



Internet Based Business Coach for SME Managers

Evaluation report of first test phase results

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1.1 Introduction

The main aim of this WP is to ensure maximum **efficiency, reliability, relevancy** and **user-ability** of the NETCOACH e-learning platform prior to official launch and open access. This can be subdivided into components as follows,

- To ensure functionality of the website and e-learning modules,
- To ensure relevance of the content,
- To maximise the user friendliness of NETCOACH,
- Perform on-site training with the project partners and SME volunteers,
- Evaluate the effectiveness, efficiency and applicability of the curriculum to the target group's needs.

1.2 Pre - Pilot Testing Methodology

The purpose of the pre-pilot testing is to identify the main issues and problems with the NETCOACH training material and structure of the online platform in general and to make all necessary changes before we decided to provide it to small and micro enterprises for the further pilot testing.

The first pilot test took place during the week beginning Nov 7th, 2011, and was complete by Friday, 11th Nov, 2011.

The main focus of this pilot test included:

- Feedback on the e-learning content
- Feedback on functionality of the platform from a users perspective
- Critique of the relevance and applicability of the platform for the target users

Pilot testers were invited to take time to familiarise themselves with the website during this week before completing the Pilot Test Survey on Friday Nov 11th. The NETCOACH platform was made available at www.netcoach.eu.com for access by the pilot testers.

The Pilot test survey was put online at the following location to facilitate pilot testers feedback and comments. http://www.kwiksurveys.com?s=OILOFG_feb032ea

Testing produced relevant and important recommendations to help us make the platform more relevant for the target users. This report sets out identified actions resulting from the feedback received.

1.3 Pre - Pilot Testing Participation

In total, eleven pilot testers participated in the 1st pilot test of the NETCOACH Platform. Testers were drawn from the partner organisations and/or their talent pool of experts.

A diverse group of pilot testers was achieved, representing different sectors including SME, Education, Business Development and Public Sector.

A target of 2 testers per participating partner was desired and this was achieved and exceeded. The reason for the extra participation was due to an invitation to an external tester independent of the partner organisations.

2.1 Pre - Pilot Testing Results

The following is a summary of the responses to each of the survey questions. The complete survey results are contained in Appendix 1.

Q1 - Did you experience any problems accessing NETCOACH?

The response to this question was 100% positive.

Q2 - How would you rate the overall interface / design of the Website?

Only 1 of 11 respondents selected the 'Excellent' option, while the majority, (8 of 11, or 73%) considered the interface to be 'good'.

Two respondents (18%) considered the interface to be average or poor.

Suggestions made include;

- Use more colours and icons
- Too much text, the interface is not attractive

While positive reaction was given to the simple layout, the colour scheme and the ease of navigation.

Q3 - Please rate the ease of navigation:

100% of respondents chose the option 'Good' to describe the ease of navigation on the platform.

While respondents seemed satisfied with this aspect of the platform, none were moved to score an 'Excellent' response.

Suggestions for improvement include;

- Make the business coach section more prominent as the other content including partner info, project background, news and results are secondary
- The left navigation pane changes once you click on Business Coach so the learning content is not clear until the user selects 'Business coach'. It might be useful to show a sub-category underneath the 'Business Coach' option, or have the subs expand/contract when clicked
- Include a navigation tree or word cloud

Q4 - Please rate your satisfaction with each of the following aspects of NETCOACH learning content:

Comprehensiveness of the instructions on the usage of the Website

27% Very Satisfied, 73% Satisfied

Structure / Organisation of the Learning Content

20% very Satisfied, 80% Satisfied

Relevance of the Learning Content for You or Your Organisation

10% Very Satisfied, 45% Satisfied, 45%Neutral

This question is quite subjective. As only two modules have been prepared and these address quite specific topics, it is expected that a 100% satisfaction rating would be difficult to achieve.

Comprehensiveness of the learning content

0% Very Satisfied, 91% Satisfied, 9%Neutral

Relevance of Tools Provided

9% Very Satisfied, 73% Satisfied, 18%Neutral

Quality of Case Studies Provided

20% Very Satisfied, 60% Satisfied, 10%Neutral, 10%Dissatisfied

It will be important to review the case Studies provided for relevance based on these results.

Q5 - Please provide your comments with respect to the “Creativity & Innovation” Module and content

A number of interesting comments were provided in this section. Some of these comments refer to technical corrections which will be made. Other interesting feedback includes the following;

- More diagrams and pictures for illustrate the content – interestingly, diagrams and pictures are included in the tools section, meaning that the chapter and tutorial is very much text based.
- Further readings and links to other sites could be improved

Q6 - Please provide your comments with respect to the “Integrated Management Systems” Module and content

A number of interesting comments were provided in this section. Some of these comments refer to technical corrections which will be made. Other interesting feedback includes the following;

- No case studies provided. Too small choice of tools.
- Further readings and links to other sites could be improved

Q7 - Overall, how satisfied are you with the NETCOACH experience?

0% Excellent, 82% Good, 18%Average

Comments / suggestions for improvement include;

- More sketches, colours and icons, more tools and case studies
- While the content is good, it may not be ideally focussed towards the needs of the target user.
- A thorough pilot test with selected SME and entrepreneurs should be conducted

Q8 - How likely are you to:

Return to this website?

27% Very Likely, 73% Somewhat Likely

This result is somewhat disappointing and may reflect the limited content at this time. It is important to address the points raised through this pilot test process and also to continue to develop material which is relevant and useful.

As further modules are developed users should be more likely to return

Recommend this website?

56% Very Likely, 44% Somewhat Likely

This result is somewhat disappointing and illustrates how important it is to engage the user from the start.

Q9 - Based on your experience on NETCOACH, please provide suggestions for improvement / possible modifications

A number of interesting suggestions were provided in this section. Some of these comments refer to technical corrections which will be made. Other interesting feedback includes the following;

- More sketches, colours and icons
- More tools and case studies
- Create a navigation tree or a word cloud
- Maybe more diagrams/illustrations. It seems very text based
- Pilot test with target group
- Refine content based on users need

- Modules, and chapters can be too long and detailed meaning some useful information can get lost. Shorter modules/chapters, and more of them may provide a more 'punchy' result
- Display information in a more attractive disposition and design
- You could make the training more interactive. Upload for instance a video or a game module
- If I was looking for a tool quickly, there is no separate "Toolbox" I can look into to find the template/tool. This could be implemented fairly easily in the right hand side pane above where the current tools show up
- Video would certainly liven it up a little. Stanford have some great videos on creativity and innovation that can be embedded or linked under "other resources"
- It is possible that having the content in a downloadable audio format (e.g. mp3) might be desirable for those managers that, according to the survey, have little time
- If the courses are to be accredited, will some form of test be required or would it be a certificate of completion?

3.1 Actions Arising out of Pre-Pilot Testing

1. Review content to include less text and more tools and case studies, and more specifically make the content more attractive through the use of more colours, icons, diagrams, illustrations etc.
2. Create a navigation tree or a word cloud
3. Pilot test with target group
4. Refine existing content, and develop new content based on users need
5. Re-edit into shorter modules/chapters
6. Investigate opportunities to make the training more interactive, e.g. by including video or games
7. Add a separate "Toolbox" to help quick search of template/tools
8. Consider developing the content in a downloadable audio format (e.g. mp3)
9. Add 'further readings' and 'useful links' to other sites could be improved
10. Make the business coach section more prominent on the platform and so that modules and content are easily identified (other content including partner info, project background, news and results are secondary)
11. Check footnotes for accuracy
12. Consider short module on Intellectual Property
13. Review text to ensure acronyms follow the convention description and its acronym in brackets
14. Consider providing basic tutorials on Risk Assessment, Incident Investigation, etc in the IMS module

APPENDIX 1

Results for survey: Evaluation Questionnaire - Pilot testing 1 - Internal testing

Page: 1/1

Pilot testing 1 - Pre-testing evaluation

Dear participant,

Thank you for your valuable feedback on the NETCOACH training system!

We will be grateful to receive your comments, suggestions and proposals for improvement.

Please go to the web site of NETCOACH - <http://www.netcoach.eu.com/> and take a look on the site services, content and structure;

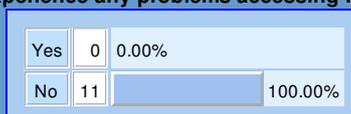
Please fill the questionnaire below and share your experience.

This will help us to improve our services and to provide high-quality content, accessible to SMEs managers and professionals.

NETCOACH Team

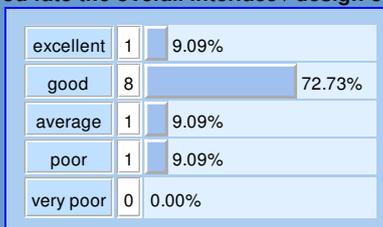
Question 1

Did you experience any problems accessing NETCOACH?



Question 2

How would you rate the overall interface / design of the Website?



ID	View Survey	Please provide more information on the areas / reasons that prompted your answer:
8847716	View	use more colours and icons
8988995	View	the website is easy to navigate, but nothing exceptional
9067932	View	too much text, not attractive
9084787	View	Simple layout, clear, good colour scheme

Question 3

Please rate the ease of navigation:

Excellent	0	0.00%
Good	11	100.00%
Average	0	0.00%
Poor	0	0.00%
Very Poor	0	0.00%

ID	View Survey	If you characterised the ease of navigation as poor or very poor, please explain us what hindered the navigation:
8847716	View	miss a navigation tree or a word cloud
8988995	View	simple, clean, easy to find the information. It could be better to make the business coach section more prominent as this is the real resource
9084787	View	The left pane navigation changes once you click on Business Coach.. so the content is not clear until this is clicked. Might be useful to show a sub-cat underneath the coach, or have the subs expand/contract when clicked?

Question 4

Please rate your satisfaction with each of the following aspects of NETCOACH learning content: (Please tick the appropriate boxes)

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Responses	Total
Comprehensiveness of the instructions on the usage of the Website	3	8	0	0	0	11	17%
Structure/Organisation of the Learning Content	2	8	0	0	0	10	16%
Relevance of the Learning Content for You or Your Organisation	1	5	5	0	0	11	17%
Comprehensiveness of the learning content	0	10	1	0	0	11	17%
Relevance of Tools Provided	1	8	2	0	0	11	17%
Quality of Case Studies Provided	2	6	1	1	0	10	16%

Question 5

Please provide your comments with respect to the “Creativity & Innovation” Module and content? What is missing? What needs to be modified?

ID	Text Answers (10)	View
8847716	can not find tools and case studies	View
8849649	More diagrams and pictures for illustrate the content.	View
8987958	Check footnotes. They don't always appear on the page where they are referenced e.g 1.1 What is Innovation.(none appear) and for example in 1.2.4 (most of the footnotes do appear on this page, but not all)	View
8988995	The module gives a good insight into the topic, and the tools are pretty good. Chapters 1.5 and 1.7 could be really useful in a practical sense, which I believe is the focus of the project. there are also some good tools here for condusting SWOT and other techniques. The contents of chapter 1.7 could perhaps be seperated into a new module on Intellectual property as these are the kind of questions many budding entrepreneurs will ask so there is merit for having them 'closer to the surface'. Overall, the module looks good but my fear is that some of the content is a little high brow for the majority of the target user.	View
9039538	Excellent!	View
9067932	Further readings could be improved, links to other sites (specialized on creativity and innovation) could be added.	View
9069089	Excellent nothing to improve.	View
9069818	Everything is well structured.	View
9076880	Point 1.1 - The text of the 4 points should be justified as the rest; Pay attention to acronyms, should be the description and its acronym in brackets;	View
9084787	Very much liked the module. Could use Brainwriting instead of storming- has many advantages... there are also a few tools that can be used for iterative decision making and these can be provided in a template form under the Tools... more complex than FFA but also quantitative. Could consider also mixing attribute listing, inversion, SCAMPERR and random word for stimulating creativity and product innovation. Overall - succinct and useful.	View

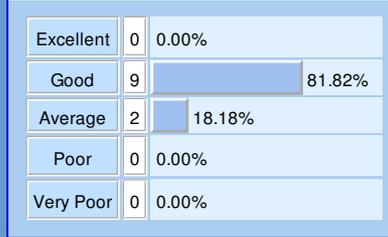
Question 6

Please provide your comments with respect to the “Integrated Management Systems” Module and content? What is missing? What needs to be modified?

ID	Text Answers (8)	View
8847716	found tools, but no case studies, too less choice of tools	View
8849649	More diagrams and pictures for illustrate the content.	View
8988995	The module on Integrated management systems is well put together but regarding the relevance to the target user, i am not convinced. In my experience the Health, Safety and Environmental Management is usually outsourced by the SME to an external consultant. Chapter 4.2 for example is quite lengthy and I am not sure contains much value for the target user. Their may be merit in providing some more basic tutorials on how to conduct a Risk Assessment, or how to carry out and Incident Investigation, rather than designing the management systems	View
9039538	It is great!	View
9067932	Add more further readings and links to other sites.	View
9069089	Excellent nothing to improve.	View
9069818	The module is complete and useful.	View
9076880	In the introduction to Section 4 appears the acronym "EMS" and then in brackets "Small and Medium Enterprise" should be upside down ie: - Small and Medium Enterprise (SME); The paragraph beginning with "In general" is a bit confusing, I think it should be simpler and smaller; In part that says "Definition" has three points, the text should be justified as the rest; The end of section 4.1 says "and the cyclical structure PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act)" should be - and cyclical Plan-Do-Check-Act structure (PDCA).	View

Question 7

Overall, how satisfied are you with the NETCOACH experience?



ID	View Survey	If dissatisfied, please elaborate further:
8847716	View	More sketches, colours and icons, more tools and case studies
8988995	View	As discussed previously, my concern is that while the content is good, it may not be ideally focussed towards the needs of the target user. I suggest that a thorough pilot test with selected SME and entrepreneurs be conducted

Question 8

How likely are you to:

	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Neutral	Somewhat unlikely	Not at all likely	Responses	Total
Return to this website?.	3	8	0	0	0	11	55%
Recommend this website?	5	4	0	0	0	9	45%

ID	View Survey	Please elaborate on your answer:
8988995	View	NETCOACH is an interesting concept and I am very excited to see how this platform develops over time.
9067932	View	would recommend to people who is looking for information on the contents presented.

Question 9

Based on your experience on NETCOACH, please provide suggestions for improvement / possible modifications

ID	Text Answers (9)	View
8847716	More sketches, colours and icons, more tools and case studies create a navigation tree or a word cloud	View
8987958	Maybe more diagrams/illustrations. It seems very text based?	View
8988995	- pilot test with target group - refine content based on users need - Modules, and chapters, in particular IMS, can be too long and detailed meaning some useful information can get lost. Shorter modules/chapters, and more of them may provide a more 'punchy' result.	View
9039538	None!	View
9067932	An effort to display information in a more attractive disposition and design.	View
9069089	Excellent nothing to improve.	View
9069818	You could make the training more interactive. Upload for instance a video or a game module...	View
9076880	Nothing to say.	View
9084787	If I was looking for a tool quickly, there is no separate "Toolbox" I can look into to find the template/tool. This could be implemented fairly easily in the rhs pane above where the current tools show up. A free MM tool is Freemind- could be linked to as well... and OpenProj is a free Project Management tool that could be used in the implementation phase of any new project. Video would certainly liven it up a little? Stanford have some great videos on creativity and innovation that can be embedded or linked to under "other resources". It's possible that having the content in an audio format might be desirable for those managers that, according to the survey, have little time. Could listen to an MP3 in the car or while having lunch etc. Cost could be low- estimated dictation time is several hours- just need a good voice. If the courses are to be accredited, will some form of test be required or would it be a cert of completion?	View

Question 10

Overall Conclusions / Any Other Comments

ID	Text Answers (7)	View
8847716	Nice overall design	View
8933288	Knowledge Management and E-Business have no content	View
8987958	Content very good and good reference point for definitions, coaching tools etc	View
8988995	Keep up the good work.	View
9069089	Excellent site, it provides a great tool for companies that wish improve their efficiency.	View
9076880	Nothing to say.	View
9084787	Excellent project. btw, have written a module on e-Business if you wish to contact me. Marc Cashin did a PhD in Knowledge Management and might have something to contribute to that module. Looking forward to looking at the finished product!	View

Question 11

May we contact you for further discussion, based upon your evaluation comments?

Yes	8	80.00%
No	2	20.00%

Question 12

Personal and Company data.
Please fill the following information:

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Question 13

Thank you for your time and your contribution!

This question has no answers