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## BETT a showcase for new learning opportunities

Published: 28 February, 2012



Microsoft pledged to help 300,000 young people improve their academic attainment as part of its three year commitment to create a Brighter Britain. The campaign aims to equip young people with the real world skills and experiences they need to succeed in today's technology-led society.

Over the next three years, the 'Brighter Britain' campaign will focus on helping schools, teachers and students to use technology improve their results, working to provide a fair chance for all.

This will include introducing the motivational principles of gaming to inspire students in the classroom, launching a new gaming design qualification and providing deeper technology experiences to foster better skills. The introduction of these initiatives will be supported by teachers who are part of Microsoft's Partners in Learning programme.

Steve Beswick, Head of Education at Microsoft commented: "In a world where information is just a search away for any child, we all acknowledge that the ways of teaching are changing and education should not be just about passing exams but developing skills for life. Technology, and the way that students play computer games can be the catalyst to encourage students to get more excited about learning and ultimately be more successful in the future. When we interview at Microsoft we look for people who can problem solve, think broadly, take risks and question the status quo – that's where some of the principles of gaming really come into their own. If you can motivate a team of your friends to victory online, you've got a good chance of making it in the boardroom."

To kick start the Brighter Britain initiative, teachers belonging to Microsoft's Partners in Learning (PiL) network will be working with over 150 schools to encourage understanding of how to use technology, gaming and programming tools to foster key skills such as literacy and numeracy as well as more advance Computer Science capabilities.

Gareth Ritter, Music teacher at Willows High School in Cardiff commented: "My pupils, like so many, play on consoles until the late hours of the morning. In gaming, when they fail a level they don't give up, they are determined to succeed. It's this determination we need to bring into the classroom. Working with other teachers across the UK through Microsoft's Partners in Learning programme has meant I've been able to introduce gaming principles as part of everyday music lessons. Using these tools has had an unbelievable impact on my learners and their ambition to do well."

Microsoft's 'Learning Suite', a set of applications designed specifically for education is now available free of charge to teachers and students as part of the company's three year programme to improve academic attainment and help build a 'Brighter Britain'.

Steve Beswick commented, "Learning Suite incorporates a huge number of tools which teachers – and students – can use to make the curriculum more exciting. All available for free, software such as Kodu Game Lab introduces programming to younger children for the first time, allowing them to create their own world, while teaching aids such as 'Mouse Mischief' promote structured learning in the classroom. We wanted to make all these tools as accessible as possible which is why we've introduced them as a Learning Suite."

Dr. Thomas Lim, Director of the Media Development Agency Singapore said: "As a trade platform for serious games, this year's BETT has certainly met our expectations. We were delighted to receive a lot of interest in our Singapore-made games for young children, particularly from British schools. For example, following BETT, Moomba Music - a Singapore-created music programme that teaches creativity and builds character in young children - will now be used by schools in the Midlands and London. This type of success shows that UK schools are committed to investing in innovative ways to engage children in learning, including collaborating with external organisations, to stay on top of their game."

### Collaborative learning

Global education technology company, Promethean unveiled the ActivTable for public preview at BETT 2012. The new technology shakes up the classroom environment by providing a dynamic and interactive learning experience. ActivTable inspires users to take an active role in their own learning and that of their friends by driving student engagement, participation and creativity.

The ActivTable is aimed towards primary school and special educational needs learners. At 46 inches, the screen provides one of the largest interactive surface areas on the market and allows up to six students to use it at any one time, with ample room for them to work together. The interactive nature of the ActivTable encourages inclusion and collaborative skills such as problem solving, group work, critical thinking and consensus decision making.

With web browser capabilities, individual tool libraries and support for numerous applications and activities, the ActivTable is simple to set up and intuitive to use. Teachers can also create tailor made activities in order to meet core curriculum learning objectives. The ActivTable integrates easily with Promethean and third party resources, content and solutions, including interactive whiteboards.

Education today  
E-Alerts!

POLL

Do you think girls should be taught to be realistic about their future?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

VOTE NOW

Current Results  
Past Results  
Last Results

- ▶ May
- ▶ April
- ▶ March
- ▶ February
- ▶ January

2009

- ▶ December
- ▶ November
- ▶ October
- ▶ September
- ▶ July
- ▶ June
- ▶ May



Speaking at the show, Paul Berry, Chief Marketing Officer, Promethean said: "In a departure from previous years, visitors to BETT Show 2012 can rediscover Promethean and see how it has grown beyond being solely an interactive whiteboard company. Promethean's solutions address the biggest issues concerning educators and schools at the moment; classroom productivity, data driven decision making, assessment for learning and collaborative learning and use integrated technologies to improve teaching and learning."

The Samsung SUR40, an Interactive Table in conjunction with Microsoft Surface software, took centre stage on its stand at the show. The interactive display features PixelSense technology, which gives LCD panels the power to see without the use of cameras. Its thin, large display recognises fingers and hands placed on the screen enabling people to share, collaborate and explore together.

The SDP-860 Visualiser, an efficient and attention grabbing way to present objects, specimens and documents to classrooms or lecture halls of any size was also on display alongside other innovative products including the Samsung Series 2, Series 4 and Series 9 notebooks and the new 700T Slate PC. The 700T Slate PC features the Windows 7 operating system so users can enjoy the same high productivity and familiar interface as a normal PC, but with a wide variety of input methods. It's quick and easy to create and manage your own content on the Slate, such as pictures and videos, and it includes a wireless keyboard, digitizer pen, touch screen interface and slate PC dock, for maximum convenience and enhanced productivity.

The Series 5 Chromebook – said to be the world's first Chrome OS notebook was also on display as part of Samsung's virtualised computing rage. By moving everything to the cloud, it eliminates any concerns about security and data loss. For example, with nothing stored directly on the Series 5, malicious spyware, trojans and viruses are a thing of the past. If the notebook is ever broken or lost, all of your files are saved online.

Graham Long, Vice President of IT, Samsung UK explains: "Samsung is leading the market in cloud displays, and with its broad range of products for the education sector will open up virtualised learning for classrooms all over the UK."

### Assistive technology

Sight and Sound Technology, a leading UK provider of hardware and software solutions for visually impaired and blind users, as well as users with learning and reading difficulties, showcased the latest cutting-edge assistive technology at BETT 2012.

Commenting on its place at the show, Glenn Tookey, CEO of Sight and Sound Technology, said: "BETT is well known for its long standing tradition of showcasing the best available assistive technologies to the public. Our reputation has been built on the same approach, working with customers to take advantage of technology to provide the right solutions and support. Keeping up with the fast pace of technology development is always a challenge, but we continue to build our Master Distribution relationships ensuring that we are able to offer choice, best of breed products and great support to our customers."

Just about anyone can improve their writing using WordQ from Assistive Solutions. Designed for struggling writers, within minutes it enables students to find and fix their own mistakes. WordQ makes smart word suggestions with every letter they type. It learns the words they prefer and offers them quicker. See and hear examples for homonyms like 'their' or 'there' and add variety by selecting from words with the same meaning. Commenting on BETT, MD David Baxter Williams said, "It's not just our customers we meet here, but the entire industry."

ABBYY's Recognition Server meanwhile, delivers high quality OCR on printed texts and has a broad variety of output options; and an open API for easy integration with other programs. Library staff at the University of Southampton, are now freed from the tedious work of manual OCR and millions of pages of documents from its collection are available online in digital formats to its students and to the wider world.

ABBYY FlexiCapture is a highly intelligent software programme which automates the process of pulling specific information from a wide range of documents including forms, invoices, surveys, shipping documents, contracts and even Children's Christmas cards. It is an ideal solution for many projects because it allows users to build templates for reading key data in so many types of documents. An important feature of the software is that it enables the software to read handwritten characters when filled into key fields in a document. ABBYY's Colin Miller said of BETT: "It's good to meet everyone; we consider it a worthwhile show. The international presence here is amazing."

### Make a note of this

Livescribe smart pens – now available to educators in the UK - are an affordable and flexible learning tool, which makes them ideal for all grade levels and subjects in a digital learning era. Beyond easing the traditional student pain point of note taking, educators use smart pens to revolutionise classroom learning by creating interactive digital copies of their notes and audio pen casts to recap daily lessons, homework assignments and classroom discussions, so students can replay the information as many times as they need in order to understand the material. Pencasts can be posted on Learning Management Systems as a Podcast PDF or can be embedded directly into a class blog or website.

Livescribe also launched its new Livescribe Sound Stickers at BETT, which are small stickers for recording and playing back audio notes. Sound stickers can be used to make interactive flash cards, word walls, study guides and talking books. They can also be used to create annotated art projects and oral reports.

Also being shown on the Livescribe stand was MyScript for Livescribe – a companion application for turning handwritten notes taken with an Echo smartpen into editable digital text. Resulting information can be sent to Microsoft Word or any word processor to a text file shared via email or simply saved as a picture.



RSS



## Teaching one-to-one

TLC Education Group is a small Cambridgeshire-based company run by husband and wife team Simon and Manda Barnes. TLC Education Group has five learning centres within schools in East Anglia. These schools are: Samuel Ward Academy and Wymondham High School in Suffolk, Coleridge Community College and Parkside Community College in Cambridge, and the Open Academy in Norwich.

TLC Education Group recently developed an online learning platform, TLC Live! that connects children one-to-one with fully qualified UK-based teachers for national curriculum focused tuition in English, maths and science. The platform is already used by Coleridge Community College, Parkside Community College and Suffolk County Council. The council uses it to provide education for looked after children who sometimes struggle to attain the levels of additional tuition required to support them in their education.

Seeing the huge disconnect between parental engagement of primary and high school students, Imagine, from Pearson, provides parents with access and insight into current learning activities, student academic data and relevant resources through its cloud based on-demand software. Using the virtual learning platform capability, students are able to access online resources from home, allowing them to interact with digital content and engaging them in a way that is more natural for many school-aged children. It also means that parents can see what their children are learning at school first-hand.

Imagine provides teachers with integration of student information, displaying student academic data alongside curriculum information and content.

### The speed and ease of access

to this student data enables teachers to personalise learning through the use of a combined learning platform and Managed Information System.

### Learning platforms

Also at BETT, Dell launched its Next Generation Learning Platform, which integrates core education applications and the resources needed to address specific learning styles, collaboration and data-driven teaching in an intuitive and engaging interface. Interfaces are tailored specifically for individual educators, students and parents. The format is instantly recognisable to young people who engage with social media every day, so it should be successful in making the link to academia, inspiring ownership of the learning process and thereby improving outcomes.

Dell Education Data Management integrates student performance data with predictive analytics to make it easy for educators to monitor student progress and intervene as necessary to improve student outcomes. The data can be leveraged on its own and as part of Dell's Next Generation Learning Platform.

Mark Horan, Dell global education vice president said:

"Our mission is to equip teachers, administrators and parents with the resources they need to ensure all students reach their full potential. Our Next Generation Learning Platform and our cloud and services capabilities are part of our continuing investment in and commitment to developing the solutions our education customers tell us they need to improve learning outcomes."

"The technology is important but is not sufficient, it's what underlies the technology, the data management and analytics...this is what will drive and change behaviour," said a member of the team adding: "We are making learning 24/7 to facilitate informal learning for the teacher and student with a more personalised, blended approach."

Skype in the classroom is a free global community that invites teachers to collaborate on classroom projects where they might use Skype, and share skills and inspiration around specific teaching needs. Teachers all over the world are using Skype to make learning more exciting and memorable. It's easy to see why: Skype allows teachers and students to meet new people and discover new cultures all around the world, without taking a step outside the classroom. To date, this has been hugely successful with around 20,000 teachers using the site to share lesson plans and help broaden their students' minds.

### BETT a great platform

James Bird, CEO at Stone, ICT services provider to the UK public sector and education, told us: "We have been attending the BETT Show for the past eight years and it always provides us with a great platform to meet ICT professionals from a variety of educational establishments with which to discuss our products and service capability. Judging by the state-of-the-art technology on display at this year's BETT Show, the next 12 months are set to be an exciting time for teachers and pupils alike."

RM Education is focused on supporting teachers to teach and learners to learn, it says. The company provides innovative products from classroom resources, through school technologies, to systems for marking exams and delivering school performance data. Head of Sales, Ian Hunter said: "Coming into BETT we weren't sure how it would be. This is my 14th BETT, but for RM it's been the most positive. It seems smaller in numbers but in terms of its intent it's been superb. As Head of Sales, it's exceeded my expectations. You judge success by how interested people are, how engaged, the value of what they are interested in and the type of interest they have."

"BETT 2012 saw the birth of the Budget Challenge. Schools provided a few details and we set the wheels in motion, put our computing power to good use and in an instant, a personalised savings statement was calculated for that school. Schools that took part were regularly saving over £50,000 for a 3-year term against a number of key spending areas such as Internet connectivity," said a spokesperson.

DYMO/Mimio began in 1997 with a singular philosophy: to make learning more engaging for students, with technology that makes it easier for teachers to do what they do best – teach. The result is the MimioClassroom a family of products, said to be among their best teaching tools ever. They allow more active participation by students, while eliminating the complications of other interactive technologies. That's why DYMO/Mimio stands apart in the world of interactive teaching. Commenting on BETT and the reaction from teachers, the companies Manny Perez said: "The traffic is very good, though it seems lighter than it has in the past, but it's one of my

favourite shows to come to."

### International presence grows

Texas Instruments' DLP division showcased its innovative classroom projectors, with features such as flexible interactive solutions, short-throw, filterless and lamp free. The Education Technology Division was also at BETT, showcasing the latest software and handheld technology for STEM subjects, Ti-NSpire CX. "It's the leading education show in the world right now. In the last five years the international presence has grown very rapidly, it's a great platform to talk to people from all over the world," said a spokesperson.

'How to Change your School' from Every1 Speaks, is the latest in pupil voice software that enables pupils to vote for ideas for their school. It's a kind of a debating society, except the technology makes it accessible to everybody - everybody has a voice and pupils needn't be afraid to speak up.

Step 1 is to identify an issue or good change opportunity in your school; step 2 is to capture everyone's ideas and opinions on that topic; step 3 is to energise the seed ideas by gaining fans and advocates; step 4 to collaborate to develop and expand the rooted ideas; observe trends and present the fruitful ideas to the school head and then listen to their feedback and amend your ideas or celebrate and promote the new change. Then start back at no.1 to create more change!

LEGO Education Europe displayed its range of resources and services covering Early Years, Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths, Language, Arts and Humanities subjects. With more than 70 products, the core offering includes LEGO DUPLO and LEGO system sets (for themed play and construction), LEGO Technic (for constructing simple machines and understanding forces, motion and energy) Lego Education WeDo (for simple computer control and digital story telling) and LEGO MINDSTORMS Education (for more advanced programming and engineering design (robotics)). Most sets have the option of being accompanied with teaching aids, which can include activity packs and teaching guides.

LEGO Education Europe introduced a European grassroots teacher training network in 2011 to provide schools with the option of being trained in optimising the use of LEGO Education resources to give students an interactive, informative and effective learning experience.

Panasonic education technology solutions including the latest interactive whiteboards, Toughbook rugged mobile computers, short throw projectors and HD displays were employed as a central feature of BETT 2012 at Professor Stephen Heppell of Heppell.net's 'New Worlds of Learning' stand. Panasonic was the technology sponsor of 'New Worlds of Learning' which offered education professionals visiting BETT 2012 new opportunities to discover how to take advantage of best practice from a diversity of international learning environments. BETT2012's dynamic and energetic feature was inspired by Stephen's work with schools across the world and gave a fresh view of what is possible in education globally.



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