



Microsoft Partners in Learning Customer Reference

Slovakian Teachers Get More Tools for Innovation in the Classroom

“The Innovative Teachers Network is a project of positive change. In my opinion, this is the best way to increase the level, quality, and purpose of our educational system, and to help fulfil our day-to-day educational and pedagogical objectives.”

RNDr. Stefan Karolcik, Faculty of Natural Sciences, Comenius University, Bratislava, Slovak Republic.

Fast Facts

Customer: Slovakian Ministry of Education

Country: Slovakia

Web Site: www.minedu.sk/

Customer Profile:

Through its INFOVEK initiative, the Ministry of Education has been promoting and supporting the effective use of information and communication technology (ICT) in education since 1999. Its remit has been to provide schools with computers, internet access, content, and teacher training.

Partners in Learning:

A memorandum of understanding between Microsoft and Slovakia was signed in Bratislava, on January 27, 2004. Slovakia has become the 13th country to be part of the Partners in Learning (PiL) programme. A range of projects are being funded, including the Innovative Teachers Programme, which builds on the Infovek projects to date.

For more information about other Microsoft Partners in Learning customer successes, please visit:

www.microsoft.com/emea/PartnersinLearning

Education Challenge

The Slovak Republic is committed to ensuring its citizens are able to participate in the global knowledge economy, and that its children are prepared for the future. Through its Infovek initiative, the Ministry of Education has been promoting and supporting the effective use of information and communication technology (ICT) in education since 1999. Its remit has been to provide schools with computers, internet access, content, and teacher training.

To date, more than 38,000 teachers nationwide have been supported through travelling roadshows, and evening classes in elementary ICT training. Grounded in the basics, teachers were keen for more resources to support in-class activities – accessible at the times they are needed most.

Solution

Slovakia has become the 13th country to be part of the Partners in Learning (PiL) programme – a worldwide initiative from Microsoft® delivering more than U.S.\$250 million in cash grants, tailored curriculum development, and ICT training and technical support to schools.

On January 27, 2004, Microsoft signed a five-year memorandum of understanding with Slovakia, which entails additional funds of U.S.\$1,358,000 in Slovakia and the neighbouring Czech Republic. These funds will be used to support technology in education projects, with the ultimate goal of assisting students and teachers to realise their full potential.

One of the main initiatives supported by PiL in Slovakia is the Innovative Teachers Programme, which is delivered as a partnership between Microsoft, P-MAT, and INFOVEK. Microsoft identified and recruited an initial group of

more than 250 innovative teachers. From this team, 20 expert evaluators were chosen to evaluate content across different subject areas. The best materials will be translated to assist the global learning community, funded by Microsoft. A dedicated Web portal has been set up to support Slovakian teachers, which hosts more than 1,300 resources for teachers to download and use – from quick tips which can be used in classes, to projects which can support full-length classroom sessions and longer.

P-MAT is managing and delivering teacher training and support; this includes the use of online resources to support teaching and learning, and shows teachers how to capture their own best practice to share with others, based on a framework developed by Cambridge University. INFOVEK is promoting the initiative across schools nationwide, building upon existing programmes that complement Partners in Learning.

INFOVEK have augmented the PiL initiative by providing content from related projects it has funded, and is raising awareness amongst Slovakian schools through its ICT roadshow, which has covered more than 250 schools per month. More than 800 teachers from different schools have registered and are regularly using the ITN portal, since its launch in December 2005 – covering almost 25 per cent of the country's schools.

“The Innovative Teachers Network is a project of positive change,” says Stefan Karolcik, one of the innovative teachers. “In my opinion, this is the best way to increase the level, quality and purpose of our educational system, and to help fulfil our day-to-day educational and pedagogical objectives.”