LUOVA

USING ONLINE ESCAPE ROOMS TO BUILD CREATIVE THINKING SKILLS

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Introduction and Aims

The Internet environment is something without which it would be difficult to imagine life now. The beginning of the Internet dates back to the late 1960s and the beginning of websites and web browsers to the 1990s. Since then, the fast-growing Internet environment has given us an infinite number of opportunities and potential for development in every area of life.

As is well known, the online environment is interactive. Thanks to the visualization of constantly developing functionalities of Internet technologies, it engages its users in making decisions and developing analytical thinking while searching for information resources and selection of collected data. The online environment is an attractive platform for sharing knowledge. Nowadays, more and more often we use the potential offered by the Internet environment and various applications for teaching both young people and adults. For this purpose, various types of e-learning tools are used which integrate different strategies and different scenarios for processing the presented data. The more strategies can be used, the more the learner can be involved at many levels of information processing and thus be interactive.

This Module aims to support front-line youth workers to harness the potential of the dynamic online environment and applications to build high-value skill sets within their marginalised target groups. In detail, the Module will provide insights on the teaching and learning processes which can be supported by the digital escape room methodology. Additionally, at the end of the Module, youth workers can find a rich pool of resources for the application of the digital escape room methodology to formal and non-formal educational settings.

Thanks to such rapid development of the Internet environment, new methods of knowledge acquisition and development of knowledge are being developed. One such example is the escape rooms. Thanks to expanding our digital literacy and efficient navigation in the Internet environment, social media and applications, we will be able to create our own escape rooms that will allow us to develop critical thinking and other key competence skills such as teamwork, decision making, results orientation or leadership.

In particular, upon the completion of the Module adult educators will be able to:

    Describe the benefits of digital collaboration;
    List the appropriate tools that boost creativity describe their use;
    Identify the social media netiquette;
    Develop digital literacy;
    Knowledge of online risks, and how to stay secure;

1. Dynamic developing online environment

The modern understanding of the online environment in its social and technological nature refers to social networking concepts. The key to understanding social networks are not only the characteristics of individuals or their associated values, but above all the links between them and the structures created by their influence. The number of links between the entities forming this network is virtually unlimited. In this sense, the Internet is the physical or technological representation of the symbolic links present in all social structures.

According to the IGI-Global dictionary online environment is "The virtual space in which a computed defined system can function being connected to other(s) connected systems through a communication electronic channel and sharing content."[1]

Since 1991, when the project to create the World Wide Web was presented, the Internet environment has started to develop more and more rapidly. The breakthrough moment from which the rate of development and universality of the Internet environment grew at an astonishing rate was the creation of the google search engine in 1998. Since then, the online environment has become a common good for entertainment and learning.

Currently, the online environment has enormous potential and gives its users endless opportunities for development.

The policy of the European Commission supports a legal and innovation-based environment for Internet platforms in the EU. To achieve this goal, the Commission has identified key areas of interest in the May 2016 Communication on Internet platforms[2]. The guiding principles of this policy are as follows:

- A level playing field for comparable digital services;
- Ensure responsible behaviour of online platforms to protect core values
- Foster trust, transparency and ensure fairness on online platforms;
- Keep markets open and non-discriminatory to foster a data-driven economy.

The Internet has a huge impact on education aimed at gaining knowledge, expanding creativity and acquiring skills. To achieve this you need a source of comprehensive information, which is the constantly developing Internet environment.

As a new medium, the Internet environment offers its users features such as:

- **Interactivity and cooperation**
  the student has the ability to receive all kinds of messages and respond to them both synchronously and asynchronously. Effective communication gives the possibility of data exchange

- **Multimodality**
  The Internet is a convergent medium - it contains messages in the form of text, image, animation film, sound. It is a polysensory medium

- **Hypertextuality**
  The Internet is a collection of information published in a non-linear way that facilitates

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[1]   https://www.igi-global.com/dictionary/online-learner-expectations/20966
[2]   https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1466514160026&uri=CELEX:52016DC0288

efficient redirection to related topics and keywords

- **Simplicity of exploration**
  Internet search engines enable efficient access to the required and specially created tag systems help to organize and archive it

Digital collaboration

As technology becomes more and more integrated in our society, so does the phenomenon called digital collaboration. Digital collaboration is referred to as "the practice of people working together through online means such as software-as-a-solution (SaaS) platforms."[3] This allows people not only to work with each other through communication, but also provides digital tools to help achieve collaborative needs.
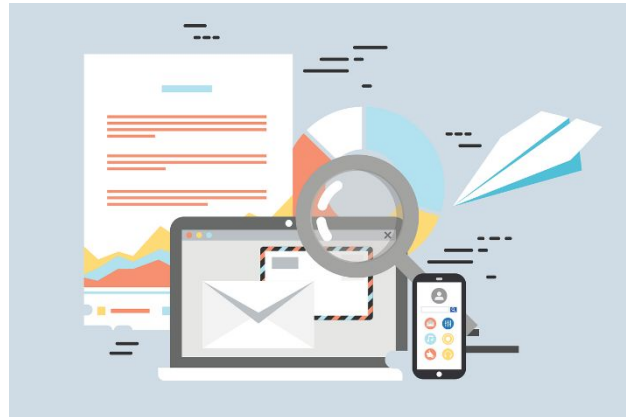
These tools will help learners not only to communicate but also to develop interpersonal skills, to improve digital literacy and creative thinking. According to a report presented by an American strategic management consultancy company - McKinsey - the use of appropriate tools and digital collaboration improves productivity from 20 to 30 percent. Here are examples of the digital tools most commonly used for digital collaboration:

Communication tools - There are many tools available on the market to support communication on the Internet and to improve digital collaboration. Taking into account the variety of methods and trends related to online communication, among the examples below you will find tools that can be used to organize webinars, video and audio conferences and online trainings.

- Flowdock
- WebEx
- GoToMeeting
- Zoom

Tools for creation - Creating and designing a given project, e.g. an escape room, is usually not a task for one person. Thanks to the following tools, you can collaborate in creating a project together in an online environment:

- Google docs / Google forms
- Quip
- igloo

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[3]   https://www.glasscubes.com/digital-collaboration/

Tools for managing projects and tasks - project management tools are essential for shared digital collaboration. They improve the task management process, organise documents and monitor deadlins.

- Dapulse
- Asana
- Redbooth
- Wimi
- Milanote
- Dropbox

Reflection activity:
Reflect about ta situation in which you have exercised your interpersonal skills (Communication, Teamwork, Empathy, and Positive Attitude) through the use of digital tools. Were you aware that these activities allowed you to exercise them?

2. Social media and smartphones

With the development of the Internet, social media have become extremely widespread and are still gaining ground. Thanks to social media, the new segments of marketing, communication, sales, education and relationship building have been formed. Over the last 10 years, social media has practically tripled the number of its users, increasing from 970 million in 2010 to almost 3.81 billion in 2020. There are multiple different platforms, each have multiple different users and offer different possibilities.

Statistics clearly show that the use of social media in European countries has been increasing constantly over the years.

source:
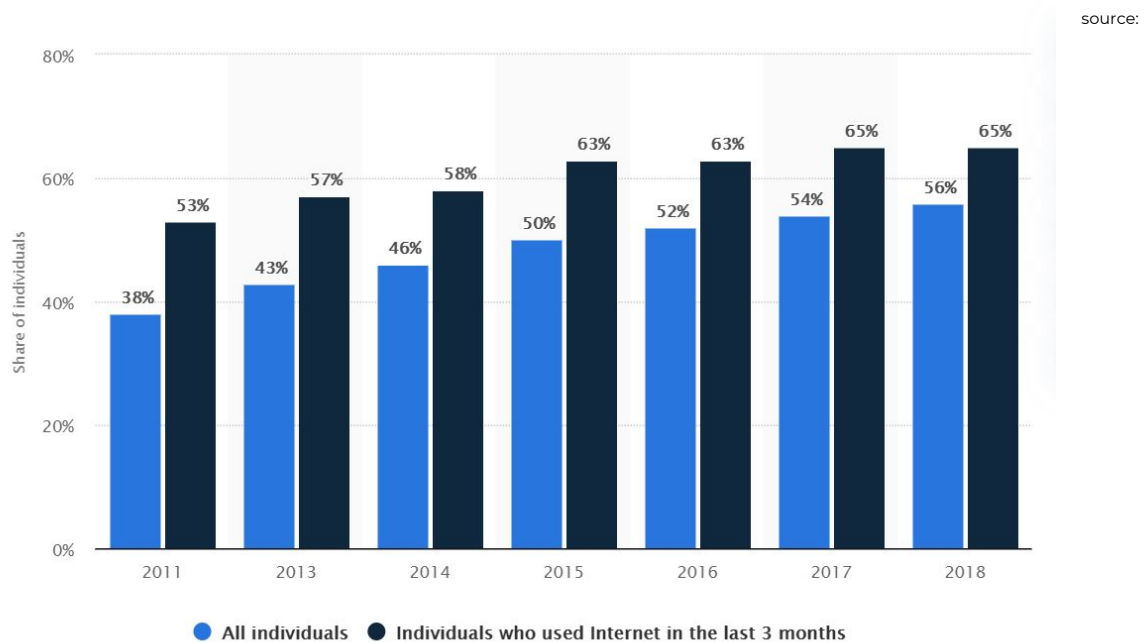
Here is a list of some of the most popular types of social media and the opportunities they offer:

Social networking (Facebook, LinkedIn) – Facebook is the most popular social media. has already collected around 2.5 milliard users. The very fact that it is the most popular social platform enables us to build relationships and reach a large number of recipients. It is also a powerful tool for building the brand image and gives us the opportunity to monitor our activities. LinkedIn is a professional social media site where industry experts share content, network with one another, and build their personal brand

Video sharing (Youtube, Vine, Facebook live) - The video portals let individuals gain hundreds of thousands of subscribers innovative ideas are awarded on these channels, allowing some to turn their hobby into a career and make money.

Microblogging (Twitter, Tumblr) - Platforms like Twitter and Tumblr can be often used outside of the blogosphere. Twitter in particular has many accounts that have been set up by companies, organizations, media outlets, celebrities, politicians, etc. Users of both networks share different types of content (news, links, images, videos).

Social media netiquette

The prevalence of social media gives its users many opportunities for development but it is important to be aware of the risks it entails. Their universality makes proper authorisation often impossible, and you can come across so-called 'fake accounts', 'fake news' or simply scams.

In order to make the most of the potential and opportunities offered by social media, certain rules must be observed by learners, such as:

Being cultured

In the social media, it is important to write and to announce opinions, which we would also announce outside the Internet - this is one of the most important principles to be observed when using the social media. Inserting false information or rude statements can damage relations with important individuals or ruin the visitor's image, because information inserted into the Internet may never be permanently removed.

Use of polite phrases

Other Internet users, very often, voluntarily show courtesy by sharing their knowledge. Likewise, we communicate with them and make an effort to work together of our own free will. "Please" and "thank you" are forms of thanking people for their help.

Being concise

Long and complex explanations in response to a short question statistically discourage the audience from reading it and can create confusion. It is not always possible to answer briefly and concisely, but it is important to be aware of the specifics of social media in order for a successful and effective communication and networking to take place.

Taking care of the grammar and spelling

It takes a short while to make sure you don't make a mistake and it will be well received. It's all about showing respect for others, and your own image. Even the smartest statement can be perceived negatively if it contains obvious grammatical errors or typos.

Appropriate reference to statements made by others

When referring to the response of another internet user, it is important to write exactly which internet user you are referring to, e.g. by his or her name or pseudonym, by a link to his or her speech or by a tag. It is then easier for other participants to follow the discussion.

Showing respect for members of the community

 If you do not agree with someone's statement, it should be done in a tactful and civilised way, using factual counter-arguments. Everyone is entitled to his or her own point of view on the matter, and disagreement should not be a personal attack on the author of the opinion, but an attempt to convince his or her right or to show that the problem is more complex.

Applying the principle of limited trust.

Networking and establishing new connections is a very important element of the Internet environment, but learners must remember about security. You should not enter into suspicious links sent by strangers, nor should you give out your personal details about your private life.

New technologies and an constantly changing reality mean that learners still have to adapt to their environment and keep up to date with all trends. Learners need to be aware of how to comply with the rules, and of the essence of self-respect on the Internet in order to explore and best exploit the potential of the Internet and its potential for self-development.

3. Apps that boost creativity

There are many different ways in which personal development can be supported, including reading interesting guides, participating in training courses or meeting inspiring people. However, the purpose of this handbook is to show learners how to develop creative skills by using the Internet environment and applications. With the development of the Internet environment, mobile applications are also becoming increasingly common. Among them there are also many applications that can develop the interests of learners and encourage them to develop these skills by creating their own challenge based breakouts.

For this purpose, it is advisable to familiarise learners with the following applications:

Elevate – this app aims to systematically exercise our mind in several key areas: memory, estimation, counting, analysis and eloquence. First, the areas that you want to develop are selected and then you can adjust the difficulty level with a short test. Each exercise has its own time constraints, which adapt to the skills of the user.

Neuro nation - Downloaded more than 6 million times and considered one of the best applications of 2015. Neuro Nation starts with a short recognition of your needs - you choose the areas you want to develop - this allows you to adapt your training to your individual preferences. The creators of the application convince that the exercises included in the application were created in cooperation with universities from Berlin, Dortmund and The Hague. The application has many elements of gamification, i.e. engaging the user through various mechanisms of gaining points and unlocking additional levels.

Peak - As in the above examples, the user first selects which areas of development he is most interested in and takes a short test that will match the exercises to his skills. The application develops skills in five areas: intellectual fitness, concentration, memory, language skills and problem solving. The creators of Peak ensure that the best results are achieved by using the application systematically, at least three times a week.

Lumosity - Lumosity is a joint effort of scientists and game designers, the aim of which was to create a tool to help stimulate the development of our minds. This application is also aimed at being systematic. Every day, users receive a new set of exercises prepared especially for pre-selected needs, and solving them helps to develop their creativity.

Reflection activity:
Think of an problem – solving everyday activity, that boosts creativity and helps learners in developing interpersonal skills.

For more information please visit this website:

https://project-management.com/improving-your-mobile-app-development-skills-through-personal-development/

4. Online safety

Online safety is one of the most important concerns of modern times. Almost everything is already in our computers and smartphones - we communicate with the world, buy, do transactions, use electronic banking, install various programs and applications. Unfortunately, there are also threats in cyberspace. It is necessary to be aware of them, and to use the Internet as safely as possible. It is estimated that worldwide losses from ICT crime will reach 2 trillion US dollars in 2019. Unfortunately, despite international campaigns to raise awareness of this type of threats, many organisations still have insufficient knowledge of the issue and do not apply appropriate safety measures.

Existing risks are constantly being replaced by new ones. Here are some of the most common ones:

DDoS attacks (distributed denial of service).

An attack on software or a website from multiple computers simultaneously to cause them to suspend or prevent them from operating online by sending too many requests. These can be prevented by using antivirus software, firewalls and filters.

Hackers

Persons responsible for external attacks trying to detect vulnerabilities in order to gain access to company systems. The purpose of such actions is to control or steal data. Regular updating of passwords and security systems is a necessary preventive measure.

Phishing and pharming.

Impersonating a trusted source (person or institution) to defraud confidential information. Phishing uses e-mail and pharming redirects to fake websites and web servers. It is essential that you tell your employees how to recognize such threats.

Bots and viruses.

Automatically installing (bots) or inadvertently installing malware (Trojans) to take control of your system or steal data. Regular updating of Internet-based data protection software and SSL certificates, installation of effective anti-virus software, and training in how to act can help prevent such threats.

Cybersecurity

Cybersecurity is the state of protecting and recovering networks, devices and programs from any type of cyberattack. What's the best defense? Well, ther is no one magic program or system that will protect you from every cyberrisk. In today's connected world, everyone benefits from advanced cyberdefense programs. At an individual level, a cybersecurity attack can result in everything from identity theft, to extortion attempts, to the loss of important data like family photos. Everyone relies on critical infrastructure like power plants, hospitals, and financial service companies. Securing these and other organizations is essential to keeping our society functioning.

Everyone also benefits from the work of cyberthreat researchers, like the team of 250 threat researchers at Talos, who investigate new and emerging threats and cyber attack strategies. They reveal new vulnerabilities, educate the public on the importance of cybersecurity, and strengthen open source tools. Their work makes the Internet safer for everyone.

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TRUST
LOVE
"Street Art"

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YOUTH IN SCIENCE AND BUSINESS FOUNDATION

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