

Cyber School News

Technology Solutions

Dear Readers,

We, once again, wish to share with you our wonderful experiences, in the past three months, here in our sixth edition of our newsletter.

In this edition, we wish to highlight the remarkable increase in the use of Digital Science and Virtual Lab software within our partner schools, by both teachers and students. Our Monitoring & Evaluation Department has documented the use of our software from the beginning of 3rd Term 2009 to the end of 2nd Term 2010. We trust that you will find the written and graphic information most encouraging.

We are also very pleased to receive an article from one of our very active partner schools, which shows us the continued enthusiasm for our product.

The rapidly growing importance of Information Technology in education and all walks of life, in Uganda and the entire East Africa, is also documented in this edition.

Editor



L– Banner for the Rwanda Expo. R– Uganda Minister of Education & Sports, Hon. Namirembe Bitamazire, at opening ceremony

1st East African Education Expo And Conference

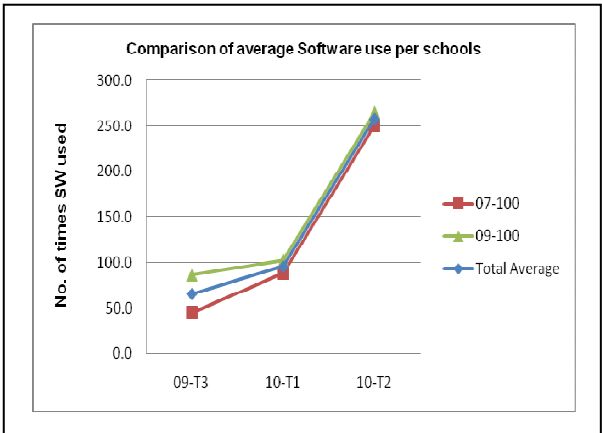
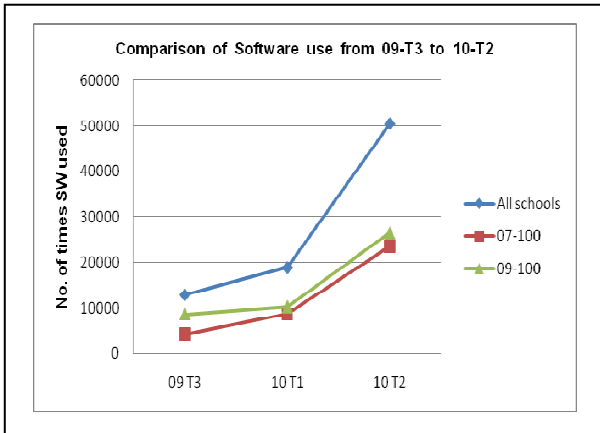
The first East African Educational Conference and Expo was held from 1st to 4th October 2010 at Kigali Institute of Science and Technology (KIST) Kigali Rwanda. The theme was *Quality Education for Intercultural Understanding and Regional Development*.

The objectives included – to recognize, promote and strengthen cooperation among the East African countries, to identify the existing unique education opportunities, to aid teachers and lecturers exchange within the region, to show case educational opportunities for achieving quality education, and to promote the utilization of ICT in education.

In her remarks, the Minister of Education and Sports (Uganda), Hon, Geraldine Namirembe Bitamazire pointed out that East Africa is growing big, but the education in EAC faces a number of critical challenges. She noted that participants should analyze the problems, focus on the solutions and share successes. Government alone cannot solve all the education problems faced by member states. It requires partnership and collective efforts from the public and private sectors.

During his remarks, Dr. Charles Murigande, the Minister of Education (Rwanda) said that the Expo offers a valuable opportunity for all education stakeholders to witness the progress made, discuss common challenges, share experiences and learn from one another in the education domain. He further noted that the education sector in the region has undertaken various initiatives aimed at harmonizing curricula and enhancing the quality of education delivered at all levels from primary to higher education. He concluded by saying that there is a lot to learn and share, on education opportunities for citizens in the region since every member state of the bloc will be having unique and fresh contributions to bring the rest during the exhibition. He visited Kyambogo College School's Expo stand, where our Digital Science & Virtual Lab software was being displayed, and took keen note of the demonstration. He urged that the software be made available, in Rwanda

Lindah Naluyinda
CSTS



% Increase between Terms

% Increase 09-T3 to 10-T1	% Increase 10-T1 to 10-T2
47%	168%

Percentage Distribution by Subject

Term	Bio	Mat	Che	Phy
% Total	45%	13%	20%	22%

Digital Science & Virtual lab Use In Schools

We, at CSTS are pleased to note the very encouraging increased use of our software in schools, as the graphs and tables above, illustrate. Software use increased overall, by 168% from term 1 2010 to term 2 2010, compared to an increase of 47% , from term 3 2009 to term 1 2010.

Software use is tracked / measured by the computers in the schools as the number of times the software was used in a term. Only sessions longer than 10 minutes are included in the above statistics.

In the graphs, the schools that joined the project in 2007 are shown as 07-100 and in 2009 as 09-100. It is interesting to see that the 09-100 schools are off to a flying start, probably due to better sensitisation from the beginning and the schools' higher expectations. Overall, the software is used most in the teaching of biology. We encourage

schools, not only to maintain this level of use, but to increase it. We expect that its use will be reflected in better performance and grades, in the near future.

John Mukiibi-Katende
CSTS

Gayaza High School Embraces Digital Science & Virtual Lab

Gayaza High school was one of the first schools where Cyber Science was pioneered first. This was in January 2006. The new approach excited some teachers and as expected - others remained anxious because their comfort zone of 'doing things the way they have always done' had been encroached upon!

The project picked momentum because of 3 factors.

The Ministry of Education and Sports gave it a go ahead; therefore it was easy to sell the idea to the Board of Governors (BOG). In fact, at one of the BOG meetings, the Board Members received

a demonstration on how Cyber Science can fire interest; fascinate; and turn a learner into a scientist! The BOG members, after the demonstration, blessed the implementation of the project!

Gayaza High School has been leading and still leads in the use of ICT. We felt that the use of Digital Science & Virtual Lab would give us double bonus: its use would not only make us excel in the use of ICT but would greatly boost the performance in the science subjects.

The students were thrilled, fascinated and enthusiastic to use the package. The biggest percentage of the learners we have, come from homes where almost each one owns a personal computer and

where ICT is part of their daily life. This made the implementation easier.

The 'sailing' of the programme has had challenges and these have been especially where the science teachers are concerned, most especially those who are not ICT compliant. Changing the attitudes of such teachers needs one to make smart strategies.

Of recent, we decided to alter the physical time table for each teacher so that the supervisor requests him/her, during the week, to have a lesson and use Digital Science & Virtual Lab. This has its own challenges as well, but the struggle will continue!

Victoria Kisarale
Head Teacher.