

Digital Content and Creation for Schools: Facts at a glance

Overview

Preparing our students to be active participants in the knowledge economy is a key challenge facing schools today. Digital content and creation tools play a central role in integrating ICT into the curriculum, developing innovative practices and transforming the way students learn.

This document contains information about digital content, digital resources, digital content creation tools and a range of professional learning resources that are available to all Victorian government schools.

Digital content or learning objects:

- are ‘chunks’ of digital material (eg graphics, text, audio, animation, interactive tools) designed to engage and motivate student learning
- are based on latest research about how teachers teach and students learn
- provide multimodal learning pathways and learning opportunities not normally possible in the standard classroom
- allow students to dynamically interact with complex content and ideas

Digital Resources:

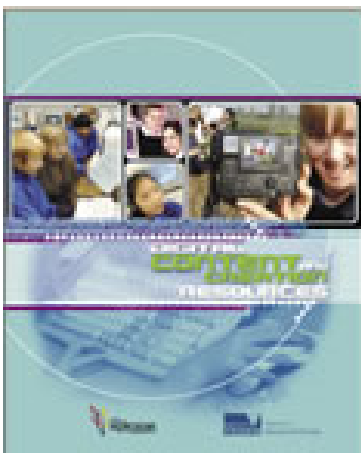
- consist of a single item: a section of moving image footage, a cartoon, speech, song, photograph
- are made available by cultural and scientific institutions of Australia
- are presented in a template: description and educational value statement

Digital content creation tools:

- are applications. Students use them to produce their own digital content, demonstrating their understanding of curriculum concepts



Release 1 – Resource Kit



In November 2004, The Department of Education & Training (DE&T) provided every Victorian government school with a Release 1 Resource Kit – a dynamic, state-of-the-art package of resources and software for students and teachers to use, create and share digital content.

What was included in the Release 1 – Resource Kit?

Learning Objects (digital content):	Kahootz (digital content creation):
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 copies of the Digital Learning Resources Release 1 CD-ROM containing over 100 initial learning objects across a range of curriculum areas • a binder to store all future CD ROM releases of curriculum content • a description of each learning object • teaching resources identifying suggested key learning areas and year levels for each learning object • sample unit plans with strategies for integrating the learning objects • help files for installation and use of the files 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 copies of the Kahootz Software CD-ROM • a licence to install Kahootz software on all school computers and teachers' home computers/notebooks • an installation guide and help desk support for technical assistance • a binder containing printed software tutorials • a dedicated web space for publishing and sharing student work

Release 2 - Resource Kit

In June 2005, every Victorian government school will receive a Release 2 Resource Kit containing further resources and supporting materials, to be used by schools to embed ICT in the curriculum.

Release 2 resources add value to the \$330 invoice to schools that accompanied the Release 1 Resource Kit.

What is included in the Release 2 – Resource Kit?

The Release 2 kit contains the following:

Learning Objects (digital content) Digital Resources	Producer for PowerPoint (digital content creation)	Professional Learning Support Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 copies of the Digital Learning Resources Release 2 CD-ROM containing over 260 new learning objects, primarily from the science area. • a description of each learning object • help files for installation and use of the files • 1 copy of the Imagebank Collection DVD-ROM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn IT, Teach IT CD-ROM (contains Microsoft Producer for PowerPoint) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 copies of the Digital Content and Creation Unit Plans CD-ROM • 3 copies of the Kahootz Interactive Tutorials CD-ROM • 1 copy of the Making a Difference: Research Guide CD-ROM • 3 copies of the Notebook Professional Learning Resource CD-ROM • A set of Kahootz posters and an information sheet for Kahootz users • Facts at a Glance sheet • 3 copies of the Victorian Education Channel brochure

More about the Release 2 Resource Kit items

Resource	What it contains and how it may be used
<i>The Digital Learning Resources Release 2 CD ROM</i>	<p>The Digital Learning Resources Release 2 CD ROM contains learning objects sourced from The Le@rning Federation. It includes 260 new learning objects, primarily from the science area.</p> <p>The TLF releases dictate the number of learning objects to be included and the content area for each release of content on CD ROM. If you combine the content on the Release 1 Digital Learning Resources CD ROM with this CD you will then have all learning objects released by TLF to January 2005.</p>
<i>The Digital Content and Creation Unit Plans CD-ROM</i>	<p>The Digital Content and Creation Unit Plans CD-ROM contains 60 unit plans developed by the Innovations Branch through the ICT Achievers program. The unit plans follow the Intel Teach to the Future template, and have been written by Intel Master Trainers. The unit plans provide examples of how learning objects and Kahootz can be incorporated into teaching programs.</p>
<i>The Kahootz Interactive Tutorial CD-ROM</i>	<p>The Kahootz Interactive Tutorial CD-ROM has been developed by the Australian Children’s Television Foundation (ACTF) and provides self-paced interactive tutorials for both teachers and students to learn key Kahootz skills. It includes video and animation demonstrations of key skills required to produce Kahootz expressions.</p> <p>It can be used by teachers who are unable to attend training and can also be placed on school intranets for use by students as a teaching aid. This CD-ROM covers the basic Kahootz Skills – the ACTF will release an advanced Kahootz Tutorial in the middle of 2005.</p>
<i>The Making a Difference: Research Guide CD-ROM</i>	<p>The Making a Difference: Research Guide CD-ROM is produced by the School Library Association of Victoria (SLAV) and provides teachers with advice and strategies for the development of effective information literacy skills in students using digital resources.</p>
<i>The Imagebank Collection DVD-ROM</i>	<p>The Imagebank Collection DVD-ROM is produced by the Victorian Information Technology Teachers Association (VITTA). It contains 9000 photographic images from Victoria, New South Wales, Norfolk Island and Canberra. Images are provided copyright free to schools (for educational purposes) and can be installed on all teacher notebooks and school computers. This resource can be used in conjunction with the Digital Resources prepared by The Le@rning Federation, which will be released to schools in late 2005 or early 2006.</p>
<i>The Notebook Professional Learning Resource CD-ROM</i>	<p>The Notebook Professional Learning Resource CD-ROM contains five modules developed for the February 2005 teacher notebook rollout: “Using Digital Content and Creation”; “Working Wireless”; “Using the Internet Effectively”; “Personalising Outlook and Edumail”; and “Using the Education Channel”. The provision of this CD-ROM will enable schools to provide the modules to teachers whose notebooks are not due for replacement in this cycle (only one third of teacher notebooks will be replaced in this cycle).</p>

Resource	What it contains and how it may be used
<i>The Learn IT, Teach IT CD-ROM</i>	<p>The Learn IT, Teach IT CD-ROM is produced by Microsoft. It provides a valuable resource that helps teachers expand their technology skills, develop an engaging curriculum, and create a compelling learning experience.</p> <p>This CD can assist teachers in becoming proficient users of Microsoft® Office, Windows® XP digital media capabilities, the Microsoft Encarta® multimedia encyclopaedia, and more. Plus, teachers will discover exceptional ideas to bring learning to life. The CD also includes Microsoft Producer for PowerPoint software and tutorials.</p>
<i>A set of Kahootz posters and information sheet</i>	A set of Kahootz posters that teachers may use to illustrate aspects of the use of Kahootz software. The information sheet will help schools to register on the Kahootz website.
<i>The Victorian Education Channel brochure</i>	The Victorian Education Channel is a 'portal' website that links to educational web pages from Australia and around the world. The Channel brochure explains how different groups in school communities can use the site, outlines the main features of the Channel and describes ways teachers can use it to find lesson plans, administrative information and online curriculum materials.

What is digital content?

Digital content is a collection of small multimedia learning objects that are used to introduce, develop or reinforce curriculum concepts. While they can be constructed in a variety of multimedia authoring software packages, the CD ROMs released to Victorian schools use Flash and Shockwave software. These file formats can be used on multiple computer platforms, and are transferable over the Internet. Both of these software packages are freely available to schools, teachers and students.

Learning objects are designed to:

- integrate into a sequence of student learning activities, including regular classroom activities away from the computer
- facilitate instruction of commonly taught concepts, procedures, applications and skills from the basic to the more complex
- simulate concepts and practices that are difficult to replicate in standard school classrooms because of safety, time and cost
- encourage interactive exploration of new ideas in engaging multimedia contexts that reflect the multiple literacies prevalent in the students' world outside school
- allow for self-paced learning and opportunities for students to revisit and revise content and skills
- cater for different student learning modes and abilities; allow for more selective and discerning choice of online content
- co-exist alongside a range other non-digital and digital content and tools, such as experiments, field work, search and use of World Wide Web content, spreadsheets, databases, publishing and presentation software and tools, concept mapping software, online quizzes and tests and collaborative discussion tools
- foster ICT skill development
- stimulate teachers' and students' imaginations to create their own learning objects.

Who provides the digital content?

For Release 1, digital content (on CD ROM) was included from The Le@rning Federation (TLF) initiative and the DE&T's Curriculum@work project. For Release 2, digital content was provided solely by TLF.

What is The Le@rning Federation?

The Le@rning Federation (TLF) is an initiative designed to create online curriculum content and infrastructure to enhance teaching and learning in Australian and New Zealand schools. TLF is funded for the period 2001-06 by the governments of Australia, the Australian states and territories, and New Zealand. It is funded by the Australian Government as part of Backing Australia's Ability: Innovation Action Plan. For further information follow the link to: <http://www.thelearningfederation.edu.au>

How can I access these digital learning resources?

Currently schools can access the TLF digital learning resources via the Resource Kit rollouts provided by DE&T. The Digital learning resources Release 1 CD ROM, provided the basic set of digital content and learning resources for teachers to use in their classrooms across a range of curriculum areas. Release 2 and future releases of digital content from TLF will be delivered to schools over the next two years. The combination of Release 1 and Release 2 CD ROMs include all learning objects released by TLF to January 2005.

Teachers will need time to explore the Digital Learning Resources CD-ROMs (Releases 1 and 2) to determine how they can be best used to support teaching and learning programs. The ICT Co-ordinator or Technician can provide access to the resources on school intranets. The CD-ROMs can also be copied on to teacher notebooks for easy reference.

How can I create Digital Content?

As part of the Release 1 – Resource Kit, all government schools were also provided with Kahootz, a 3D multimedia authoring software to enable students to develop their own digital content. The Australian Children's Television Foundation (ACTF) has developed Kahootz to provide students with tools to create, share and collaborate on digital curriculum content.

Microsoft Producer for PowerPoint (Producer) is a free program that can be downloaded from the Microsoft website (www.microsoft.com). However, being a large download we have included it on the *Learn IT, Teach IT CD-ROM*, as part of the Release 2 Resource Kit. Producer allows users to integrate multi-media elements with PowerPoint presentations to create more interesting and media rich presentations.

Producer is not a creation tool as such – all the source media files (video, sound, html, images or PowerPoint presentations) need to be created in other applications. Once the files are made they can be imported into Producer for use. In essence, Producer could be called presentation sequence software. Producer uses a timeline to sequence events. The events can be the running of a video clip, sound file, web page, PowerPoints or images.

For more information about Microsoft Producer for PowerPoint go to:
<http://www.microsoft.com/office/powerpoint/producer/prodinfo/default.msp>

Where can I find out more?

- Download the Kahootz Schools Television news story from <http://www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/schoolstv/news/vault.htm#0408> (4 August, 2004, 1.1 MB; Dur: 2:53)
- See examples of Kahootz in the curriculum and download teaching activities and resources from <http://www.kahootz.com/>
- Explore the printed samples of six unit plans that were included in the *Digital Content and Creation Resources* folder as part of the Release 1 Resource Kit, which has been delivered to your school. A further 60 unit plans are included on the *The Digital Content and Creation Unit Plans CD-ROM* as part of the Release 2 Resource Kit
- Visit The Le@rning Federation's website at www.thelearningfederation.edu.au and follow the link to the 'Showcase'. This page showcases a sample of TLF online curriculum content, including learning objects and digital resources, and links to descriptions of all content released. The site provides information about using learning objects, sharing teaching ideas, accessing resources and engaging in professional discussions through the professional learning community.
- DE&T is producing a further series of Digital Content and Kahootz unit plans through the ICT Achievers program. These unit plans will demonstrate ways of using Digital Content and Creation resources to support the Victorian Essential Learning Standards. The plans will be distributed to schools with subsequent releases. Support and training will also be made available through CeLL schools, regions, subject associations and the Australian Children's Television Foundation (ACTF).

What does this mean for me?

Digital Content and Creation Resources can lead to positive impacts on learning and teaching, and support the Victorian Essential Learning Standards. Digital content supports:

- active and critical learning
- decision-making
- experiential learning
- visualisation
- simulation
- game formats
- investigation and inquiry
- modelling
- problem-solving
- research

Who can I contact for more information?

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