DIGITIZING THE PRISON EDUCATION SYSTEM

TRANSFORMING THE MIND REDUCES RECIDIVISM

Dr. Phil Zimbardo, the former president of the American Psychological Association, is the mastermind behind The Stanford Prison Experiment. In the summer of 1971, Zimbardo took healthy Stanford students, gave them roles as either guards or inmates, and placed them in a makeshift prison in the basement of Stanford University. In just days, the prisoners demonstrated symptoms of depression and extreme stress and the guards had become sadistic. The experiment was stopped early. The lesson learned? As W. Edwards Deming wrote: "*A bad system will defeat a good person, every time.*" The current system of prison education is doing nothing to empower behavioral change and rehabilitation of minds. A transformation in methods, means and thinking is required.

How Well Is The Current System Working?

Since 1985, the number of people incarcerated has jumped from about 744,000 to over 3.3 million in 2011. That represents an overall increase of more than 400%. While all sectors have grown over that time period, the highest growth was in the federal prison population, which increased by 473%. Increases in the other sectors ranged from 175% in state prisons to 178% in local jails. The current correctional rehabilitation system is obviously is not working[1].

For society to reduce criminal activity and incarceration, the prison educational eco-system needs to be re-engineered. These changes should enable inmates to access relevant educational content and media that enhances behavioral change.

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[1] http://www.ets.org/research/policy_research_reports/publications/report/2006/dbcz

Transforming Minds

**Transforming Minds
Transforming Lives**

Studies conducted over the last two decades almost unanimously indicate that higher education in prison programs reduces recidivism. This reduction translates into fewer crimes being committed, savings to taxpayers, and long-term contributions to the safety and well-being of the communities. Communities to which over 90% of formerly incarcerated people return.

Recent research on prison education programs presents discouraging statistics on the current recidivism rate. The Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP) reported in 2011 that nearly 7 in 10 people who are formerly incarcerated will commit a new crime, and half will end up back in prison within three years. Given that about 90 out of every 100 incarcerated people eventually rejoin society, it is crucial that we develop programs and tools to effectively reduce recidivism.

Prison education is far more effective at reducing recidivism than boot camps, "shock" incarceration, according to the National Institute of Justice. The Correctional Education Association's "Three State Recidivism Study" quantified this reduction, demonstrating that correctional education lowered long-term recidivism by 29 percent.[2]

A 2005 IHEP report cites yet higher numbers. IHEP reports that recidivism rates for incarcerated people who had participated in prison education programs were on average 46% lower than the rates of incarcerated people who had not taken college classes. The same report examined 15 different studies conducted during the 1990's. It was found that 14 of these studies showed reduced long-term recidivism rates among those who had participated in postsecondary correctional education.[3]

A large population of people inside U.S. prisons do not have a high school diploma. A high correlation exists between the level of education attained by an incarcerated person, and his or her recidivism rate. The American Correctional Association has reported that in Indiana, the recidivism rate for GED completers is 20% lower than that of the general prison population's rate. The recidivism rate for college degree completers is 44% lower than that of the general population. In other words, the higher the degree earned, the lower the recidivism rate. Higher degree completion leads to increased ability to gain employment.

Educational Investment Reduces Cost

Prison education is a broad term that encompasses any number of educational activities occurring inside a prison. These educational activities

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[2] Stephen Steurer, Linda Smith, and Alice Tracy, "Three State Recidivism Study," Correctional Education Association, 2001

[3] Wendy Erisman and Jeanne Bayer Contardo, "Learning to Reduce Recidivism: A 50-State Ar Correctional Education Policy," Institute for Higher Education Policy, 2005

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include both vocational training and academic education. The goal of such activities are to prepare the prisoner for success outside of prison. This justifies the value proposition of the rehabilitative aspects of prison.

Educational programs offered inside prisons are typically provided and managed by the prison operator. Funding for the programs are provided through official correctional department budgets, private organizations (e.g. colleges, nonprofits, etc.), and the prisoners or their families. Educational funding for the purposes of managing facilities, disseminating materials, and overall program supervision are constantly being reduced. This at its face is contrary to the rehabilitative model. These reductions lead to the warehousing of inmates and the inevitability of recidivism.

The United States, with an incarcerated population of 3.3 million, and growing, has the largest prison population of any country in the world. The US spends approximately $72 billion on corrections each year.

On average, the national cost of providing an education for a k-12 student is approximately $7,000 to $10,000 per year. The average annual cost of incarcerating a single individual is approximately $32,000 to $75,000 per year. Each dollar spent on funding prison education programs reduces incarceration costs by $4 to $5 during the first three years after an individual is released, the period when those leaving prison are most likely to return.[4]

An American study, found "One million dollars spent on correctional education prevents about 600 crimes, while that same money invested in incarceration prevents 350 crimes. Correctional education is almost twice as cost-effective as a crime control policy" [5]

Digitizing the Prison Educational "System"

The current educational system within prisons is multi faceted and resource intensive, both in terms of human expense and capital outlay. The threat of new technologies and open internet in prison, is enough to make any administrator cringe. Thus, the increased cost of protecting both the public and staff has seen a rise. Contraband cell phones and cameras have set the precedent that technology inside the walls cannot be trusted.

Conversely, it is the adoption of secure technology that can reduce cost and security risk. By adopting proven hardware (such as varied sized tablets) and simultaneously integrating secure software and operating systems, substantive change can be made within jails/prisons. Many services such as commissary, education, medical and legal video visitation, can be offered over a single platform. This consolidation of already offered services, can increase security while simultaneously reducing costs.   Inmates no longer need to be

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[4] Bidwell, Allie. "Prison Education Programs Could Save Money"
[5] "2009 State Expenditure Report," National Association of State Budget Officers (December 2010)

Transforming Prison Educational Systems

A "system" using advanced technological solutions that can enable increased participation and access to more educational content at lower cost. This is needed to enhance the human potential and reverse historical recidivism trends.

transferred and transported across campuses in order to receive multiple services. The opportunity is upon us to embrace digital transformation of the educational system and solve this problem forever.

A **"new system"** using integrated and advanced digital technology solutions can enable increased participation. This system can also increase access to significant resources of educational content at lower price points. These changes are needed to enrich the human experience and reverse historical recidivism trends.

The proposed new "system" has been designed by IDS using three innovative transformational components: These are:

1. **Low Cost Digital E-Readers**
2. **Software solutions that enable secure content delivery and management of access**
3. **Academic, Vocational and Spiritual media that enables the transformation of the mind**

E-Readers: Easy to use and carry, digital tablets are revolutionizing the way technology is used in education by replacing heavy textbooks that require storage in a "prison library", and often quickly become outdated. E-Readers, which can access everything from eBooks to full course curriculums, ensure that the latest ideas and discoveries can be included in offerings to inmates.

Software Solutions: Innovative software solutions have been designed to enable access to the abundance of educational content that can be made available to individual inmates based on their vocational, academic and spiritual preferences.

Academic, Vocational and Spiritual Content: A unique interface and secure engagement design between the tablet, the software and the user provides the highest security that restricts access to only chosen content of choice by administrators. The design also restricts access to outside "networks" thus prohibiting inmates from communicating via the internet.

The three components of the new system create expansive access to information technology advancements, which improve both the effectiveness and efficiency of rehabilitative programs. The "new system" is called Correction**Ed.** It can be customized to meet the requirements and desires of any correctional institution.

The Correction**Ed** system enables correctional institutions to bring digital solutions to any and all educational initiatives. Some of the transformative advancements include:

1. **Expanded Education Resources**: Helps offenders achieve milestone credits with increased access to college curriculum

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IMPROVE ACCESS, CONTENT AND LOWER COST

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textbooks. Tablets are pre-loaded with Educational Program textbooks and provided to inmates enrolled in college courses. Devices are checked, charged, updated and reissued for use by other inmates

2. **Inmate Online Education Network** Secured inmate education network connects inmates to computers that enable use of online resources: internal centralized learning repositories, internet based certification programs, and distance learning environments.

3. **Digitized Law Library Technology** Provide Administrative Segregation inmates with electronic touch screen access to the Gilmore Law Collection as mandated by Casey v. Lewis court case. This also reduces time and costs required to escort high security inmates to the library.

4. **Offline Digital Resource Library for Inmates**: Uses technology to reduce education textbook and library collection costs by providing those items electronically to inmates in classrooms and libraries via an offline "internet in a box" concept.

5. **Video Programing Integration:** Supports adult basic education, career technical education, and college on multiple channel televisions for inmates, using more efficient technology

Creating More Value at Lower Cost

The Digital Era has transformed industries, institutions and governments. The transformation has created new social behaviors influenced by access to knowledge 24/7.

The lessons learned from these transformations have demonstrated that technology enables the creation of more value, faster and at lower cost.

Technology has transformed the educational process. The tablet pc created a new learning experience. Access to knowledge that transforms individual thinking is now available to anyone and people are consuming it 24/7. Teaching is no longer constrained to a classroom or teachers being physically present. Learning has become a self-guided experience of discovery for anyone, anywhere and anytime.

We know that educating inmates provides the promise of changed behavior and reduced recidivism. These results enhance human potential, reduce cost and improve outcomes.

We know that the transformation of the traditional system of prison education, into the new progressive system, can be done at lower cost and higher quality than maintaining the old system. Jail and prison administrators will make the transformation over time. Our society cannot afford to remain in the 1990's educational paradigm.

WHO WILL MAKE THE NEEDED CHANGE

The question is ……..which State and Federal Departments of Corrections and Rehabilitation, will make the transformation? The opportunity to lead is upon us.

IDS is an innovator of digital content delivery systems for security sensitive environments and secure information between two or more parties. The IDS System enables participation in relevant and approved digital content using a proprietary process and customized electronic devices. The IDS System can deliver information, entertainment and educational content solutions securely to participants within correctional facilities and institutions that require high levels of security for access to digital content between two or more participants; The IDS System is based on five years of research followed by development using collaborative partnerships arrangements with device manufacturers, software developers and content providers. Based in Nashville, TN IDS is led by Dr. Turner Nashe and supported by over 50 developmental engineers and servicing staff. IDS has resources in India and China and the current system is capable of servicing global institutions.

Dr. Turner Nashe, President of IDS - is an entrepreneur, inventor, innovator and recognized leader in building technology that facilitates delivery of educational and entertaining content to security sensitive industries such as correctional facilities, hospitals and school administrators. Dr. Nashe is based in Nashville, TN where he received his doctorate in Educational Administration and Supervision from Tennessee State University. Dr.Nashe also received a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from John Carroll University.

Dr. Nashe has built several businesses around proprietary digital delivery systems that provide relevant content to k-12 schools, correctional facilities and hospitals. He has worked with firms in the private and public sector as well as governmental entities. His work has attracted firms from the Fortune 500 to medium sized organizations and start up technology firms. His inventions have created innovative solutions for emerging eco-systems that are revolutionizing traditional approaches to delivery of educational content within secure facilities.

His thought leadership has helped organizations transition from the mental models of an ego-system to the 21st century eco-system required to accelerate educational content that facilitates behavioral transformation of human capital. His inventions represent innovative approaches to the use of digital technology as the means to accelerate human development and social performance. While technology is rapidly advancing Dr. Nashe wants to ensure that it enables and optimizes human development to its fullest potential. Dr. Nashe can be reached at tnashe@ids615.com