



E.C.L.O.
European Consortium for the Learning Organisation



The Editor for this Issue is Desmond Keegan (Ericsson Ireland)

Using Wireless Technologies for Context Sensitive Education and Training (CONTSENS)

ECLO is delighted to announce that it has been accepted as a core partner in the above project, partially funded under the Socrates-Minerva programme.

The profile of the typical mobile device is changing rapidly. It is estimated that by 2010, the number of people using mobile broadband connections will have increased to over half a billion. This access is being made on all type of mobile devices; mobile phones, media players, handheld games consoles, ultra-portable PCs, etc. Already we are seeing a great deal of convergence in the marketplace; while it is common to see people carrying both a mobile phone and a media player, such as an iPod, these devices are merging, with mobile phones offering gigabytes of storage for audio and video. Devices running Windows Mobile and Symbian have many of the features of laptops or desktop computers and are now being used to access the net at broadband speeds.

Handheld devices can be used in public and social settings where larger devices would be intrusive and seem out of place. Using a small device like an audio tour guide on an iPod or mobile phone web browser to supplement a visit to the art gallery is an obvious use of mobile technology; typing on a laptop computer in that same environment is not as acceptable or practical.

Current handheld devices are capable of the processing power, information storage, and data connection speeds exceeding that older personal computers - but are not reliant on power sockets or CAT-5 cables. They are capable of all of the same kinds of learning tasks: peer-to-peer sharing, ad-hoc networking, wireless internet access, discussion boards, chat, voice calling, video messaging, and resource creation and editing. They can support free and open source software, all the way from their Operating System, through to their applications, and even support and integrate with Web 2.0 tools.

Mobile learning is being incorporated into mainstream education and training, especially in Europe, South Africa and Japan. In Europe this is mainly through projects funded by the European Commission, four of which were led by Ericsson and Giunti Labs, both of whom are partners in this project and in which most of the other partners in this project were participants.

The concrete aims and objectives are to contribute to the continued development of mobile learning and to address the imbalance identified above between the availability of mobile devices and the lack of education and training provision on the sophisticated communications devices which every student in every EU country carries and uses constantly – except in education.

It is now possible to envisage an audience for mobile learning content which is media rich, collaborative and always available to the user. Using established technologies such as GPS

and SCORM, and developing for newer technologies such as RFID and Mobile Positioning, training content can be developed for both context sensitive and location based delivery.

It is the role of this project and its objective to contribute to the advance of mobile learning by harnessing the latest technological developments in the field (GPS, RFID, Mobile Positioning) for learning. This will address the main objective identified in A5, to support the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice for Lifelong Learning.

The partners in this project are :

- Ericsson Education Ireland
- Giunti Labs s.r.l., Sestri Levante, Italy
- Corvinno Technology Transfer Centre, Budapest, Hungary
- University of Plovdiv, Bulgaria
- London Metropolitan University, United Kingdom
- European Consortium for the Learning Organisation, Wavre, Belgium.

To follow the development of this project please go to : www.ericsson.com/contsens