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Abstract

Managed Access to Audio, Visual and Information Services (Maavis) was launched as an open source beta release application in September 2008. Maavis was developed by the authors with the participation of older people using a prototype called 'SIMWIN' which showed proof of concept and indicated beneficial outcomes[1-3]. The concepts behind Maavis, which partially were guided by human computer interfacing for people with dementia[4-5], were always recognised as beneficial to a number of other groups[6]. Consequently during 2008 these concepts, summarised as use of IT without understanding it or extreme simplification of the interface, were also evaluated with four school pupils with varying physical and learning impairments. Again this work indicated beneficial outcomes. This lead to the authors adding features to Maavis to make it suitable for use in the special needs school environment, eg being network friendly and single switch scanning access. This was achieved through team discussions and consultations with staff within three schools. These developments will be tested during the autumn 2009 and winter term 2010 in the same three schools. The details of the developments and their success so far will be reported.

In June 2009 Maavis was adopted by JISC's OSS Watch[7] as a 'strategic' project that will significantly address accessibility issues of IT and the web for groups who struggle with standard IT and/or are e-isolated. The aim is to establish an active open development community by the first half of 2010. Links with others in the adult education field and with UK and international care providers are already initiated.

Acknowledgements

References

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Introducing the AT Innovations Broker workshop

Workshop Programme :

- Presentation about the aims for the workshop and introducing the broker.
- Having a go with the broker*
- Discussion/feedback
- Summarising the findings

* - requires live connection to the Internet with 3-6 wireless laptops, the latter will be provided by D4D, but individuals can bring their own wireless laptops

The Innovations broker has several important services to deliver to the AT field[1]. Firstly to be a 'dating' agency for manufacturers and innovators; inspired by the lack of conversion of bespoke designs and one off prototypes to commercially available choice for consumers. Secondly, to allow users to express what they need from technology innovations and to express their views about the usefulness of others. Thirdly, to allow owners of near identical innovations to open a dialogue to clarify the way forward most beneficial to the end users. And fourthly, to provide a rapid to use information resource that allows stakeholders to grasp their role and what is involved in commercialising AT innovations.

The Devices for Dignity AT Innovations Broker was first openly proposed in September 2008[2]. At that event the stakeholder representatives, covering manufacturers, innovators, carers, end users of AT, and others including researchers, there was a consensus that a web based resource, i.e. the Innovations broker, was wanted despite the reservations over lack of accessibility of Internet based services to the e-isolated populations. To avoid the need for a generic non-disclosure agreement between all registered users, this implementation of the broker aims to use descriptions of the need that an innovation meets and optionally of what makes it distinctive. So, by this means, avoiding online intellectual property issues and disclosure during exchanges about the innovations.

The purpose of the workshop will be to give potential users of the IB the opportunity to learn how to use it (e.g. how to add an innovation and exploring how usable the descriptions of innovations are, searching for innovations of a particular type), discuss its merits or otherwise, and if they wish to, to arrange full (free) registration on the site.

References

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