

# Announcement

## News on ICT in Education

### Highlight

#### **Chinese and Egyptian laureates receive UNESCO prize for the use of ICT in Education**

Director-General of UNESCO, Koïchiro Matsuura, awarded the 2008 UNESCO King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa Prize for the Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in Education to the Chinese and Egyptian laureates, Zhang Deming and Hoda Baraka.

### News & Events

#### **UN works with Mongolia to close the digital-divide**

Over 50 senior Mongolian government officials received training from the United Nations on the use of Information and Communication technology (ICT) to promote the landlocked country's development.

#### **India to link 18000 colleges under new ICT in Education plan**

The Indian government approved a new scheme to use ICT in providing personalized and interactive knowledge modules to students.

#### **Philippine' Department of Education Secretary urges educators to optimize existing ICT programmes**

Jesli Lapus calls for the optimum use of ICT to deliver quality education and enhance institutional efficiency worthy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

#### **Sri Lanka calls 2009 the year of English and ICT**

2009 year has been declared as the year of English and ICT education in order to improve and enhance the education standards and skills in Sri Lanka.

#### **Technology companies lead collaboration to improve global education assessments**

PISA, TIMSS join forces with Cisco, Intel and Microsoft to develop the next generation of assessments.

### Programmes & Projects

#### **Personalised learning puts students in a class of their own**

A new learning platform is giving the traditional classroom a radical makeover. Using innovative ICTs, iClass is putting pupils at the centre of the learning experience and providing them with more control over what they learn.

### Resources

#### **An administrators' guide to interactive learning**

This eBook provides guidance on planning for technology use, addressing the needs of the school district's stakeholders, and describing the technologies that work and the support that makes them effective and cost-effective solutions.

#### **Microtraining as a support mechanism for informal learning**

The Microtraining method is being developed as a mechanism to support predominantly informal learning activities by using flexible mechanisms such as eLearning.

### **Gender and ICTs for development: A global source book**

The global source book features five case studies illustrating ways in which women have been able to make the most of digital opportunities.

### **VoiceThread – Interactive multimedia albums for collaborative work in the classroom**

A VoiceThread is a collaborative, multimedia slide show that holds images, documents, and videos and allows people to leave comments in multiple ways - using voice, text, audio file, or video.

### **Travians – A new browser simulation game**

Travians is a free online browser game with educational potential in which you rise to the challenge of everyday life as a villager.

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## **News & Events**

### **Chinese and Egyptian laureates receives UNESCO prize for the use of ICT in Education**

Director-General of UNESCO, Koïchiro Matsuura, awarded the 2008 UNESCO King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa Prize for the Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in Education to the Chinese and Egyptian laureates, Zhang Deming and Hoda Baraka. Mr Matsuura presented each of the laureates with a diploma and US\$25,000 during the ceremony at UNESCO Headquarters, in the presence of the Minister of Education of Bahrain, Majed Bin Ali Al-Noaimi.

Professor Zhang Deming, President of Shanghai TV University, received the prize on behalf of his university for its project “Turning the Digital Divide into Digital Opportunity: The Project for Building the Digital Lifelong Learning System” in Shanghai. The project reaches 230 community learning centres in the Shanghai area and addresses the needs for the digital literacy of students, lifelong learners, working adults, senior residents and members of the general public from diversified backgrounds.

The project is exemplary both because of its quality and scale. Through satellite and network systems, high-quality digital educational resources are made available to remote and underdeveloped regions in China, including training teachers in rural areas and providing information technology services and teaching resources to rural schools. It also provides lifelong learning support to four million Shanghai residents and to an equal number of migrant workers. There are plans to use the programme to assist African and Asian countries in developing lifelong learning systems.

Dr Hoda Baraka, of the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology of Egypt, was honoured for her leadership in the implementation of several national ICT projects in education. These include the ICT-In-Education Programme: Toward Ubiquitous Reachability to All Learners, an initiative consisting of an array of exemplary programmes designed to provide digital opportunities to Egypt’s citizens; and the Egyptian Education Initiative, which covers 2,000 schools, 17 public universities and 1,000 information technology clubs. The initiative has provided

training to over 64,000 teachers and trains a further 45,000 teachers and administrators in digital literacy. The national projects aim to promote the use of ICT to enhance the quality of education, to fight illiteracy, and to provide quality and equitable education to remote areas, while addressing the needs of gender education.

The laureates were chosen from among 67 projects from 47 Member States or observers. The Prize was created in 2005 and is placed under the patronage of HM King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

**Further information:**

- [Chinese and Egyptian laureates to receive UNESCO prize for the use of ICT in Education](#)

**Related links:**

- [ICTs in Education Prize: call for nominations](#)
- [Belgium and U.S.A.-based projects to receive 2007 UNESCO King Hamad Bin Isa Al-Khalifa Prize](#)
- [ICT in Education Prize: call for nominations](#)
- [UNESCO announces laureates of ICTs in education prize](#)
- [Call for candidates for prize on the use of ICT in education](#)

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- [UNESCO "ICT in Education" Announcement e-newsletter](#)

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## **UN works with Mongolia to close the digital-divide**

Over 50 senior Mongolian government officials received training in December from the United Nations on the use of Information and Communication technology (ICT) to promote the landlocked country's development.

The officials - heads of departments and agencies in government ministries - discovered during a three-day workshop in Ulaanbaatar the use of ICT as a tool for development and the link between ICT and the Millennium Development Goals.

The workshop was organized by the United Nations Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (APCICT), in partnership with the Information and Communications Technology Authority of Mongolia (ICTA), the World Bank and INTEC Co., Ltd. It also marked the first national roll out of the Academy of ICT Essentials for government leaders, a flagship training curriculum developed by APCICT.

The course was customized to use case studies, discussion topics and group exercises that are specifically related to Mongolia's needs and policies. All the training materials were prepared in both English and Mongolian and the entire session, including group discussions, was simultaneously interpreted.

"I am very glad to participate in the Academy because it provided a unique opportunity for different government ministries to come together to exchange views and gain better understanding of ICT for development," said Turboid Bat-Orgil of the Mineral Resources and Petroleum Authority of Mongolia. "We discussed the challenges we face and came to a common understanding on how to further develop Mongolia through the use of ICT."

Hyeun-Suk Rhee, Director of APCICT, observed that Mongolia had made ICT a national priority since the establishment of ICTA in 2004. Changes have been made to the legal and regulatory framework for ICT and the e-Mongolia national programme has been developed to make it easier to connect the majority of the country to the Internet in a cost-effective manner.

"The adoption and integration of the Academy as part of the country's strategy to build ICT capacity is a crucial element in developing an inclusive and people-centred information society in Mongolia," said Ms. Rhee.

The Academy is an eight-module training programme designed to help equip policymakers with essential knowledge and skills to embrace ICT as a means for national development. The courses cover subjects ranging from the link between ICT and development to e-government applications.

Mongolia's Academy of Management was founded in 1924 as the first high educational institute in the country. It trains more than 1,500 government officials every year. Academy officials announced at the workshop that they will offer a Continuing Education Programme, with all eight Academy modules, starting from March 2009.

### **Further information:**

- [UN Works with Mongolia to Close the Digital-Divide](#)

### **Related links:**

- [UN-APCICT Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders](#)
- [UN helps strengthen Mongolia and Pacific Island nations' information and communication technology capabilities](#)
- [UN appeals for funds to bridge 'digital divide' in the Asia-Pacific region](#)
- [UN ESCAP's ICT training centre launches three new initiatives to bridge the digital divide](#)

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- [UNESCO "ICT in Education" Announcement e-newsletter](#)

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### **India to link 18000 colleges under new ICT in Education plan**

The central government has approved a new scheme to use Information Communication Technology (ICT) in providing personalized and interactive knowledge modules to students.

Officials have set aside Rs.4612 crore (about US\$9.5 Millions) for the 11<sup>th</sup>, Five Year Plan for the National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The mission will generate content and provide connectivity to institutes and learners.

Under the new plan, a “National Knowledge Network” will be set up by extending computer infrastructure and connecting over 18,000 colleges in the country. High quality personalized and interactive knowledge modules will be developed for all learners in higher education institutions and provided online through the National Knowledge network.

The provision of low-cost-low-power computers and access devices for learners and institutions aims to enhance the reach of the network. The Mission will furthermore have a component of teacher empowerment through proper training to enable teachers to make the best use of the e-contents.

The mission will also seek to improve the standards of education in governmental colleges as well as private colleges. Support and cooperation between federal states, institutions and individual experts will be an integral part of the Mission as well.

“The projected results of the scheme would be enhancement of access to quality education, making available knowledge modules in cyber space and optimal utilization of available resources by using of ICT for educating the masses, especially those inhibited in remotely located areas and places at a disadvantage,” an official of the Ministry of Human Resource Development said.

**Further information:**

- [National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology](#)

**Related links:**

- [CCEA approves National Mission on Education through ICT](#)
- [Govt approves ICT scheme for personalized knowledge to students](#)
- [India launches a new scheme on ICT in Education, minister says](#)
- [Training-the-Trainers Workshop in Information Literacy for South and Central Asia inaugurated in India](#)
- [ICT in school education - the model of the Byrraju Foundation](#)
- [UNESCO publishes a book on Open Access to Knowledge in South Asia](#)

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**Philippines' Department of Education Secretary urges educators to optimize existing ICT programmes**

Department of Education (DepEd) Secretary Jesli Lapus has called for the optimum use of Information and Communication technology to deliver quality education and enhance institutional efficiency worthy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Mr Lapus made the call during the National Educators' Congress in Baguio City, where he also cited the department's effort to provide ICT-enriched learning

materials, Internet connectivity and computer laboratories to public schools through the assistance of the private sector.

The DepEd Chief stressed that “it is about time that we effectively use ICT in teaching and learning as well as in managing the delivery of services.”

Some of the sessions on the second day of the Educators’ Congress focused on ICT tools that can be used to enhance productivity among teachers, school heads, education managers, and field office administrators.

These sessions aim to provide real and live examples of practices of DepEd's ICT partners. “Introducing new stuff to educators and learners can be useless if they cannot harness and build on existing ICT initiatives,” said Mr Lapus.

Ayala Foundation, Intel, USAID, SMART, Oracle and Microsoft are just some of the institutions that support DepEd in its goal to bring digital literacy to students in the Philippines and make them more competitive with the country’s progressive neighbours.

DepEd has increased its ICT-related efforts to sustain the initiatives that these groups have started. This year, Mr Lapus instructed the department's budget chief to provide additional operating funds to schools which have dropped connections to cover Internet subscription fees and incremental electric consumption charges.

Mr Lapus said “Before I assumed leadership at DepEd, the department had several programmes that, when improved, continue to be relevant to our public schools. Alongside the creation of new programmes on digital literacy, there is still a need to build on and continue existing meritorious programs.”

The department’s ICT4E or Information Communication Technology for Education, the strategic plan which has just been completed, builds on earlier efforts, strategies, and interventions developed by DepEd in partnership with its stakeholders. It is a road map on what, when, where, why, and how DepEd will employ and integrate ICT in the delivery of learning competencies, initially in the core subjects of English, Science and Mathematics.

**Further information:**

- [DepED Updates](#)

**Related links:**

- [Department of Education \(Republic of the Phillippines\)](#)
- [Public schools in the Philippines get free ICT learning tool](#)
- [Philippines: 200,000 public school teachers trained in ICT](#)
- ["One laptop per child" - Intel continues cooperation with Philippine Department of Education](#)

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### **Sri Lanka calls 2009 the year of English and ICT**

This year, 2009, has been declared the year of English and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) education in order to improve and enhance the educational standards and skills in Sri Lanka.

Education Minister Susil Premajayantha told the *Sunday Observer* that the declaration will highlight ICT areas that need to be improved and enhanced in Sri Lanka. He said that in order to achieve these goals, the ministry has initiated and updated various ICT programmes around the island to offer access to even those in rural areas. He cited the example of Penideniya College which has enhanced the English skills of teachers in the Kandy area. The fully-equipped college can accommodate up to 400 teachers. It has computer laboratories, libraries and a self-access centre.

To upgrade English education in Sri Lanka, 41 senior English teachers have been sent to the Language University in Hyderabad, India for a three month English training programme. Another step has been taken, along with the Defence Ministry, to train 605 cadet officers as English teachers. They have been assigned to teach English at schools in remote areas such as Moneragala, Batticaloa, Ampara, Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa.

ICT has been introduced as a subject for the O/L examination which has been chosen by about 30,000 students as a subject. Measures are due to be taken to introduce ICT as a subject for the A/L examination from this year onwards.

Mr Premajayantha said: "We have close links with the ICT faculties of the Colombo, Moratuwa and Peradeniya universities. We also have 100 CRCs (Computer Resource Centres) that are used by school leavers providing them with a six month ICT training programme and in some instances our ICT teachers are trained there too. So far, we have initiated 3,400 computer access centres under various projects by using our education fund. With the assistance of the Asian Development Bank we have also set up the Secondary Education Modernization Project to enhance secondary ICT education programmes."



**Further information:**

- [2009 – The year of English and ICT](#)
- [Measures to upgrade English and ICT education \(Sunday Observer\)](#)

**Related links:**

- [With ADB's help, Sri Lanka's secondary students are finding better schools and programs to provide skills for a changing job market](#)

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**Technology companies lead collaboration to improve global education assessments**

Three leading technology companies today announced a collaboration aimed at transforming global educational assessment and improving learning outcomes. At the Learning and Technology World Forum in London, Cisco Systems Inc., Intel Corporation and Microsoft Corp. unveiled plans to underwrite a multi-sector research project to develop new assessment approaches, methods and technologies for measuring the success of 21st-century teaching and learning in classrooms around the world. During the session, the three companies called upon educational leaders, governments and other corporations to join in the effort.

The three companies also announced the appointment of Barry McGaw, currently the director of the Melbourne Education Research Institute at the University of Melbourne, as executive director of the project. Mr McGaw will oversee an executive committee, a project lead team and up to 50 leading experts and innovators in academia and government, to collaborate on the research, and assist in influencing the development of future international and national assessments.

He said: "Shrinking resources and market pressures mean that education can no longer be the sole responsibility of governments. Building the future workforce will require a commitment from the private sector to partner with public institutions.

"Reforming assessment is essential to enabling any systemic change in education. And change on a global scale is required to equip students of today with the skills

they need to succeed in the workforce of tomorrow. PISA's (OECD Programme for International Student Assessment) international education assessments focus on key competencies in reading, mathematics and science.

"In PISA 2003, we took a step by adding an assessment of problem solving, but one limited to analogical reasoning. We hoped to add Information and Communications technology competence in PISA 2006 but did not succeed. We all need now to work together to advance assessment practice."

The assessment research and development project spearheaded by Cisco, Intel and Microsoft has received the support of major international assessment organizations. Specifically, OECD and the International Association of the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) have expressed interest in using the evidence-based and verifiable output of the 21st-century skills assessment to inform the development of the next versions of PISA and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), their respective international benchmarks.

"In the global economy, it is the world's best-performing education systems, not simply improvement by national standards, that have become the yardstick for educational success," said Andreas Schleicher, head of Education Indicators and Analysis, OECD. "That is why more and more countries measure the relative strengths and weaknesses of their education systems with OECD's global PISA assessments. To do so effectively, it is crucially important that these assessments continue to evolve to reflect the skills that matter for individuals and economies. Technology-based assessments will be critical to this and the project brings together key partners that can help PISA make this happen," he said.

"IEA is committed to the greater integration of IT into all its assessments, especially TIMSS and the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study," said Seamus Hegarty, chair of the IEA. "This reflects the changes in learning environments and the potential of technology to enhance the teaching and learning process. We look forward to working with the collaboration to achieve our common goals for young learners."

Based on extensive research, Cisco, Intel and Microsoft concluded that most education systems have not kept pace with the dramatic changes in the economy and the skill sets that are required for students to succeed. These skills include the ability to think critically and creatively; to work cooperatively; and to adapt to the evolving use of technology in business and society.

The project will focus on several key areas that will offer the most promising opportunities for transforming education and assessment. Teams of educators and academics will focus on enabling education assessment methodologies and technologies, effective learning environments, and replicable ICT-enabled teaching and assessment methods that foster the development and assessment of the skills students will need to succeed. To accelerate the project in time to influence the next versions of PISA and TIMSS, the project will review successful classroom practices for the teaching and testing of 21st-century skills and draw implications for large-scale assessments.

**Further information:**

- [Cisco, Intel and Microsoft Lead Collaboration to Improve Global Education Assessments](#)

**Related links:**

- [Programme for International Student Assessment \(PISA\)](#)
- [Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study \(TIMSS\)](#)

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**Programmes & Projects**

**Personalised learning puts students in a class of their own**

A new learning platform is giving the traditional classroom a radical makeover. Using innovative ICT technology, iClass is putting pupils at the centre of the learning experience and providing them with more control over what they learn.

Every parent believes their child is unique. And they are right. Every pupil has their own individual strengths and weaknesses, and their own particular way of learning. However, putting this common sense observation into practice is no mean feat and our schools have generally not been very successful at personalising the learning experience.

In fact, the image of classrooms as “knowledge factories” has not changed much since the Industrial Revolution, despite the major advances in teaching methods that have occurred. This model holds that teachers input information, pupils process it, and out comes the learning in neat little packages.

“A school is not a factory,” bemoaned British novelist JL Carr in his acclaimed novel, *The Harpole Report*, which tells the story of a primary school headmaster. “Its raison d’être is to provide opportunity for experience.”

In recent decades, learning theories have shifted to a “student-centred” focus, and moved attention away from the teacher, as the imparter of all knowledge and wisdom, towards the pupil or student, while the educator’s role has become more that of a mentor and facilitator. However, the standardisation of demanding school

curricula and the often-large sizes of classrooms make the transition to this more personalised form of learning difficult.

ICTs present an opportunity to place the learner at the centre of the learning experience. Traditionally, computers and other information technologies have been treated as subjects in curricula, as word processors or, with the advent of the Internet, as powerful research tools for assignments. But ICTs are gradually evolving to become an integral component of the learning experience in general.

The [EU-funded iClass](#) project has been working to develop an innovative learning platform based on the concept of self-regulated personalised learning (SRPL) which is designed to empower pupils, aged 14 to 18, to take more control of the learning process. Led by Siemens IT Solutions and Services, the project brings together 17 partners from the EU, Turkey and Israel to develop an intelligent cognitive-based open learning system and environment.

“We aim to make education more effective, worthwhile and, above all, enjoyable,” said Eric Meyvis, the project’s coordinator. “Pupils are becoming increasingly unmotivated. We are using ICTs, the internet and an attractive interface to make learning more fun.”

SRPL boosts a pupil’s motivation to learn by personalising the learning process, placing an emphasis on self-direction and self-reliance, and trusting the learner to make mindful and meaningful choices. The model follows three distinct stages: planning; learning; and; reflecting.

In practice, this means that a teacher creates a learning plan based on a goal to be achieved, suggesting some sub-goals and activities, while some activities can be left “open” for the student to shape. Students then click on the “Learn” button to start the assignment. During this process, a system called “tips and alerts” provides the pupil with some optional guidance. A personal journal encourages the learner to reflect on their choices and what they have learnt.

Teenagers spend 15 per cent of their time in a school setting, while adults spend a meagre three per cent in formal education. The upshot of this is the increasing recognition of informal, as well as lifelong, learning as an important aspect of education. The web-based iClass platform is well placed to link seamlessly the formal and informal learning environment.

It has been designed to provide pupils with ubiquitous access to encourage them to exploit formal and informal learning environments to the maximum.

In addition, by promoting greater self-reliance and a passion for inquiry among pupils, iClass helps equip them with crucial attitudes for the emerging knowledge-based economy, which requires people to update and upgrade their skills and knowledge constantly throughout their lives.

At first, the iClass project set itself the ambitious and unrealistic aim of creating an electronic substitute for the teacher.

“We were convinced that the platform could replace teachers, but we soon discovered that this was too technology oriented. We refocused the project to strike more of a balance between technology and pedagogy,” said Mr Meyvis.

Instead, the platform has evolved to aid the teacher in empowering his or her charges. It also promotes a more open approach to education. However, this departure places new demands on teachers.

“It is a big challenge for schools to switch from traditional learning to iClass methodology, and that is why we have developed a teacher training package. We piloted the training material and teachers were generally enthusiastic about it and the platform,” said Mr Meyvis.

The platform also recognises that the school curriculum in different countries places different demands on teachers, and so has built-in flexibility to allow the system to be customised.

“We have created a versatile infrastructure and it will be up to developers to take the next step and customise the platform for individual countries,” Said Mr Meyvis.

A leading German publisher is already developing content for the German market and opportunities abound for developers in other countries to tailor the system to other national markets.

iClass was funded by the ICT strand of the Union’s Sixth Framework Programme for research.

**Source: ICTresults**

**Further information:**

- [Personalised learning puts students in a class of their own](#)

**Related links:**

- [ICT Results](#)
- [Moving away from "one for all" learning to "one for me" Personalised Learning Environments](#)
- [Actively using the internet and social software for modern e-learning](#)

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## **Resources**

### **An administrators' guide to interactive learning**

Students today are interactive learners; they spend much of their time at home engaging with information and other people online, creating content, learning, and sharing ideas. In classrooms that value such student creativity, students are encouraged to create original content and share the results using a variety of technology tools. Classrooms that offer the opportunities that engage students in interactive learning realize better results. This eBook provides guidance on planning for technology use and it addresses the needs of the district's stakeholders, and describes the technologies that work and the support that makes them effective and cost-effective solutions. You will need to register, free of charge, to read this eBook online.

#### **Read the eBook :**

- [An administrators' guide to interactive learning](#)

#### **Related links:**

- [Theory and Practice of Online Learning - Second edition released](#)
- [The eSkwela Project](#)
- [Online mathematics and science learning resources](#)
- [“Endless possibilities for learning”: Thinkfinity website](#)
- [Toolkit for creating effective e-learning activities](#)

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## **Gender and ICTs for Development: A Global Source Book**

Around the world Information and Communication technologies have changed the lives of individuals, organisations and indeed, entire nations. ICTs can have profound implications for women and men in terms of employment, education, health, environmental sustainability and community development. Women want to have access to information and to engage in communication that will improve their livelihoods and help them to achieve their human rights, yet, due to gender inequality in the information society, they are often prevented from accessing and shaping ICTs.

This book features five case studies illustrating ways in which women have been able to make the most of digital opportunities, examining:

- E-commerce in Bhutan;
- Entrepreneurship by women workers in China;
- Post-conflict communication using radio and ICTs in Sierra Leone;
- Sustainable fisheries production in Ghana;
- Information exchange related to HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean.

The book also provides an extensive annotated bibliography of the international literature on gender and ICTs for development, in particular rural development, and relevant web resources.

### **Read the book:**

- [Gender and ICTs for Development: A Global Source Book](#)

### **Related links:**

- [Oxfam](#)
- [From veil to camera: Empowering women through skills training](#)
- [Appropriate and accessible ICT tools for women's education and empowerment](#)
- [Gender Evaluation Methodology for ICT-related Projects](#)
- [Documentary Films on Women and ICT in South Asia](#)

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### **Microtraining as a support mechanism for informal learning**

For informal learning to flourish it is crucial to develop flexible mechanisms which support this kind of learning, while avoiding the drawbacks that coincide with informality. The Microtraining method is being developed as a mechanism to support predominantly informal learning activities.

Most companies are confronted with fast changing learning demands and the need of new concepts. Companies very much overestimate and over invest in formal training programmes, while missing out on the opportunities to foster more natural and informal learning processes. For informal learning to flourish it is crucial to develop flexible mechanisms which support this kind of learning, while avoiding the drawbacks that coincide with informality. The Microtraining method is being developed as a mechanism to support predominantly informal learning activities.

Microtraining should be understood as a learning arrangement of about 15 minutes for each learning occasion. Each session contains elements like an active start, demo or exercise, feedback or discussion and a shared view on how to proceed. Such an occasion can be face-to-face, online or in mixed modes depending on the circumstances and possibilities.

The concept is based on a number of theoretical considerations of which Social Constructivism is an important element, next to the notions of “Connectivism” and the “Levels of Mastery”. Microtraining requires an organisational framework to effectively apply this method relative to the learning issue, the skills of the initiator and the employees and their daily working schedule.

In practice, it has been shown that the framework helps to collectively develop solutions for workplace related learning with ample opportunities for information transfer. Microtraining supports informal learning close to the workplace, thereby increasing the learning capacity of the company.

The Microtraining concept is being developed within the framework of the European Union’s Leonardo da Vinci programme.

#### **Further information:**

- [Microtraining as a support mechanism for informal learning](#)

#### **Related links:**

- [eLearning papers](#)
- [UN launches e-Learning initiative in over 160 developing countries](#)



- [Create your own E-Learning](#)

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**VoiceThread – Interactive multimedia albums for collaborative work in the classroom**

A VoiceThread is a collaborative, multimedia slide show that holds images, documents, and videos and allows people to leave comments in five ways - using voice (with a microphone or phone), text, audio file, or video (via a webcam). Users can share a VoiceThread with friends, students and colleagues for them to record comments too.

Users can doodle (draw on top of the media) while commenting, use multiple identities and pick which comments are shown through moderation. VoiceThreads can even be embedded on websites and exported to MP3 players or DVDs as archival movies.

With VoiceThread, group conversations are collected and shared in one place from anywhere in the world.

There are several subscription plans for VoiceThread. Apart from a basic free account, there is a designated network for K-12 students and educators called "Ed.VoiceThread", which may be subscribed to for a small fee.

In an educational setting, Ed.VoiceThread can be used, for instance for creating and collaborating on digital stories and documentaries, practicing and documenting language skills, exploring geography and culture, solving maths problems, or simply finding and honing student voices.

**Further information:**

- [VoiceThread](#)

**Related links:**

- [Making the case for voicethread and interactive digital storytelling](#)

- [Living and learning with new media: Summary of findings from the Digital Youth Project](#)
- [Serious virtual worlds](#)

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**Travians – A new browser simulation game**

Travians is a free online browser game with educational potential in which the user rises to the challenge of everyday life as a villager.

This means more than just specializing in an occupation, building a home or deciding whether one enjoys games more than fighting: The most important thing is communication and collaboration within the huge village community. This is the only way to get fun points and build up strong guilds.

The focus of the game is not on building up resources and armies, to conquer the resources and armies of other players. Instead, the focus appears to be on building the resources and levels of your character and accumulating wealth within your village.

Online games such as Travians can have a big potential in teaching and learning if educators chose suitable material and make the game part of the overall lesson, rather than letting children play unattended without any applied pedagogical strategy.

**Further information:**

- [Travians online game](#)

**Related links:**

- [Travians wiki](#)
- [The potential of e-games as a teaching-learning tool](#)

- [Teacher Tools: On-line resources for teachers](#)
- [Mobile phone games teach about HIV/AIDS](#)
- [Ecological Footprint Calculator](#)
- [Visit the Virtual Forbidden City](#)

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