

Newsletter

March 2009

EDITORIAL

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VITA – a transfer of innovation project

In the fall 2007, a group of professionals from Education and Training were joined for a Contact Seminar promoted by the Romanian National Agency for Lifelong Learning Programme. There born the idea of the project which became later a proposal launched in March 2008. The idea was to transfer known good experiences about Second Life educational uses by the participants to a field of practice that required improvements, towards the objectives of Lisbon 2010: successful SMEs for the dynamic growth of economy.

After this, the team contacted other

organisations with relevant know-how to carry out the actions, and the idea got developed into the project VITA — *Virtual Learning for the management of successful SMEs in Europe.*

The project was approved by the European Commission in October 2008 and it was launched in the beginning of 2009. Here we present the first of 6 Newsletter' editions which will follow the project activities during 2 years.

Along with a brief description of the project aims, we present the results of the first partnership meeting and the next steps on the workplan.

1st Meeting in Beja

The promoter of VITA (Beja's Polytechnic Institute) has hosted partners from 5 European countries in Beja (Alentejo — Portugal), from the 3th and 14th February. The full working agenda included the presentation of past projects and experiences from the partners, useful for this Project, the detailed plan for the first activities and the dissemination materials and strategies, such as the website, and agreement on quality procedures. In the second day, Leonel Morgado - the Scientific Coordinator -promoted a workshop inside *Second Life*, where partners could experiment some of the possibilities of creation and communication in the platform with their *avatars*.



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IBM joins VITA

After contacts with IBM representation in Portugal, the promoter got in touch with the Kevin Aires (Previously IBM's Virtual Universe Community Guildmaster) and Craig Becker (Global Architect, 3D Internet & Virtual Business/IBM Master Inventor) from the Labs that promote-Second Life. These experts will be consultants for VITA and will be a major support in the inclusion of the latest technology into the project.

Main facts of VITA

- LLP Leonardo da Vinci Transfer of Innovation
- 2009-2010
- Partners in Portugal, Austria, Finland, Greece, Italy, Romania

Project' summary

VITA – *Virtual Learning for the management of successful SMEs* — presents an innovative approach to learn and practice entrepreneurship and business management competence, based on the results of different projects, concerning web 2.0 based and virtualization strategies.

VITA will be developed during 24 months and aims to increase the capability of SMEs to adapt to European contexts, resorting to a specific training, and increase adults employability, mobility and multicultural awareness, by:

- Defining the European manager profile in terms SME's management competences on the basis of needs analyses in collaboration with employees;
- Defining courses, pedagogical approaches and evaluation tools addressing identified needs, upon the results of different projects, adapted to the characteristics of a virtual learning

campus;

- Conceiving a 3D virtual learning environment where learners will participate in collaborative learning experience, located in *Second Life* platform and will have the opportunity to test their competences in a safe context of application by generating and managing a virtual SME.
- Certify eLearners in the basis of EQF and ECVET systems and other national qualification systems.

VITA will target directly adults qualified with secondary school level and employers in the scope of SMEs' sector, and have an indirect impact in Education and Training professionals, all the users of *Second Life*, SMEs owners, SMEs employees and managers. As main results, VITA will produce: an excellence training model and curricula for SME's management; a virtual campus; e-learner and e-tutor handbooks and guides; a guide of good practices; and certified cases.

Partnership

PROMOTER

- Beja's Politechnic Institute/ Higher School of Education (IPB/ESEB)

www.ipbeja.pt



SCIENTIFIC COORDINATION

- University of Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro (UTAD)

www.utad.pt



- Bucharest Chamber of Commerce (CCIB)

www.ccib.ro



- IDEC S.A.

www.idec.gr



- Hyvinkää-Riihimäki Vocational Adult Education Centre (HRACK)

www.hrakk.fi



- Bit media e-Learning solution GmbH & Co KG

www.bitmedia.cc



- Didanetwork Srl

www.gruppodida.it



SLACTIONS 2009

Research conference in the Second Life® world



Next events

➤ Next Meeting in Finland

Partners will meet for the second VITA Meeting in Hyvinkää (Finland), on the 18th and 19th May 2009, **hosted by the adults' education institution HRAKK**. By then, partners shall have presented national reports about the profile required for SMEs' managers.

➤ Slactions 2009

SLACTIONS 09 is the first international conference held simultaneously in several countries from 24th to 26th September. The conference will cover from educational research to content production, from gender studies to media distribution.... In the Programme Committee is **Leonel Morgado** who is also VITA's Scientific Coordinator. Find more at www.slactions.org or contact info@slactions.org.

➤ 1st European SME Week

The first European SME Week, taking place from 6th to 14th May 2009, is a campaign to promote entrepreneurship across Europe and to inform entrepreneurs about support available for them at European, national and local level. It allows SMEs to discover an array of information, advice, support and ideas to help them develop their activities. Find more at <http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/entrepreneurship/sme-week/>.

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2008-I-PTI-LEO05-00411



Lifelong Learning Programme

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

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