Production of Digital Content at Zvaigzne ABC: who gives the fishing-rod for shallow waters?

Sintija Buhanovska, Gatis Neimanis
Department of E-Learning Materials
Zvaigzne ABC Publishers
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In this presentation...

Digital content at Zvaigzne ABC

✓ e-books, their production stages and access channels both for schools and individual users;
✓ interactive learning materials for schools and individual users;
✓ some ideas and considerations for the future.
Not so long ago...
Nowadays...
The Big Bang

March 8th, 2010
A small step...

Laurence Freeman – a well-known Benedictine priest

Juris Rubenis – a well-known Latvian clergyman

“The Tradition of Meditation for a Time of Crisis”
Who – the team

- in-house production
- localization as well as original content is provided
- Department of E-learning materials deals with e-books (both fiction and school materials) as well as interactive materials, platforms, teacher training seminars and marketing activities
What – the products

- interactive learning materials (DVDs, CDs, online platforms, applications)
- e-books (787 titles on 5.06.2014., both fiction and academic literature)
- applications as entertainment/PR tools (Christmas, Easter, summer solstice)
Why – the diversity

**Positive features**

- customer-centred approach
- quick response time

**Negative features**

- small and unstable market
- decisions influenced by other sectors

**Challenges**

- how to balance needs and possibilities
- educate users – take by hand, show, encourage and provide a reliable support service
How – the customer as the process

✓ The user is the king.
✓ Be there to help, be where your customers are (or can be).
✓ Provide solutions.
✓ Invest in your team.
How – the production stages of e-books

✓ e-book = (traditional) printed book
✓ testing
✓ files are uploaded/submitted
✓ e-book is available on our website www.zvaigzne.lv and/or other platforms (iBooks app, Fastr Books)
✓ e-book may be produced before the printed book (also as a marketing tool)
Resources involved

✓ editors, layout designers, proofreaders, etc. who are involved in the traditional book production

✓ 2 layout designers who test e-books

✓ e-book project manager who coordinates both preparation of files, marketing activities as well as post-production activities like customer relationship management (CRM) and new initiatives and projects
The most popular genres

1. Fiction (350 titles)
2. Educational materials (142 titles)
3. Children’s books (81 titles)
4. Cookbooks (56 titles)
5. Healthy lifestyle (35 titles)
Grāmatplaukts – a localized platform for e-books for schools since 2014
How – production stages for e-books for schools

✓ so far an e-textbook has never been produced before the printed book

✓ e-textbooks themselves may serve as marketing tools to address more advanced teachers or progressive parents

✓ printed book is made
✓ e-book is prepared (compatibility, etc.)
✓ testing
✓ multimedia files are added (audio, Word.doc, etc.)
✓ files are uploaded/submitted
✓ users can get the textbook on our website
Resources involved

resources for the e-textbook production

✓ authors, editors, layout designers, proofreaders
✓ Ministry of Education and Science, reviewers for approval

resources for the e-textbook platform itself

✓ online access
✓ application for Android tablets (iOS in process)
✓ applications for Mac and Win computers
✓ skilled IT team to work with multimedia content
The number of e-books sold

- 2010: 267
- 2011: 851
- 2012: 2953
- 2013: 9363
Interactive learning materials (both offline and online)
How – production of interactive materials (both offline and online)

✓ translators, proofreaders
✓ editors, programmers, Flash specialists, audio specialists
✓ internal subject matter specialists
✓ external reviewers

Problems

➤ local: school readiness to adapt to new learning environments;
     government support (moneywise)

➤ external: materials are localized from YDP, HelpDesk in Poland
Some ideas to be considered

- Dare to be brave! Be the first!
- There is no right answer. Learn from your mistakes.

- Schools may require different solutions
- Customer education is a tough process
- Your business decisions may be altered by external factors
- Testing may take much longer than initially planned
Conclusions

1. In digital river all waters run swiftly.
2. A well-trained and motivated in-house team is a must.
3. The challenge – always remember: a small step may mean a giant leap and thus change the industry.
Questions? Comments? Suggestions?

Thank you for your attention!

Sintija.Buhanovska@zvaigzne.lv
Gatis.Neimanis@zvaigzne.lv