

Mobile learning with iPhone now possible

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Developing countries often lack the appropriate infrastructure and trained personnel to enable lifelong learning or continuing education. Although broadband Internet is on the rise, it still requires a big funds investment. Currently the mobile infrastructure is the main access point for Internet communication in remote areas. That is why researchers from Peru and Belgium have developed an open source learning solution. This code enables health care workers to connect to the free learning platform Moodle with their iPhone, iPod, and some other last generation mobile devices. This is a first application of its kind for both Moodle and the iPhone.

Web-based learning platforms are being used by all universities and some K12 institutions to give students access to courses, exams, and assignments. There are many learning platforms available (Blackboard, Sakai, Dokeos...) but not all of them are for free or accessible by mobile devices. Free and open source programs are of great importance to developing countries as it immediately affects positively the institutions' tight budget. Therefore Moodle was chosen as a free and open source learning platform.

In the last stages of finalizing the code everyone is invited to sign-in and try-out the last version of the web-application. The try-out and project site is available for all, starting Friday, March 19th , 2010. In the final stages of building this web-based application an international team of Moodle experts joined our team.

Both research institutes will offer the source code for free under a

Creative Commons GNU license. Institutions, NGOs, small organizations, and companies can use the code to develop their own mobile learning environment, which allows a great number of people in remote areas to get access to lifelong learning. This is in line with UNESCO's philosophy of 'Education for All'.

This mobile learning project, made available through a Tibotec REACH grant, already served [health care workers](#) engaged in twenty clinics throughout Peru, involving them in a three-month program. Those health care workers treat 70% of all Peruvian HIV/AIDS patients in need. This pilot mobile learning program used multimedia, 3D-animations, group discussions, policy documents, and peer reviewed literature. A big added value is that participants in remote areas are no longer in need to leave their clinics (temporary brain drain) or move to another location to follow trainings.

More information: Project and demo site: iphone.moodle.com.au/

Provided by Institute for Tropical Medicine Antwerp

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