



Report: Microsoft Validation Workshop

South Africa & Kenya

Description of Project

SchoolNet SA was commissioned by Quick Refresh (QF5 Consulting) to run two Microsoft Validation workshops – one in Bryanston, South Africa and one in Nairobi, Kenya. Quick Refresh's CEO Samer Chidiac had already run a number of these workshops in countries throughout the Middle East and in Africa, and he was able to brief SchoolNet's Megan Rademeyer on the content of the workshop and also provided some training materials. In order to organise and share the training materials a OneNote was created and the videos and PowerPoints that were used were shared via the following OneDrive link: <http://1drv.ms/1N30D1V>. In addition to providing a record of what was covered during the training validation workshop, these materials can be used when delegates run workshops of their own.

Topics covered

The programme for both workshops were similar – with the following sessions being covered. The exact order of activities was shuffled to accommodate the training time available for the two workshops.



Sway: When delegates arrived they were asked to produce a Sway to introduce themselves. This activity provided an immediate hands-on experience of using one of the new tools as well as an opportunity to sign up for a Microsoft account if a participant did not yet have one. The presentations allowed delegates to get to know one another and for the facilitator to gauge the IT skills of the group.

Welcome and Introduction: Once everyone had arrived, delegates were welcomed to the workshop and given an overview of what the Trainer Validation Workshop would cover. Those delegates who had completed their Sways then showed these to the others to introduce themselves.

21st Century Learning Design: This session was conducted as a plenary for the most part, with delegates also watching a video on a case study school in Malaysia. As part of this session the group was divided up and given five minutes to think of as many uses for an every-day object as they could (a ring, a sock and a hair clip). This activity was a good ice-breaker, and also got a discussion going around what is innovation. Throughout the training session, delegates reflected back on this activity and the idea that innovation involves thinking out of the box and using what you have in creative and novel ways.

Microsoft Educator Network & Microsoft Educator Community: This session provided delegates with an overview of the new Microsoft Educator Community as well as an opportunity to register and create one's profile. The old Microsoft Educator Network was also shown as a means of comparison and because some relevant courseware has not yet moved across to the new community.

Teaching with Technology overview and self-assessment: This session saw participants working their way through the self-assessment activity of this courseware. This provided an opportunity for potential trainers to experience the course first-hand and to see what the various modules covered. Delegates were then given pointers for facilitating this workshop with others, and tips for launching the program and providing guidance to ensure that their trainees will go on to complete the course.

Office Mix: Delegates saw examples of how Office Mix can be used to enhance a PowerPoint and as a tool for flipping the classroom. They then downloaded the Office Mix plugin and created some slides of their own.

21CLD Courseware: Delegates were shown examples of different lessons which were exemplary activities for developing various 21st Century skills. These activities were then discussed using the 21CLD rubrics and framework. The examples used were not those usually used in this activity as time was short and it was decided to show slides of locally relevant lessons that did not require printing and intensive reading. Nonetheless, delegates were pointed to the online 21CLD materials for further reading.

Office 365 and OneNote Class

Notebook Demo: Microsoft South Africa's Damian Nelson-Higley presented this session in person for the South African workshop and via Skype for Business for the Kenyan workshop. Damian was able to demonstrate how OneNote Class Notebook Creator works as well as other benefits of using Office 365 for Education. For the Kenyan session, an added bonus was that Damian could demonstrate live how well Skype for Business works for conducting online demonstrations.



TeachMeet – Other Microsoft Tools: At the end of each workshop time was set aside for a TeachMeet activity so that delegates could share their favourite Microsoft tools and examples of how they have used these. In some cases “oldies but goodies” were presented – in other words tools such as AutoCollage and Windows Live Movie Maker – which have been around for some time but which teachers and organisations continue to find useful – were shown to the group along with examples of how these have been used. In other cases, newer tools were presented including Cortana, Skype in the Classroom and Microsoft Math. Whilst these sessions provided only a brief glimpse of a range of tools it was worthwhile to see how they are being used and delegates were eager to find out more about some of the offerings presented in their own time.

Course wrap-up and evaluation: At the end of both workshops, delegates were asked to complete the online course evaluation (<http://1drv.ms/1BX4a0f>). In addition to gathering insights about delegates' perceptions of the workshop, this activity also provided an opportunity to introduce Excel Online and the survey tool to delegates who had not previously used this tool.

South Africa Microsoft Validation Workshop

The South African Microsoft Validation Workshop was scheduled to take place as follows:

Dates: Wednesday 25 November to Friday 27 November
Venue: Microsoft offices – Bryanston, South Africa



Microsoft South Africa’s training manager, Victor Ngobeni, invited a range of people from various training organisations, NGOs and ICT companies to attend the workshop and fifteen people indicated that they would be present. Disappointingly, on the first day only five participants arrived.

As the group was so small, and as the year-end is a busy time to be away from one’s workplace, a decision was made to shorten the workshop to two days and the program was adjusted to accommodate the shortened training time whilst still covering all the topics.

One advantage of having a small group was that participants could ask questions without feeling intimidated and the facilitator was able to provide hands-on support when required. The group also got to know one another well and enjoyed finding out more about their various backgrounds as the workshop progressed.

A second South African Microsoft Trainer Validation Workshop will be scheduled in 2016 so that the workshop reaches a wider audience. For this second workshop, delegates will specifically be asked to bring along devices pre-loaded with Microsoft software, or to indicate in advance if a load device is required.



Kenya Microsoft Validation Workshop

Phil Oduor, Microsoft’s Academic Programs Manager – East & Southern Africa arranged the Kenya Microsoft Validation Workshop which took place as follows:

- Dates: Tuesday 1 December to Thursday 3 December
- Venue: KICD

17 people attended the workshop – representing a range of organisations and stakeholders.



Whilst the Kenyan workshop was well attended, training got off to a late start every day as delegates were late to arrive at the venue. The programme was adapted accordingly so that the content could still be covered. Whilst some delegates did not have their own devices, Phil had some loan devices for people to use for the duration of the workshop.



On the whole this group were engaged and enthusiastic about learning more about the various Microsoft tools on offer. A number of delegates had already used some of the tools which were discussed and they willingly shared their experiences with the rest of the group. The IT skills of participants was good and delegates were easily able to follow along and try out the tools themselves.



As a South African facilitator, I felt that this workshop provided me with an excellent opportunity to find out more about the Kenyan education system and to, along with the group, think of ways in which the various Microsoft tools could be used to enhance education in this country.

Conclusion

A number of participants at both workshops indicated that they enjoyed the workshop and found it to be useful. Whilst some delegates knew about some of the tools that were covered, everyone learnt at least one new tool during the trainer validation workshop. Even if participants were learning about a tool that they already knew they appreciated seeing how it could be introduced to others and many remarked that they will make use of the materials provided during this session.

Thank you for the opportunity to facilitate these workshops. Should other opportunities to collaborate present themselves in future, we hope that you will again consider working with SchoolNet SA.

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