

Project summary

Media Lab is an educational center that provides media literacy and digital inclusion education to young people, families, and seniors. The programs are implemented through several workshops designed to empower participants to be critical thinkers, to develop the ability of expressing their ideas, and to be creative producers of news content for printed and online versions. The challenge is simple: "Make your own newspaper". Participants produce their own newspaper in a multidisciplinary news office, writing the daily news following the rules of journalism, with the support of trained and specialized staff. Specific workshops are provided, dedicated to different themes such as Science, Europe, Environment and History. Media Lab also develops family workshops; after a brief presentation on how to produce media content, the family members together search and discuss online news and produce a newspaper page from their point of view.

Aims

Establishing a connection between the newspaper and the educational community, promoting journalism, and empowering young people with the skills to interpret and create media content. Media Lab also facilitates the analysis of media and how to use media for multi-disciplinary learning on different curricula themes, while complementing the ambition to develop technological skills. We aim to provide or promote:

- access to media content
- media awareness
- research habits and critical thought
- tools to empower participants to produce media content
- opportunities to create a more participant and responsible society

Target group(s): Young people from basic school levels up to university are the main target groups of Media Lab. Teachers, adults, seniors and families are also targets.

Media: Printed and online media, videocast, podcast, photojournalism, social media

Methods

Formal classes: theoretical classes, media, etc. Informal training: thematic sessions with experts and trainers Practical training while doing their own work: a front page or a four-page newspaper, blog, videocast or podcast

Duration of project: Throughout the year, except for August, since 2010

Resources needed: Project leader, web-developer, and team of trainers depending on the number of participants at the workshops; one computer per participant; auditorium with multimedia equipment; whiteboard, and color printers

Description of project

Programa para Familias (Workshop for Families)

Media Lab – Diário de Notícias provides students and families with an exciting new dimension in media literacy, and allows them to get to know the world of newspapers in an interactive way, using modern technologies. The project, launched in

November 2010, is located at the headquarters of Diário de Notícias, the 150-year-old Portuguese newspaper, in Lisbon, and Jornal de Notícias, in Oporto. Media Lab targets young people aged six to 21 years, families, and seniors. The project won in 2011 the World Association of Newspapers (WAN) prize in the category "Making the News". Through 'learning by doing', the participants learn, read, search, interpret and select content, as well as perform interviews. They also write and film and edit videos in order to create their own news content: one- or four-page newspapers, blogs, videocasts or podcasts. All the content produced by the participants is uploaded to the online Media Lab platform, and is immediately available to be looked at, and shared with family and friends through social networks. After the visit, participants can also develop a school or neighborhood newspaper, or blog, by using a web tool available on the Media Lab web platform, for free.

Method

The 'learning by doing' method has proven to be very attractive to families, which explains the strong participation. It also opens an opportunity for newspapers to get involved with the families and the educational community. Programa para Famílias has proven to be a positive experience as an intergenerational workshop, since it:

- gives family support and orientation concerning media content
- enriches the dialogue between children and parents as regards 'news'
- transforms the intergenerational exchange of opinion into an amusing activity
- gives them skills to deal with the rapid media evolution
- raises media awareness, bringing into discussion 'my news ... your news ... our family news'

Exemplary description of one day/part of project

- After the welcoming, which includes an introduction to the famous newspaper Diário de Notícias, the families receive in the auditorium a formal theoretical class on media content production, as well as on media contents about media
- On the occasion of some 'national events days', speakers are invited to talk to participants about that theme. After the presentation, the participants write about the theme and what they have learned. They act as reporters of the day and its activities.
- Working in pairs, parents and children or adults and young friends search the daily news online.
- They discuss, select and explain their choices.
- They rewrite the news, applying their critical sense, and reveal their points of view in their own newspaper template.
- The newspaper is locally printed, and uploaded to the online Media Lab platform.

What needs special attention?

- Monitors must have communication skills.
- To create the impression of a real newsroom, the participants must have limited time to finish the work, and news should be of a general nature. They must choose news from different sections of the newspaper they are consulting. Girls tend to choose social news, and boys sports news. The news must be discussed and the participants choose which is the most important to the family.
- All underage participants must have parental approval for releasing images of themselves.

Project implementation difficulties

- Sometimes it's hard to find financial support or financial partners.
- You have to use the right form of communication to get the attention of the target group – parents and other people responsible for children.

What could be improved?

With good financial resources we could add more and better technological tools, such as interactive tables, film and editing soundrooms, tablets and smartphones. Also, trainers and instructors should have contact with other international projects and practices.

Information about the organization that runs the project

Initiator: BrandMeaning is the agency responsible for the concept, development, implementation and contents of Media Lab. BrandMeaning creates and manages communication projects. The company's activity focuses on two fields:

- the conceptualization, development, implementation and management of educational and social responsibility projects
- the conceptualization of educational projects, involving mainly corporate social responsibility policies, which aims to train young people on how to build a responsible society.

Partner(s): Diário de Notícias (Lisbon) and Jornal de Notícias (Oporto)

The project benefits from the institutional support of several official and private organizations, including:

- The Portuguese Ministry of Education, UNESCO NC, the European Parliament Information Office, the Portuguese European Commission Office, CIEJD, GMCS, PORDATA (Francisco Manuel dos Santos Foundation), the Gulbenkian Foundation, and the Ciência Viva Agency.

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Links to website and social media

Site <http://medialab.dn.pt>

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/pages/MediaLab-DN/152426561466158>

YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/user/CanalMediaLab>

Blog <http://medialabdn.blogspot.com/>

Quotes of participants

"My son loved the afternoon. Thank you!" – Lisete Cristina Pires Neves, Mother (Facebook page, 24/07/13)

"It was super nice and interesting! An experience I'll never forget!" – Matilde Lago da Silva, Student (Facebook page, 23/05/13)

“A rich experience for the students and also for us” – Maria Oliveira, Teacher (workshop report, 16/05/12)

“We spent a great afternoon. The kids had fun but they also learnt something very important. Keep on!” – Sara Guimarães, Mother (workshop report, 26/11/11)

“Very positive this newspaper initiative in organizing the news workshops, in a time where the students only see the world and don't read the world ...” – Teacher, Secundária Stuart de Carvalhais (about a regular workshop, 2012)

Information about the resource

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