Massive Open Online Courses: Reimagining the Future of Education

MOOCs (massive open online courses) are large free online courses using Internet technology. The courses are delivered using multiple instruction techniques, including recorded web-based lectures, online reading materials, peer-graded exercises, and interactive discussion forums.

This talk will focus on edX, a nonprofit, open-source enterprise founded by MIT and Harvard in 2012. EdX was launched as a MOOC portal, but the edX platform has expanded – to include SPOCs (small private online courses), blended courses, collaborations with both for-profit and nonprofit entities, and adoption of the edX open-source platform across entire countries and global regions.

This presentation will outline the edX evolution and impact. It will include an overview of who the edX students are, what makes these courses popular, and how the open-source platform is evolving. The talk will explain some of edX’s impact: how MOOCs increase access to education around the globe, how MOOC technologies are currently being incorporated into on-campus courses to improve learning outcomes, and where MOOC technologies are headed in the future. Finally, the presentation will provide recent research results – some ideas of how to improve education online and on campus. The talk will discuss how MOOCs might evolve in the future to continue to bring innovation to the world of education both on-campus and beyond.

Anant Agarwal is the CEO of edX, an online learning destination founded by Harvard and MIT. Anant taught the first edX course on circuits and electronics from MIT, which drew 155,000 students from 162 countries. He has served as the director of CSAIL, MIT’s Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory, and is a professor of electrical engineering and computer science at MIT. He is a successful serial entrepreneur, having co-founded several companies including Tilera Corporation, which created the Tile multicore processor, and Virtual Machine Works. Anant holds a Ph.D. from Stanford and a bachelor’s from IIT Madras. Anant’s twitter handle is @agarwaledu.