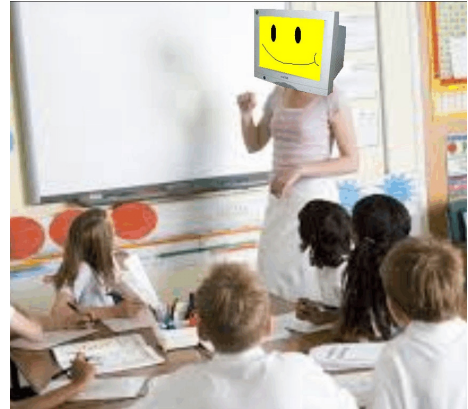# ATS! The Great Money Making Machine

First company who launches ATS will have a license to print money!

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For the last couple of decades, the internet has spawned a number of large hugely successful companies that have made unparallel changes to our economy and society. One can't help wondering what the next big innovation might be, and the answer is rather simple . . . Automated Teaching Systems will be the next big computer-internet revolution. Everything needed to spark this revolution is already present- the unfulfilled need and the technology to create the product. All that is really needed now is the right marketing model, and the marketing of cable and satellite television provides that right model!

The Unfulfilled Need- The first requirement for a successful new product is the need for that product that nothing else is fulfilling. The unfulfilled need for ATS is the dismal education provided by the American public education system. Studies abound, and often reported in the news, about how low ranking American education is compared with other nations. America ranks in the high to mid twenties of academic achievement, closer to the third world nations than the advance western nations. At best, and there's a lot of data that suggest otherwise, but at best the American highschool graduate is no better educated than when the Wright brothers first flew their airplane in 1903. Most American's (highschool and college) have a 19th century education at best.

Parents are continually looking for some alternative for their children, realizing how ill prepared their kids are for the twenty-first century. With technology growing exponentially, doubling every fifteen years, their kids are being left behind with no real future. Hence, they are desperate for any method or means that can catapult their kids ahead of the least common denominator of society. The growing gulf between education and the technology of the modern world is the unfulfilled need that ATS can fill.

Technology for ATS- The technology for doing ATS is already here. The basic premise for an ATS technology is using a software Socratic emulator to continually question the student just as a traditional tutor does. First a short presentation is made using traditional audio-visual methods, then a session of question-answers in which the software emulator determines if the student has sufficiently mastered a topic to continue, and if not, then another session of question-answers. This makes the system self regulating, so if a student is strong in science, but weak in English, more time is spent on English and less on science. Being a Socratic design, the student is constantly engaged and therefore holds the student's attention through the lesson.

The Socratic emulator is surprisingly simple to make, I wrote a simplified version using BASIC to demonstrate just how a system would operate, and was surprised how easy it was. It used a plain text file for the scripts of questions, each having three to six answers. Each answer is partly right, with one being fully right, and the question is scored on a ranking of how right it is. After the question is answered, the program then explains what was wrong in the answer selected and what is right. Even the fully correct answer is repeated with different wording to further reinforce the learning process. This is just how a good tutor teaches, continually explaining the subject matter and reinforcing the learning with questions.

Marketing Model- People suggest this system will be very difficult if not impossible to sell in a market dominated by self-interest and self-preservation bureaucracies and teacher unions. And indeed it would be a constant uphill battle using traditional sales and marketing approaches. But when the cable-satellite marketing model is adopted, resistance quickly falls away. When a sales representative can go to the school board and say, "Clear everything out of your classrooms and get rid of it. We'll come in and install our custom work station furniture, install the computers, wire them together in a local network and connect to local servers which are then connected via the internet to our national system. And it won't cost you one red **CENT**!" You don't pay for any of the installation, but instead you pay us a per student, per course, per semester leasing fee that will be half to a third what you are paying now. Cash strapped school boards will be banging on the doors wanting such systems install before the sun rises.

Cable and satellite television usually have a two year commitment contract and are able to pay for their installation and equipment cost and still make a nice profit. True, the initial capitalization cost is high, but the capitalization cost for the software is largely one time, so I would expect, that like cable and satellite television, to be able to recoup that capitalization in two years or so, then after that . . . huge profits! Being a Socratic tutoring system, means a better more comprehensive education, thus providing the sought after unfulfilled need, at a significant cost savings to the parents and tax payers of schools.

But ATS is more than just raising the education of American children to something of the twenty-first century, it's also a 'must have' for the world. For decades we have been engaged in military operations in the middle east trying to bring peace and stability to those all important regions seemingly having made no progress. And no real progress can be made until those people are brought up to at least the mid-nineteenth century, and that means a modern education. To implement such education using traditional technologies requires massive numbers of educated and trained teachers speaking native languages, which are very difficult to obtain in vast numbers. The only alternative is ATS technology.

ATS is the real weapon needed to bring the peace and stability to critical regions, thereby allowing America to actually disengage from continual hopeless wars. Until those people are brought into the modern world, all other efforts are a waste. No matter how hard and valiant our military fights, they can never resolve the problem without educating the populous.