Kent *IdeasFactory* Live
Consultation Notes

Date/Time	10 July 2002, 13:00 – 16:00pm	
Venue	Training Centre, Dartford Technology College	
Facilitator	Amanda Bradshaw	
Attendees	Amanda Bradshaw	Worth Media
	Andrew Sleigh	
	Dominique Lee	
	Steve Wells	Institute of Electrical Engineers
	Kiminder Bedi	4 Learning
	Philip Porter	Kent County Council
	David Ellin	Dartford Technology College
	Kathy Wilson	Whitstable Community College
	Kris Fidock	Invicta Grammar School
	John Fulton	Hartsdown Technology College

Purpose of consultation

- To gain feedback from teachers to inform a final project specification
- To understand how participating schools seek to benefit from involvement in the project and establish measures of success
- To identify any potential barriers to involving teachers in the development process

1. Introductions

The consultation began with introductions and an overview of the project.

2. Aims and objectives

DE: What is the 'real' objective of the project? Why should schools get involved? What is the involvement of Channel 4 and IEE? What are the strategic aims? What has shifted over the past 2 years in terms of changing aims and objectives? Do Channel 4 understand that e-learning has moved on a lot over the past 2 years?

In response KB explained the Channel 4 remit to “nurture new talent”. SW talked about the IEE as keen to encourage young people into careers in engineering, and pointed to the fact that funding of the project will help to raise IEE profile.

DE: felt the project was trying to be all things to all men. We need to more clearly define the project audience, objectives etc.

WM: Explained the desired outcomes of the proposal.

Conclusion:

There is a need for all project stakeholders, especially Ch 4 and IEE to be very clear and communicate what their strategic and project aims are, what outcomes they are looking for, what precisely their involvement in the project will be.

3. Feedback from teachers on proposed *IdeasFactory* Live concept

KW reported that she would find the proposed resource very useful for her work with pupils re web design. Pupils advance quickly and overtake her skill levels, and she is therefore not able to progress their learning beyond a certain point. A structured multimedia learning resource would accommodate their needs.

JF highlighted that the learning resources/web tutorials need to be non-product specific and at a basic publishing level universal software tools could be used e.g. text editors, Microsoft Word etc.

KF queried how much time he, as a teacher, could allow learners to complete a web tutorial and move along the learning pathway. He stressed that his remit was to teach Science, not web skills – spending time in a Science class teaching web skills does not fit into his curriculum requirements. We need to be very conscious of the how much time a learner may take to complete a tutorial and create content. We need to understand the skills levels of teachers and students in the schools to estimate how long it would take to create multimedia content. There is a need for learners to see results from their learning very quickly.

KF queried why spend time learning multimedia skills – what does that bring to learning about Science?

There was a discussion around how best to ensure that the resource works across the curriculum and be as relevant to English lessons as to Science. No clear outcomes came out of this discussion, but it was clear that this area needs careful consideration.

Discussion re whether the resource/project should target very basic skill levels. No broad agreement here, but JF was very clear that Hartsdown would require this.

Broad agreement that the resource/project should work to illustrate best use of ICT in teaching and learning.

Verbal instructions are desirable to address low literacy levels. Simple steps. Learning by doing, not reading.

Any resource produced has to be very visually engaging.

Important to measure and track how the resource enhances learning in the classroom. DE recommended introducing feedback and tracking mechanisms to encourage students. Peer to peer review may also have potential.

Conclusions:

Teachers were significantly confused by the changing nature of the project over time. There is a need to put the history to bed and work up an agreed spec that has real buy in from teachers.

Teachers found the concept difficult to grasp. To gain buy-in from teachers it would help to develop a visual treatment of the concept with supporting functionality.

While there was strong interest in the proposal from some teachers, others were less enthusiastic. The attendees had a wide range of different needs and desired different outcomes from the project. This presents challenges re finding a solution that is right for

every school. Significant concerns were raised re relevance to curriculum, time it would take for learners to complete tutorials, range of skill levels to accommodate. The participating schools range from a very basic level of implementation of e-learning to a sophisticated approach, and an agreed solution will need to accommodate this difference. Currently the proposal is catering more for schools with low levels of e-learning, and may not be relevant to schools with high skill levels and good facilities (e.g. Dartford, Cornwallis).

There is a need for WM to meet with Ch 4, clarify aims and objectives and the role of stakeholders, prior to producing a project specification.

4. Benefits of involvement for schools

Teachers reported the following ways they would seek to benefit from involvement in the project:

- Strategic partnership with Ch 4 / IEE – profile from Ch 4 publicity brings kudos. Heads of schools will like this and therefore agree to progress project and commit staff time
- To raise the profile of e-learning within school and take away an e-learning vehicle that can be used by staff
- Personal development – more money / promotion for individual teacher

Most teachers agreed to make themselves available over the Summer holiday to comment on a draft specification document, and input into the project.

Conclusions:

It is key that we incorporate delivery of benefits to schools/teachers into the project spec and ensure they are delivered.

Teachers will need to commit time to input into project. Previously the project incorporated a cost to cover teacher involvement – suggested £200/day (to pay for cover) or alternative offer.

5. Meeting in Brighton with John Plunkett, Cornwallis

John Plunkett was unable to attend the consultation session, and attended a separate meeting in WM offices on Friday 12th July:

JP explained how Cornwallis would like the project progressed. He pointed to the fact that internal meetings have been held at Cornwallis re Kent IF Live, and the school is ready to implement the following project:

2 members of staff from Cornwallis would teach 50 students how to present ideas from two curriculum subjects (Science and Art) using multimedia technology. The project would train two teachers to become competent in use of multimedia technology to enable them to teach students multimedia skills. He highlighted that the project must link clearly with existing curriculum criteria, and pointed out that the skill levels of teachers at Cornwallis are generally high i.e. minimal training reqd. This will not be true of all participating schools.

JP stressed that students must not lose classroom learning time through learning to use the multimedia technology. The lesson should be used for content development. Multimedia skills must be taught outside of the lesson e.g. computer club, independent learning on behalf of the students. Participating teachers need to know that all student time spent on computers will also enhance their subject based learning and skills.

We need to be aware of the skill base of teachers and students likely to be using the resource.

Cornwallis know they have the resources and people to achieve a successful outcome from the project.

JP had reservations about the Brilliance document, in particular a ‘black box’ solution.

JP is keen to know:

How the project will link to the curriculum. Schools require a clear outline i.e. the project will take X number of lessons, require X resources, have X outcomes which are relevant to the curriculum (teacher needs to be able to tick boxes against curriculum requirements).

What the end product outlined in the WM proposal doc is going to be. Will it be more than a site teaching you how to make web pages? Why should schools use the IFL resource and not carry out similar work independently? This approach would work best for schools with low skill levels re e-learning. Schools like Cornwallis would not see significant value in using the resource because they can draw on existing tutorials and resources independently.

AB proposed that the focus of the project needs to be the communication of ideas – multimedia is a great way of achieving this. There needs to be clear guidance re how to link the project to schemes of work within the curriculum.

The project needs to present a number of options re schemes of work. Teachers should have a limited choice of schemes to apply to classroom learning e.g. biography of an inventor, take his invention and describe the science involved in its creation. JP suggested building multimedia teams amongst students to support the delivery of their projects. These teams could work across years and subjects – the unifying theme is the scheme of work and using multimedia technology to present content. It will be important to provide an example of how the project will work if teachers are to fully understand and implement it.

JP identified the following benefits for participating schools/teachers/students:

- Offer something appealing to teachers. Specifically Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) who are keen to learn more, energetic, have ICT skills, want to climb the career ladder, be involved in frontline enterprising work. Frame the project so their involvement will elevate their status in the school
- Kudos for Heads. Helps schools position themselves for funding e.g. re Specialist Technical College status
- Teachers receive training on using publishing resources
- Teachers and students learn how to create content which has a ‘wow’ factor
- Students have to be interested in order to want to be involved i.e. competition needs to engage them
- Potential for a community of schools to share information. If the solution appeals to a wide range of people e.g. primary schools, parents etc. it has potential to involve a wider community

AB expressed concern that this approach might not work for schools with lower multimedia skill levels than Cornwallis. DL pointed out that if the focus was on content and communicating ideas, rather than use of multimedia tools, and this was made clear to participating schools then the project would be relevant and achievable across the board. A

school with low skill levels would need to have as good a chance of winning the competition as Cornwallis – the judging criteria have to relate to creativity, ideas, content etc., not use of multimedia tools, and this has to be communicated to schools if they are to buy into the project.

Target audience:

JP recommended targeting year 9 specifically. Reasons were that this year group is settled within the school and is not undertaking GCSE's or A levels. They will be taking their SATs (Standard Assessment Tests) in May but have the opportunity for more open learning in June and July. This project would be a good way to introduce Year 9 students to yr 10 learning.

The following project model was discussed:

- Website communicating briefly what the project is about, presenting schemes of work with clear guidance re curriculum, and explaining how to use multimedia to create great content
- The site should refer users to existing learning resources, and not attempt to create supporting materials or additional web tutorials
- The website could be present instructions for application in the classroom e.g. in week 1 you will do this and achieve this. Printouts and material evidence to demonstrate what students have achieved and learnt should support instructions.
- Focus should be on the 'virtual classroom' where students can progress at their own pace.
- Students need feedback to congratulate them on their progress

References:

Knowledgenet.com	http://knowledgenet.com/
River deep	http://www.riverdeep.net/index.jhtml
Litnum.com	http://www.litnum.com

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Action required

(This list is **cumulative** from the last meeting minutes, together with new items raised at the current meeting).

Description	Date	Action	Complete
Add description of action required	Day 00/00/00	Name	(tick)
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