



The Computerworld Honors Program

Honoring those who use Information Technology to benefit society

Final Copy of Case Study

Status:

Laureate

Year:

2013

Organization Name:

SMART Technologies

Organization URL:

<http://smarttech.com/>

Project Name:

SMART Learning Space Anti-Cyber-Bullying Campaign and SMART Exchange

Please select the category in which you are submitting your entry:

Philanthropy

Please provide an overview of the nominated project. Describe the problem it was intended to solve, the technology or approach used, how it was innovative and any technical or other challenges that had to be overcome for successful implementation and adoption. (In 300 words or less.)

SMART Technologies is a leading provider of innovative products and solutions that enhance learning and enable people to collaborate in more effective ways. Recently, the training and professional development team at SMART Technologies has developed an online program entitled Preventing and Responding to Cyberbullying. According to The American Academy of Pediatrics, cyberbullying is the "most common online risk for all teens." A number of high-profile incidents in Canada, the U.S., and around the world in recent years have demonstrated that cyberbullying through email, texts or social networking sites like Facebook can lead to grave consequences if not handled properly. Bullying has always been an issue for students, teachers, administrators and parents.

However, with the current rate of technology change, online bullying is taking the place of in-person bullying and many caregivers are unfamiliar with the rapidly changing social technologies that are abused in a cyberbullying situation. SMART provides their anti-bullying training courses and many other Teaching with Technology courses through their Saba Learning platform. The program reaches teachers, students, school administration, parents, and anyone interested in cyberbullying. These courses empower caregivers with the social technology skills they'll need to educate young people about how to prevent and respond to cyberbullying. The courses teach users: How to recognize cyberbullying, how common social technologies are used, and how they can be abused, and how to use technology to document and protect against abuse. These courses are available through the SMART Learning Space with more resources available on SMART Exchange, a community and database available to educators across Canada. Teachers and faculty can find, preview and download over 60,000 classroom-ready resources and share and download peer-generated content. Teachers can connect with more than 1.2 million colleagues around the world to exchange lessons, ideas and insights.

When was this project implemented or last updated? (Please specify month and year.) Has it incorporated new technologies and/or other innovations since its initial deployment? (In 300 words or less.)

SMART first deployed the Cyberbullying program in February 2011 for pink shirt day, a public initiative designed to raise awareness around the issue of bullying. We update the course every year for launch in February to coincide with pink shirt day annually. New developments, legislation, support venues and advancements or changes in technology are added to the course each year. On the SMART Exchange side, the site is growing and we implement new enhancements all the time. Recent enhancements include a 3D gallery with downloadable objects that can be used within our Notebook software as well a market place for publishers, partners and even teachers to sell content.

If this is a previously submitted project that has been significantly updated and/or expanded, please describe the nature of the update here. (In 300 words or less.)

SMART Technologies Learning Space was submitted last year in the Education and Training Category for their work enabling partners, resellers, customers, and end users. Their SMART Exchange program for educators and anti-cyberbullying program has not been submitted for recognition.

Is implementation of the project complete? If no, please describe the project's phases and which phase the project is now in. (In 300 words or less.)

The implementations of our projects are complete, but we continue to add functionality and enhancements all the time. Each year SMART provides more than 30,000 free courses to teachers around the world. These courses range in topic from cyberbullying to how to teach more effectively and keep children engaged while learning. One of our goals is to help do what we can to promote learning, keep kids in school and help reduce the dropout rate. This is also where the SMART Exchange comes into play. Teachers don't have all the time in the world to create engaging lessons for their students, so with the SMART Exchange they can swap already made lessons with their peers. To date there are over 1 million users, 60 thousand pieces of content and on average 500 thousand visitors each month in the SMART Exchange.

Please provide at least one example of how the technology project has benefited a specific individual or organization. Feel free to include personal quotes from individuals who have directly benefited from the work. (In 300 words or less.)

Shannon Fowler, Special Needs teacher, has benefitted greatly from SMART's training: "Because I teach students with significant cognitive disabilities, I think it's important to incorporate technology to engage them in activities and to modify the General Ed. curriculum so they can access the material. I want to be able to collaborate with some of the teachers here today from our school and maybe put together some information to pass on to our faculty at our school so that if we can't all be here, we can continue with the idea and teach them, keeping it fresh in our minds." Through the use of communities (within Saba) as part of the distance education program that SMART offers, teachers have the opportunities to learn and collaborate with their peers and trainers so they can better meet the needs of their students. Another example of how this type of training has benefitted an organization is SMART's partnership with the University of Alberta's Faculty of Education Department. SMART provided access to the learning environment and trained their Information and Communication Technologies staff to deliver workshops to their student teachers who are preparing to enter the workforce. With this training, new teachers were equipped with the skills they needed to embrace interactive technology in the classroom and deliver engaging lessons. This also sparked interest from local school districts that targeted their recruitment of these teachers in an effort to get them into classrooms that were already outfitted with an investment of interactive technology.



Would this project be considered an innovation, a best practice or other notable advancement that could be adopted by or tailored for other organizations and uses? If yes, please describe that here. (In 300 words or less.)

SMART Technologies' anti-cyberbullying courses are a proactive solution to a technology disconnect that has affected the ability for educators and parents to address key issues in children's lives. This effort to empower those with limited technology skills is a best practice that other educational organizations should adopt. SMART is focused on developing a variety of easy-to-use, integrated collaboration solutions that free people from their desks and computer screens, making collaboration and learning with digital resources more natural. Their efforts to enable their users and the wider education community to collaborate and address social problems such as bullying match their central goal to innovate in how information and learning is being shared. They started the SMART Learning Space, a virtual learning environment loaded with highly innovative and interactive learning experiences that enhance SMART's educators. With the SMART Learning Space, SMART has been able to provide over 15,000 courses over the last year to school districts around the world, giving teachers some of the training they need to engage students and help them stay in school and perform better. Since SMART launched the program, their registrations have grown from 9,000 to almost 50,000 in just over a year. SMART Exchange takes the innovation even further, allowing teachers around the world to crowd source the best content and work together to address common classroom challenges in forums. This free exchange of ideas, lesson plans, and resources enables the development of the best and most advanced learning across a global community of educators.