

ROGER SCHANK LAUNCHES NEW COMPANY: SOCRATIC ARTS

World-renowned e-learning expert and author builds entire master's degree programs for less than the price of one course

PITTSBURGH, JANUARY xx, 2002 – Dr. Roger Schank, a world-renowned expert on computers and education and author of more than 25 books, today announces that he has launched Socratic Arts, a company focused on providing higher education institutions with high-quality, inexpensive curricula that is based on “learn by doing” methodology. By using a combination of mentors and online support, Socratic Arts is building an entire master's degree for less than the cost of one high-quality e-learning course.

“The most effective way to teach new skills is to put learners in the kinds of situations in which they need to use those skills and to provide mentors who help learners when they need it,” said Roger Schank, John Evans Professor Emeritus in computer science, education and psychology at Northwestern University. “Socratic Arts will focus on helping universities deliver meaningful, yet inexpensive “learning by doing” curricula that focus on real-world skills and give students degrees for work accomplished rather than courses passed.”

Socratic Arts' first partnership is with a university with one of the leading computer science programs in the country. Socratic Arts is building an entire online master's degree in computer science for the school's professional information technology disciplines. The first degrees will be offered starting in Fall 2002 and include programs in electronic commerce technology, software engineering, information technology management, computer security, information networking, data mining, and entertainment technology. The degrees are designed to provide real-world project and problem-solving experience and are mentored by university faculty members.

Socratic Arts' e-learning programs are based on a new approach called the Story-Centered Curriculum. The Story-Centered Curriculum represents a dramatic departure from traditional master degree curriculums. It is “learning-by-doing” based, rather than listen-and-test based. In fact, there are no classes, no courses, and no tests. Students learn by working together on projects that are part of a larger “story” – a business – in which they are playing a role. Help is offered by professors and by local experts on a just-in-time basis.

Socratic Arts is also working to provide this new “story-centered curricula” to corporations and secondary education institutions.

About Roger Schank

Schank is one of the world's leading researchers in artificial intelligence and applying cognitive learning theory to education. He has written more than 25 books including *Virtual Learning: A Revolutionary Approach to Building a Highly Skilled Workforce*, *Coloring Outside the Lines: Raising a Smarter Kid by Breaking All the Rules*, *Dynamic Memory: A Theory of Learning in Computers and People*, and *Engines for Education*.

His latest book, *Designing World-Class E-Learning*, was published by McGraw-Hill in November 2001.

Schank is the John Evans Professor Emeritus in computer science, education and psychology at Northwestern University, where he founded the Institute for the Learning Science. Schank has also taught at Yale University and Stanford University.

Before founding Socratic Arts, Schank founded and served as chairman and chief technology officer of Cognitive Arts Corp., a provider of goal-based multi-media simulation training to Fortune 500 corporations and Ivy League universities.

About Socratic Arts

Founded by world-renowned e-learning expert Dr. Roger Schank in January 2002, Socratic Arts' goal is to change the nature of the education curriculum to provide meaningful and real-world skills to students. Socratic Arts uses the new medium of the computer and Internet to replace the traditional course model of lectures and tests with "learn by doing" curricula that teach practical skills based on a new approach called the Story-Centered Curriculum. To learn more about Socratic Arts, visit www.socraticarts.com.

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