It pays particular attention to the ways in which theory informs practice in each of the Centre's areas of activity, and also to the personal preferences and attitudes of the people involved. Educational media is seen as a field governed more by convention than by formula. Its unpredictable and uncontrollable aspects are seen as signs of its artistry. And artists have ultimately to be left to their own devices and their own genius.

Perhaps the most important outcome of the study is that it translates some knowledge from someone's head to a more objective and accessible form of record.

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