



LEARN IT



Education and Culture DG
Lifelong Learning Programme
Leonardo da Vinci

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Dear Reader,

We are pleased to present the seventh issue of the LearnIT newsletter. In this issue we would like to inform you about the recruitment and testing of our platform and highlight the development of the courses. We will continue to update you on ongoing activities and hope that you will find our newsletter interesting.

The LearnIT project consortium

In this issue:



Recruitment and testing

Since publishing the last newsletter it has been very busy time for all the partners. Not only have we had to implement some final changes to the LearnIT system but also find Tutors and recruit our testers. Even though the testing phase started a few months ago, the actual testing with the target groups are about to start now. The whole process is being implemented according to the project plan, prepared by the external expert.

In line with his recommendations, the testing of the elaborated courses will focus on technical diagnosis connected with error detection and correction of didactic materials structure. Remarks made by pilot testing participants as well as any other diagnosed programming flaws will help in the production of a final version of the courses. The testing process will provide us with the opinion of the representatives of target users regarding the courses' substantive content, practical usefulness in their jobs and desired level of skills which should be developed by the courses.

The dominating form, in respect of both e-learning and m-learning courses, should be the model of self-education which permits the beneficiaries to realign their time, conditions and intensity of working within the course. All participants will be supported by Tutors, whose role is not only to introduce the methodology and to present the aims, methods and courseware but also to coordinate and support the independent work of users.

During the process of recruitment, we tried to make sure that the users belong to the representatives of our target groups. The criteria chosen were:

- preferably females;
- people working in or professionally bound with IT (in SME);
- people from SME that use technical English language in their jobs.

As expected in some countries it was easier to find men than women working as IT specialists but partners have ensured a good number of potential female beneficiaries.

The actual testing started with individual partner kick-off meetings of participants with Tutors who presented the curriculum and described the strategy of the material presentation and the technical capabilities of the system, correlations between m-learning and e-learning modules, desired path of material acquisition and knowledge testing. Tutors also presented expectations of the LearnIT consortium regarding substantive remarks related to the tested tools, evaluation of their functionality and the possibility to report their reflections.

...about our courses

Today the system consists of m-learning and e-learning platforms designed for IT professionals who are employed in Small to Medium Enterprise sector. We invite the users to register and enrol on the courses Networks, Technical English and watch a presentation on Women in IT and the issues and benefits they feel they obtain.

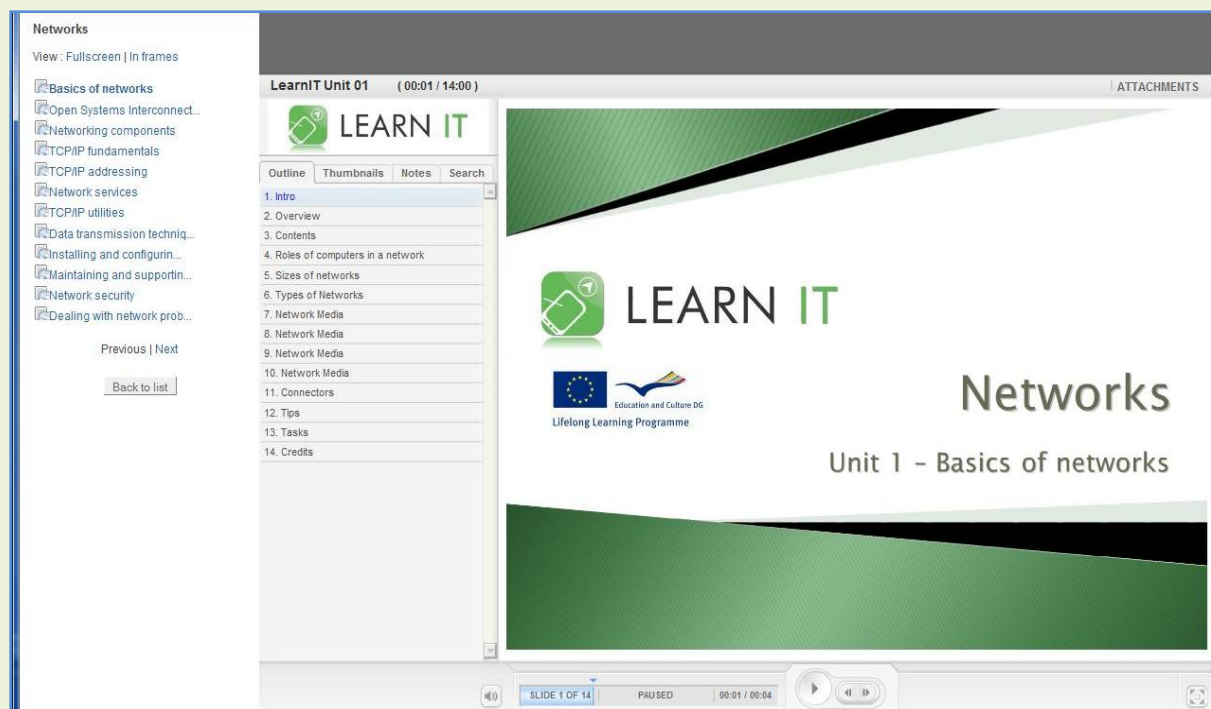
The courses are structured with a particular emphasis on women addressing issues for both the IT professionals, who work within the SME sector and individuals who have graduated from universities containing IT faculties,

NETWORKS

The 'Networks' course is designed for IT professionals working in SMEs' that want to improve their knowledge in the field of network structures and functionality. The course is designed for self-study and presented in 12 modules: Basics of networks, Open System Interconnect (OSI) reference model, Networking components, TCP/IP fundamentals, TCP/IP addressing, Network services, TCP/IP Utilities, Data transmission techniques, Installing and configuring Network Operating System, Maintaining and supporting a network, Network security and Dealing with network problems.

The theoretical section consists of audio-visual presentations, whilst the practical section is built around interactive exercises i.e. single and multiple choice tests, 'drag and drop' tasks, sequencing, matching in pairs, true or false exercises and image maps.

This is how our e-learning course "Computer Networks" looks. All of the courses were prepared using the same style.



Computer Networks course window

● TECHNICAL ENGLISH

The 'Technical English' course is designed for individuals already working in the field of IT, who have the basics of English language, but due to the necessity of understanding technical documentation used in their work they want or need to improve their English language skills.

The course consists of 6 modules which introduces vocabulary linked with technical IT terminology. Each module is divided into three sections: reading, vocabulary and grammar. The first section is scenario based and depicts a

day in a woman's working life. The woman is a manager of an enterprise, faced with the task of designing a computer network within the business. The course participants, together with the main character, discover network structures, local bus topology, how to create a network, learn the functions of a firewall, analyse the associated costs of network maintenance and ways of troubleshooting. The use of technical vocabulary and grammar is repeatedly used in the interactive exercises and tested after a short revision of the simple grammatical rules.

● WOMEN IN IT

The 'Women in IT' presentations aim to encourage women to consider taking up employment in the field of IT through the profiles of women who already work as IT professionals. The women's stories break the stereotype of the 'IT male domain', by demonstrating that this career that can provide career breaks or family work life balance opportunities. These short videos presentations represent a cross section of 10 woman's career pathways from five countries: Bulgaria Great Britain, Italy, Poland and Spain.

Platform handbook

In order to facilitate the use of the platform, we have created a handbook which is distributed among participants and available to download from our website. It supports the user in the independent use of the educational tools. The handbook is used during both the direct contact with the tutor and the process of self-learning and contains the following information:

- Technical and hardware requirements, connected with the use of the courses;
- The aim of the course together with its recipients;
- Learning outcomes resulting from the course realisation;
- Skills that should be developed by the course;

- Methodology (mini-lectures, presentations, application-exercises that verify the knowledge, skills, etc.);
- 'The Pathway' of the course depicting the order (possible scenarios of realisation) of the didactic units;
- The forms of consultation and communication with the tutor that gives the possibility to receive substantive and technical support in the case of problems with the course realisation;
- Bibliography and reference material providing the possibility to further develop the knowledge gained within the course.

Progress of the project

Besides the testing process we are now preparing national dissemination seminars and obtaining material for a promotional CD. Another task is preparation for the next and last meeting in Manchester. It will take place on 9th -10th September 2010. The meeting will be the time to summarise all work, validate cooperation and to make final decisions about any improvement of our results. We also plan to discuss the preparation of the final report.

Next issue

The next issue will be available in October 2010. Where we will present the final products, information about the seminars and enclose some pictures from Manchester .