



Summary of the Regional Needs Analysis

THE USE OF WEB 2.0 IN
VET AND ADULT
TRAINING IN LEUVEN
AND VLAAMS-BRABANT

SPRING 2010

www.svea-project.eu



PROMOTING WEB 2.0 IN VET AND ADULT TRAINING



Project Coordinator:

MFG Baden-Württemberg mbH
Public Innovation Agency for ICT and Media
Petra Newrly
Breitscheidstr. 4
70174 Stuttgart
Germany
Phone: +49 711 90715-357
Fax: +49 711 90715-350
E-Mail: newrly@mfg.de

EuroPACE ivzw
Erwin Heylen
Kapeldreef 62
3001 Heverlee
Belgium
Phone: +32 16 327736
E-Mail: erwin.heylen@avnet.kuleuven.be

SVEA Consortium:



Co-financed by:



The SVEA project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This report 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.

Preface

This regional needs analysis illustrates the status quo, the needs, trends and barriers in the use of web 2.0 applications within VET and adult training in Leuven and Vlaams-Brabant (B). These local findings will be incorporated in a composite analysis across several European countries (Germany, Spain, Italy, Wales and Belgium). It will be the basis for the development of the SVEA web 2.0 training system, and the collaborative platform aimed at strengthening the web 2.0 uptake within adult training institutions in Europe.

The analysis will first have a brief look at the status quo in ICT and Social Media diffusion in Leuven and Belgium, before outlining the needs, trends and barriers of integrating web 2.0 applications in VET and adult training.

For this regional needs analysis personal telephone interviews were conducted in Leuven and Vlaams-Brabant with 8 private and public training institutions. Each interview explored the current use of web 2.0 applications in VET delivery, the potential for its use in the future, and the training needed by institutional staff to use web 2.0 tools effectively. Additionally, a round table workshop brought most of the interviewed institutions together to offer them a deeper platform of exchange and to get to know their real needs better.

About SVEA

SVEA addresses the collaboration and web 2.0 skills of teachers and trainers in both VET and adult training institutions, with a special focus on personnel and organizational development. Providing these institutions with the means for target oriented communication and knowledge exchange, it will stimulate active co-development of organisational processes and tools, and will at the same time enable teachers and trainers to use those tools to empower learner-centred and self paced teaching.

SVEA will develop an online platform offering custom web 2.0 tools for trainers and teachers, combined with both an online and a face to face training programme to help the target group to master these web 2.0 applications. Guidelines and training material will also be designed to guarantee successful implementation.

SVEA's goal is to cultivate new work processes and communication strategies through the use of net-based technology. Upgrading e-skills in VET and adult training institutions will foster innovation and change in personnel and organisational management.

1. Current ICT and Social Media usage in Belgium

In order to assess the training and development needs of the SVEA target audience, the current status quo needs to be identified. Eurostat published the following data in a recent publication¹.

In Belgium around 80 % of the population between 16 and 24 use the internet on a daily basis. There is difference however, when comparing this age group with an age interval of 16 to 74, which only amounts to roughly 55% of participants using the Internet on a daily basis. This trend is evident in most European countries. The current percentage of households in Belgium that have a broadband connection amounts to 63 % in 2009, which is a steady increase from the 54 %, three years earlier. While these data don't provide any specific insight into the use of web 2.0 tools, it's safe to assume that a proper Internet distribution among the population is a prerequisite for a successful implementation of web 2.0 training.

The Tackle survey, published in July 2008, did collect some interesting data on ICT and web 2.0 use among trainers and educators however². Survey studies across Europe show that a mere 25% of educators consider themselves to be experienced in the use of ICT technology, while 60 % of respondents claim some familiarity with ICT. In Flanders, the use of e-mail (99,3 %), word processing (97,1 %) and powerpoint (53,7 %) are most commonly mastered. The use and knowledge of forums (28,1 %), media sharing (28,7 %, e.g. youtube, flickr,...) and direct communication tools (29,1 % e.g. skype, msn,...) are less common. Blogs (8,4 %), wikis (9,7 %), podcasts (4,2 %), social networking (13,4 %) and social bookmarking (4,0 %) aren't all that widespread among respondents.

Aside from powerpoint (50,7%) and specific software for interactive exercises (28,5% e.g. eXe, HotPotatoes,...), ICT technology is rarely used as a teaching tool or to create a learning environment. Most of the surveyed institutions (predominantly secondary schools) host an electronic learning environment or learning management system (71,9 % e.g. Toledo, Smartschool, Moodle,..). These systems are rarely used in teaching methods (46,8 %), and even then mostly for administrative purposes.

These figures illustrate that the basic framework for Internet connectivity is already present, but the use of web 2.0 as a teaching tool is still limited.

¹ Eurostat 2009 „Internet usage in 2009 – Households and individuals“
http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/product_details/publication?p_product_code=K S-QA-09-046

² TACCLE Partnership 2008 „Results of the TACCLE survey“
www.tackle.eu/component/option,com_docman/task,doc...2/.../lang,en/

2. The Current Use of Web 2.0 Applications within VET and Adult Training

During the regional analysis in Leuven and Vlaams-Brabant, 8 different training institutions closely cooperated with our analysis through telephone interviews (March – June 2010) and the round table workshop that was held on 8 June at EuroPACE in Leuven. The aim of this evaluation was to identify the needs, trends and barriers in the use of web 2.0 applications within VET and adult training courses.³

During the telephone interviews and the round table workshop in Leuven, the following status quo concerning the use of web 2.0, needs and barriers to use web 2.0 applications within VET and adult trainings was identified:

2.1 Current use and knowledge of web 2.0 tools in the participant organisations⁴

Most participants knew the definition of web 2.0 and the possibilities of web 2.0 instruments to enrich the learning experience. Nevertheless, there are still few institutions who regularly use those applications to offer more collaborative and learner centred trainings. The familiarity with web 2.0 tools was mostly limited to the use of media sharing sites like Youtube and Flickr, collaborative wikis, and networking tools such as Facebook. When web 2.0 tools are used within the organisation it is mostly for administrative purposes, there are rarely guidelines or scenarios available to use web 2.0 in an education practise.

2.2 What are the barriers to use social media tools within the organisation and their training delivery?

2.2.1. Culture / Acceptance

- In addition to the common resistance to change in many organisations, there is also a lack of acceptance of the perceived benefits of web 2.0 tools. This is sometimes due to the low level of broad digital literacy, and the resistance to use new and unfamiliar techniques. Using web 2.0 is also often unjustly perceived as unnecessary time sink, and the training of students and staff as too time- and energy consuming.
- Many students enrolling in VET or adult education courses do so for social reasons. The face-to-face group dynamic is an essential part of many lifelong learning tracks, and it is sometimes felt that web 2.0 is incompatible with such dynamics.
- There are still too few best practice scenarios that could persuade trainers and institutions to use those tools, and outline their effectiveness and efficiency.

³ A detailed overview on the involved public and private training institutions can be found at the end of this report (Annex 1)

⁴ See Annex 2: Statistical diagrams

2.2.2. Structural /Institutional barriers

- Choosing the right web 2.0 application to fit the organisation's needs, needs to be done according to a careful analysis of present and future trends. Identifying those needs and trends is crucial for a successful implementation.
- Adopting a web 2.0 platform requires a certain investment of resources in staff training. When working with a large number of freelance trainers however, the cost/benefit ratio of training new (sometimes only temporary) staff becomes more difficult to assess.
- Assessment and evaluation through web 2.0 requires a different approach from the classical right or wrong summative assessment. Learning goals, and therefore course material and teaching methods, will have to be adjusted accordingly, and not everyone trainer/teacher is willing to invest in that.
- Open source networks are often considered as too informal, and too accessible (available to communities beyond the intended target audience) for education purposes. The possibility for user-generated content also means less control over the content of the learning platform, which is an important consideration for many organisations.

2.2.3. Technological barriers

- There is an overabundance of tools and utilities available on the web, with a plethora of widgets/apps/tools that often can't be properly integrated in existing networks. This can feel overwhelming to those who aren't as digitally literate.
- A digital gap (across generations or socio-economic status) is still very much in existence. When targeting a lifelong learning audience, the subset of the population that lack basic ICT skills needs to be taken into account.
- Usability: Acquiring the skill set to use and navigate a web 2.0 application might present a steeper learning curve for some than it does for others. Any form of web 2.0 training should center on presenting basic functionalities, and not drown the potential user in a sea of options.

2.3 What are the benefits for teachers and learners to use web 2.0 applications?

- Distance and blended learning allow courses to target more and more specific audiences in the area of lifelong learning.
- Hosting courses and providing learning material through web 2.0 enables more learner centered, and self paced learning.
- Hosting courses through web 2.0 allows the building of a learning community that can persist through several courses/training modules. This community can interact and share content through the many social tools of web 2.0 networks. Interaction is also possible between different communities across content modules.
- Coaching and evaluation (both summative and formative) are no longer limited to face-to-face contact moments, allowing for more flexibility.
- Media uploads can make course content available to students with specific disabilities (e.g. audio podcasts for the visually impaired).

2.4 What are the success factors that will encourage web 2.0 uptake?

- Usability: Learning to use a new technology requires an investment of time and energy. The easier a tool is to adopt (for a given level of functionality), the higher the chance of a successful implementation.
- Best Practice scenarios: Providing clear guidelines and concrete examples on the optimal use of web 2.0 for a specific context will result in a higher rate of success, and a greater level of acceptance.
- Change management: Any change in institutional policy or philosophy has to be guided over a certain period of time. The rationale behind the choice for web 2.0 has to be if not embraced, then at least accepted, by future users.
- Hands-on experience: Acceptance of new technology and methodology is more likely when the concepts turn from abstract to concrete experience. Preferably in a controlled setting at firms

3. Future Trends in VET and Adult Training

In telephone interviews and stakeholder meetings, the following trends in VET and adult training were identified:

- Blended learning allows a great deal of flexibility in the learning environment, and in how to achieve learning goals. An added advantage of setting up a course through web 2.0, is that the process of teaching and learning can be made flexible as well. Compare for example a classic classroom lecture on business dynamics, with power points and a thesaurus, with an interactive business simulation using a social/collaborative network. The parameters of such a simulation can be adjusted, and the learning goals alongside it, depending on the rate of progress of the students for example.
- With a greater focus on lifelong learning, there is also a greater need for self-reliance on the part of the learner. When developing learning goals and a learning environment, these competencies need to be factored in.
- The market demands for recently graduated students are focused more and more on flexible competency profiles. Therefore it is also the case in lifelong learning that a 'classical reproduction of knowledge' is no longer sufficient.
- Blended learning and distance learning are on the rise. New ICT technologies are an important asset, but face-to-face training or contact moments remain an integral part of education and training.
- The methodology of teaching in VET is becoming more task-oriented.
- Education institutions will have to provide more online support and opportunities for students to interact with trainers and other trainees.
- While the current focus in innovation lies in the means of providing the learning materials through new technologies, the future may see a renewed interest in innovating the content of the learning material itself. Our society's needs are changing, and the interaction between society and education tends to shape the direction that schooling takes (e.g. new defining technologies like cloud computing, that may require specific programming skills and degrees in the future).
- The flexibility of the education landscape through distance learning and multimedia content, allows courses to cater to very specific and sometimes very small target audiences.

Annex I: Brief description of the stakeholders participating in Vlaams-Brabant

The following public and private training institutions were involved in the regional needs analysis phase in Vlaams-Brabant:

I. Public Training Institutions

CVO VTI Leuven

- CVO VTI Leuven is the adult education branch of one of the major associations of schools in the area of Leuven. The CVO offers mostly VET training, but also hosts the SLO, the specific teacher training.
- Like the rest of the schools in the association, CVO VTI uses a Toledo based learning management system called ELO-V, it is mostly used for administrative purposes, but also hosts content sharing and forum functions.

More information: www.cvovtileuven.be

CVO SSV VIVA

- SSV is an adult and VET education centre that focuses primarily on crafts for a female audience. SSV does not host any formal learning platform.

More information: www.CVO-SSV-brabant.be

CLT – Centrum voor Levende Talen

- CLT is a branch of the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven that primarily host international language courses in adult training formats.
- CLT uses the Blackboard (Toledo based) platform that is used across the KUL. Most training packages are more informal and the use of wikis and social networking is relatively widespread, depending on trainer experience and preference.

More information: www.CLT.be

CVO SSH

- CVO SSH is the adult education branch of the Katholieke Hogeschool Leuven. Their education program is aimed at social work and social sciences in a lifelong learning context.
- The SSH uses a Toledo learning management system. The use of ICT in training courses differs among trainers. The more commonly used tools are media sharing sites such as Youtube and Flickr, and social networking sites such as Facebook.

More information: www.CVO-SSH.be

Open University Belgium

- OU is a leading institution in the field of Distance and blended learning, with a great interest in lifelong learning.
- OU Belgium is embedded within the organisation structure of the KUL, but they provide their own learning content, mostly through a combination of distance learning and ICT.

More information: www.avnet.kuleuven.be/ou

AVnet

- Avnet is an education technology research centre operating within the KULeuven.
- Avnet is on the forefront of research and training on the use of web and ICT in education.

More information: www.avnet.kuleuven.be

II. Private Training Institutions

VDAB

- VDAB is the federal service for employment and vocational training. They organise a wide range of VET content, to help people find their way into employment.
- VDAB is also a leading research institution on the use of ICT in training and on the work floor.

More information: www.vdab.be

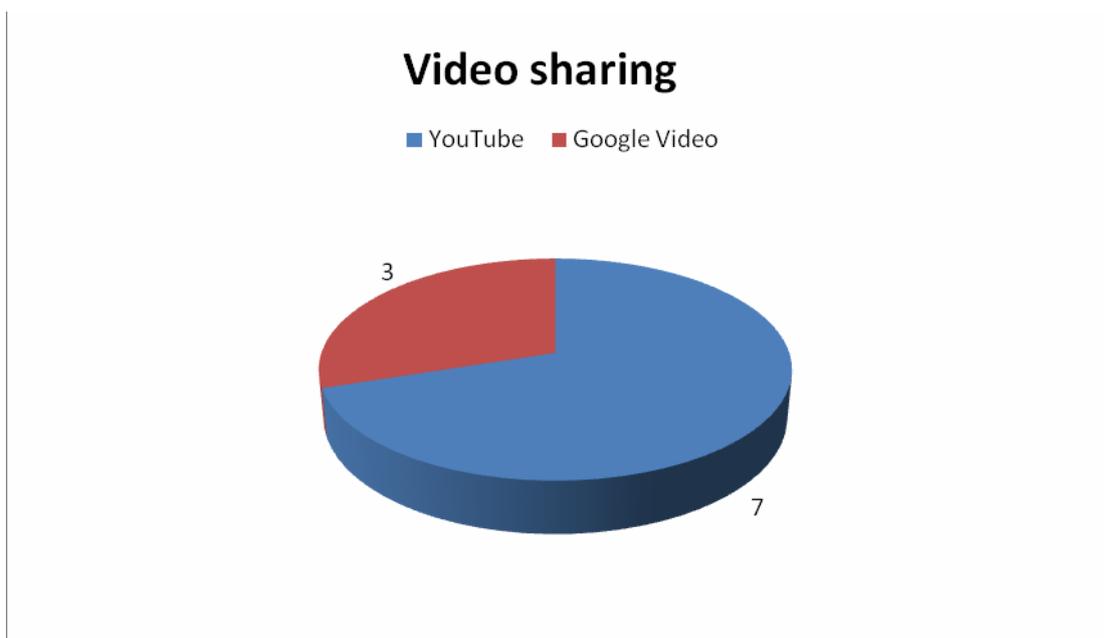
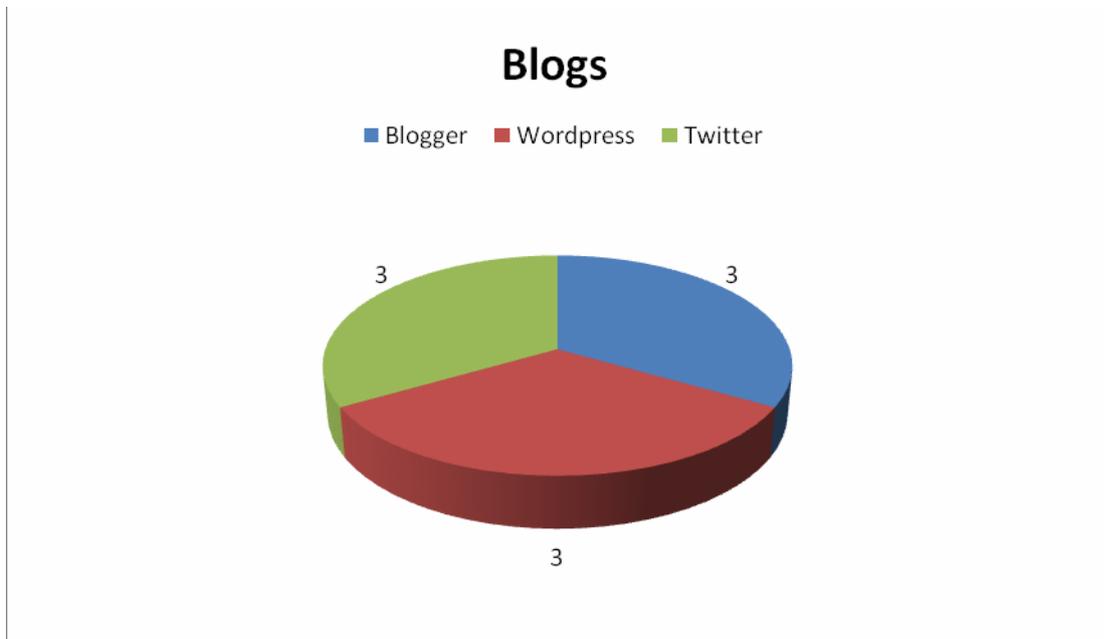
Obelisk bvba

- Obelisk is a primarily soft skill consultancy agency that focuses on resource and competency development in human resources and the work environment.
- They are currently exploring the need for change management, and the potential of social networking in their training portfolio.

More information: www.obelisk.be

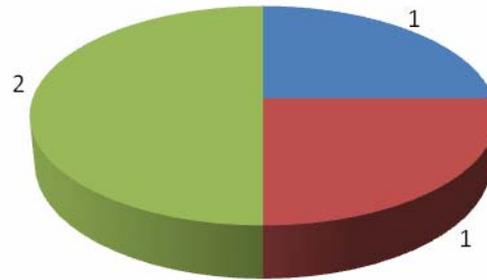
Annex II: Statistical Diagrams

Web 2.0 tool usage within adult training institutions in Leuven and Vlaams-Brabant following the telephone interviews and meetings with several representatives from 7 local adult training institutions (VET and adult education)



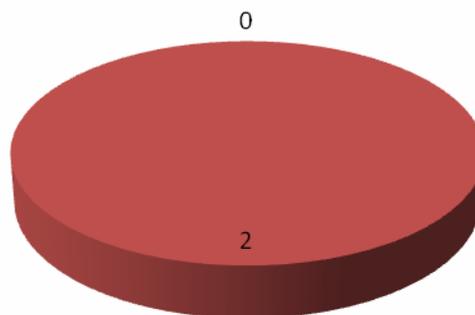
Web meetings

■ Vitero ■ Netviewer ■ Different Tools



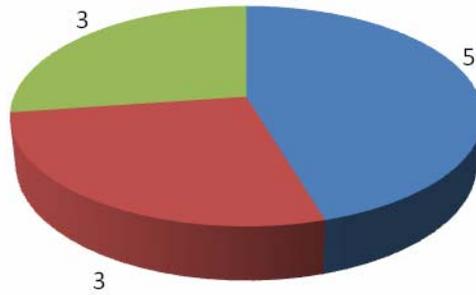
Wikis

■ Moodle ■ Own Learning Platform



Social Networks

■ Facebook ■ LinkedIn ■ Xing



Document sharing

■ Sharepoint ■ Google Docs ■ Own Developed Platform

