

Apple Classrooms of Tomorrow (ACOT)

Apple Classrooms of Tomorrow (ACOT) was a research and development collaboration among public schools, universities, research agencies, and Apple Computer, Inc. Initiated in 1985, ACOT began its work in seven classrooms that represented a cross-section of America's elementary and secondary schools. Its goal was to study how the routine use of technology by teachers and students might change teaching and learning.

The ACOT research project concluded in 1998. After more than a decade of research, the ACOT project was one of the longest continuing educational studies of its kind. During the thirteen years of research, ACOT studied learning, assessment, teaching, teacher development, school design, the social aspects of education, and the use of new technologies in more than 100 elementary and secondary classrooms throughout the country. ACOT also collaborated with schools internationally to explore constructivism mediated by technology, emphasizing collaboration over the Internet.

In ACOT classrooms, students and teachers had immediate access to a wide range of technologies, including computers, videodisc players, video cameras, scanners, CD-ROM drives, modems, and online communications services. In addition, students could use an assortment of software programs and tools, including word processors, databases, spreadsheets, and graphics packages. In ACOT classrooms, technology was viewed as a tool for learning and a medium for thinking, collaborating, and communicating.

ACOT's research demonstrated that the introduction of technology into classrooms can significantly increase the potential for learning, especially when it is used to support collaboration, information access, and the expression and representation of students' thoughts and ideas.

Realizing this opportunity for all students, however, required a broadly conceived approach to educational change that integrated new technologies and curricula with new ideas about learning and teaching, as well as with authentic forms of assessment.

ACOT's mission was to advance the understanding of teaching and learning in global, connected communities of educators and learners. This included investigating how teaching and learning change when people have immediate access to technology as well as helping people better understand how technology can be an effective learning tool and a catalyst for change.