

Discovery

Space

A feasibility study of the business case of the on-line use of a science thematic park for educational purposes



The DISCOVERY SPACE project is co-financed by the European Commission within the framework of eTEN Programme eLearning Action



The Discovery Space (D-Space) project contributes to the access to and sharing of advanced tools, services and learning resources not only between schools but also among science parks and research centers. The project aims at the deployment of a virtual science thematic park that will connect schools, universities, science museums and parks with a network of robotic telescopes around the world. The project is building on this aim as it brings to students, teachers, researchers and individuals (amateur astronomers, visitors of science parks) all around the world the opportunity to use remotely controlled robotic telescopes in real time giving accessibility to unique resources as the sky is a vast and unique laboratory of science, always in operation, accessible at all times from everybody from everywhere, where all sorts of interesting physical phenomena take place most of which is impossible to reproduce in any scientific laboratory. Finally it supports the provision of key skills to the future citizens and scientists (collaborative work, creativity, adaptability, intercultural communication). The D-Space project aims at investigating the feasibility of the business case of the online use of robotic telescopes for educational purposes. The project aims at the feasibility of a world wide service, which has been partially introduced in European level in the framework of very successfully implemented projects, namely the EUDOXOS project and the Schools Observatory project.

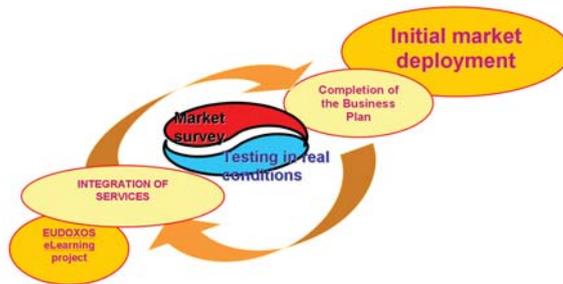
The proposed service demonstrates an innovative approach that crosscuts the boundaries between schools, research centers and science thematic parks and the wider public and involves users in extended episodes of playful learning. The D-Space service looks upon informal education as an opportunity to transcend from traditional classroom based teaching, to a “feel and interact” user experience, allowing for learning “anytime, anywhere”, open to societal changes and at the same time feeling culturally conscious. These pedagogical concepts and learning practices would address implementing a set of demonstrators (scenarios for both formal and informal learning settings), employing advanced and highly interactive visualization technologies and also personalised ubiquitous learning paradigms in order to enhance the effectiveness and quality of the teaching and learning process. The consortium believes that in addition to enriching the repertoire of learning opportunities, the blending introduced by the D-Space service will help meet the challenge of “science for all,” i.e., providing science education opportunities tailored to diverse and heterogeneous populations of future citizens. These populations vary both in their interest in learning science and in their abilities to learn science.

The D-Space project will begin with a feasibility study of the operation of a network of remotely controlled robotic telescopes. In parallel an extended

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market survey will be realised to estimate the size of the target market and market potentials. An extended validation phase of the D-Space service in real environments will follow. Finally the project will conclude with the feasibility study of the business case for the actors involved.



The D-Space project's main objectives are:

- the demonstration and piloting of the D-Space service to the target users in real environments (e.g. schools, universities, science parks)
- to perform an extended validation study of the D-Space service
- the development of a detailed business plan
- the development of the marketing strategy and of the associated short and medium term action plan for the full deployment of the services provided. This will be the

outcome of the continuous interaction between the consortium and the potential collaborators (content providers, telecommunication services providers, manufacturers and potential investors), which will be part of the business planning process. **Several workshops, open days and summer schools will be organized in this framework in order to introduce the service to the targeted audience.**



Project Number

eTen-2004-1-517339

Duration

18 months

Programme

eTEN

Action Line

e Learning

Project Type

Market Validation

Full Title

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Start Date

01/03/2005

End Date

30/08/2006

Target Audience

Students, Teachers,
Young People,
Scientific Community and Wide Public

Key Words

Science Contest and Science Days,
Informal Learning,
Network of remotely controlled Robotic Telescopes

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