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Foreword

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Over the next few years, the promise of low cost, ubiquitous broadband networks will become increasingly realized. The ability to deliver rich media anywhere, anytime is, in my opinion, a revolution as profound as the invention of the printing press. Like the printing press, we can expect that this revolution will spawn new forms of literature, new kinds of literacy, and new types of educational organizations. With wisdom, these new approaches can make learning opportunities accessible in ways that were never possible before - to people in remote communities, to those who have very restricted time to learn, and to those with disabilities.

Over the past few years, the thought leaders in education have suggested that the most effective way to deliver learning content using advanced networks is through the use of small, easily repurposed, learning objects, stored in distributed learning object repositories, and accessed through use of standards-based metadata. Canada has become a world leader in this field, as documented in a recent study (Porter, Curry, Muirhead and Galan, 2002). This CJLT issue is a testament to that leading work.

CANARIE, Canada's advanced Internet organization, is pleased to have encouraged and funded, through the CANARIE E-learning Program, many of the papers presented here. It is our hope - and expectation - that this effort will result in improved educational opportunities for Canadians everywhere and for people of all ages and with all kinds of interests. In addition, we hope that leading Canadian education and training organizations, both public and private, will increasingly share their expertise with countries around the world.

References

Porter, D., Curry, J., Muirhead, B. and Galan, N. (2002). A report on learning object repositories: Review and recommendations for a Pan-Canadian approach to repository implementation in Canada . Ottawa, ON: CANARIE. Retrieved October 2, 2002 from http://www.canarie.ca/funding/learning/lor.pdf

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