Today's Growing Numbers Of E-Learners Seek PC Work Stations Geared To Cyber Education

(NAPSA)—From jewelry making to MBA courses, cyber classes are proliferating. Today's Internet-linked personal computer is often a self-contained classroom, with 59 percent of the U.S. population connected online, according to *Kiplinger's Personal Finance*. College students, adult professionals and retirees alike are wired for learning in front of their computer screens. Eighty-seven percent of college dorm rooms boast computers, according to a study by MarketSource Corporation and Harris Interactive, and universities are offering their students more and more online course options.

It's the older generation, however, that goes to the top of the class in cyber education: Corporate University Xchange reports that two-thirds of all virtual classroom students are over age 35. Corporate spending on e-learning is projected to grow to $18.2 billion by 2005, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's International Data Base. Many companies already offer their employees online courses for college credit, job training, or just for fun. "Today's students are accessing new frontiers in contemporary learning," said Susan Dountas, vice president of merchandising for Sauder Woodworking. "These consumers need study environments that match their forward-thinking educational efforts."

When the computer is where you meet for class, the computer workstation has to make the grade in terms of comfort, convenience and ergonomic concerns, Dountas added.

The virtual classroom can be in virtually any room of the house with the help of a computer desk with go-anywhere styling and techno-cued details such as electrical cord access, adjustable keyboard tray and generous storage. Sauder's neo-classic styled Roanoke home office grouping, for example, retails for less than $800, leaving e-learners ample room in the budget for tuition fees.

With today's multi-tasking lifestyles, the household workstation is often in the midst of a busy family room, where computer users switch from paying bills to logging on for cyber-classes. Casually styled furnishings such as Sauder's Cottage Home computer armoire, entertainment center and library fit easily into an informal setting and are geared to the requirements of contemporary technology.

Even a bedroom corner can be transformed into a private cyber-classroom with a compact computer desk designed for today's full range of electronic components. Clean styling, technology-minded details and generous file and storage space can add up to a focused work hub for eager e-learners.

"Online education is an exciting contemporary learning option," Dountas noted. "Consumers are demanding furnishings that support their Web-based classrooms."

Self-contained computer armoires create virtual classrooms in all but the smallest spaces.