

Ludolettre

Improving service delivery through the Internet

Context

Computer use is often associated with the most affluent and educated members of society. In the mid-1980s, Ludolettre, a literacy organization located in Saint-Léonard-d'Aston, Quebec, decided to use computers to teach its adult literacy learners. At the time, this was a revolutionary idea.

Program description

The advantages of using computers very quickly became apparent. Computers made it easier for learners to write numbers and letters, a task that is often difficult for people who may lack fine motor skills. As well, computers allow learners to be neater and to more easily avoid mistakes. A few years ago, Ludolettre also developed its own Web site. The content has been reworked and the site is now used for French and Internet browsing as well as in various family-related situations.

Successes/challenges

Today, the use of computers as teaching tools for literacy students seems to be such a logical and relatively simple solution. However, this was not always the case for Ludolettre. The acquisition of computers was the main stumbling block. As access to the elementary school computer lab became more limited, the organization's board of directors decided to purchase its own equipment. With limited financial resources, Ludolettre's employees sold private computer training to local companies to raise money for new computers.

Another problem soon became apparent. At the beginning, computers were rarely used as part of literacy workshops in other literacy groups. Consequently, teachers had to be trained in computer applications in literacy education. In addition, people were very reluctant to use computers, which were considered too complex. In order to overcome this, Ludolettre called upon its students to provide training to the literacy workshop teachers, who could then add the use of computers to their workshops.

This technique, which also gives students self-esteem, has been a tremendous success. The learners/students have also learned critical thinking and writing skills through access to the Internet, as well as through contacts with literacy learners in other areas through e-mail and instant voice messaging.

Several literacy advocacy organizations across Quebec and abroad are now taking advantage of the distance teaching offered by Ludolettre.

www.ludolettre.qc.ca/frameset.html

These best practices are an excellent way of sharing your experiences with other organizations

in the voluntary sector. If you also have positive experiences on the use of technology in the voluntary sector, the IM-IT Secretariat will be pleased to post your stories. Please contact the IM/IT Secretariat by e-mail at imit@ic.gc.ca.