Title

"Internet Café for Active Senior"

Keywords

- modern communication systems,
- active seniors,
- Internet Café,
- social activation of the elderly

Abstract

Old age is inevitable, but it does not necessarily mean passivity (according to stereotypes). It can be a time of active realization of one's own passions and dreams.

Many community organisations help older people to understand this and to help them overcome various barriers. An example of such action is the creation of the ,,Internet Café for Active Seniors" - a place that is conducive to integration and at the same time enables the acquisition of computer skills and the use of the Internet.

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INTRODUCTION

There is a stereotype of an elderly person perceived by society as an inactive person (professionally and socially), ill, often very lonely. Old age is inevitable, but does it have to look like this? After all, it can be a time of active realization of one's own passions and dreams!

According to the data, the activity of older people in Poland is not the best. Many people give up their careers and retire. Only a small percentage use any form of education. In the 65 - 74 age group, about 90% of seniors have never used a computer. The truth is that everyone (regardless of age) can learn how to use a computer.

Passivity in professional and social life, reduction in people-to-people contacts and other limitations related to the knowledge of basic technology tools are clearly the cause of the decline in the mental and physical well-being of older people and have a devastating effect on their quality of life.

Although active ageing is something new in Poland, it is slowly changing for the better. A significant role is played here by social organisations, which promote and carry out activation measures for the elderly. Just one example is the project ,,Internet Café for Active Senior".

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The ,,Internet Café of Active Senior" is a project implemented by the Municipal - Communal Public Library in Chęciny (Poland). The aim of the project is the local activation and integration of seniors leading to the improvement of their computer skills, but above all to

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the change of their awareness and approach to the computer and the Internet. The creation of an Internet café in the library was supposed to encourage and contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of seniors by introducing the possibilities of modern communication systems. The cosy character of the Café is very conducive to overcoming various barriers and fears of technique.

The project lasted 2 months (April - May 2011). It consisted of 12 meetings during which seniors worked on computers for 2 hours. The participants of this project were 10 older women who faced new challenges twice a week over a six-week period.

The workshops were conducted by a person with IT education and additionally 2 young volunteers supported seniors in practical exercises.

During the first classes the participants learned how to build a computer, learned how to use a keyboard and mouse and worked with a text editor. Then, they learned how to search for different information on the Internet. In addition to saving documents on a computer drive, they have learned to save data on external storage media. A big step was to set up an e-mail and get acquainted with the Internet communicator (Skype). The project participants were the most interested in these skills.

The organizers of this project also made sure that the learning is consolidated by repeating the knowledge during the classes. After each course, seniors received didactic materials, which help them practice their computer skills on their own.

CONCLUSION

The project contributed to the creation of the Internet Café for seniors in the library, which is also a place of social and intergenerational meetings. Seniors overcame the barriers related to the use of computers and the Internet and became acquainted with the possibilities of modern communication techniques and tools.

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Title

"THE MEMO Project"

Keywords

- digitisation and the quality of life of seniors,
- activation of seniors,
- tools that support memory

Abstract

Digitalization plays an important role not only in the lives of young people. It also contributes to the social integration and activation of the elderly.

The MEMO project aims to design a multimedia device for the elderly (65+) which will stimulate memory and cognitive activities and initiate social interactions, thanks to the use of various audio - visual techniques. This device will make it easier for seniors to get in touch with the technology. They will be encouraged to watch and listen to digital content about local history (their city, region), politics or culture. Viewing content, archives, photographs, films, etc. by using a digital device may have many positive effects and improves the quality of life of seniors. This experience helps to maintain relations and interactions between seniors, brings them closer to the younger generation and is a great opportunity to encourage seniors to take an active part in culture.

According to psychologists, returning to experienced moments perfectly stimulates memory and has a positive impact on decrease the negative effects of aging on mental processes. Memory cannot be repaired, but you can take care to keep it in good condition for as long as possible. This is what the MEMO product contributes to.

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INTRODUCTION

Digitalization plays an important role not only in the lives of young people. It also contributes to the social integration and activation of the elderly. However, in addition to physical access to digital technologies, it also requires the ability to use them.

The main problem among Polish seniors is the lack of such skills and motivation to acquire them, which leads to social exclusion and lowering the quality of life. According to research, a small number of seniors use the Internet.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE MEMO PORJECT

The ,,MEMO - Multimedia tool supporting memory and activating the elderly" project is implemented by Foundation Pracownia Badań i Innowacji Społecznych ,,Stocznia", ,,Szkoła Wyższa Psychologii Społecznej'', ,,Laboratorium EE'' and ,,Miasto Gdynia''.

The aim of the project is to design a multimedia device for the elderly (65+), which will stimulate memory and cognitive activities, initiate social interactions and support social

relations within and between generations through the use of various audio-visual techniques.

Research shows that sometimes, for older people, the only way to get in touch with others is through memories. This applies mainly to seniors who suffer from dementia. For them, various media content that stimulates memories (photographs, films, recordings) can have a therapeutic character. According to psychologists, returning to experienced moments perfectly stimulates memory and has a positive impact on mitigating the negative effects of aging on mental processes. Memory cannot be repaired, but you can take care to keep it in good condition for as long as possible.

This is what the MEMO product contributes to. A multimedia device also indirectly helps to prevent digital and cultural exclusion of older people by familiarising them with new technologies.

The process of creating such a device covered 3 years of work of designers and technology specialists, but also a huge involvement of future users (seniors).

Project stages:
1. Diagnosis of the needs of seniors.
2. A review of literature, available solutions and technologies.
3. Design.
4. Preparation and testing of the prototype.
5. Preparation of the implementation plan.

The MEMO device shall consist of:
- tablet,
- enclosures,
- software (3 applications):
  ● MEMO Trening,
  ● MEMO Dzień,
  ● MEMO Pamiątki.

Conclusion

The multimedia device will make it easier for seniors to get in touch with the technology. They will be encouraged to watch and listen to digital content about local history (their city, region), politics or culture. Viewing content, archives, photographs, films, etc. by using a digital device may have many positive effects and improve the quality of life of seniors. This experience helps to maintain relations and interactions between seniors, brings them closer to the younger generation and is a great opportunity to encourage seniors to take an active part in culture.

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Title

"LATARNICY (lighthouse keepers) – modern social animators"

Keywords

- digital communication,
- generation 50+,
- digital education for seniors,
- young people help the elderly,
- action against digital exclusions,
- a modern social animator

Abstract

The problem of digital exclusion in Poland is very serious. Many people have access to a computer and the Internet, but are unable to use it. Lighthouse keepers help seniors face this problem!

Through their actions, social activists not only contribute to the education of seniors and the improvement of their quality of life, but also to the reduction of intergenerational differences.

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INTRODUCTION

In Poland, in recent years, a lot of actions have been taken to prevent the exclusion of older people due to the lack of ability to use the available digital goods. According to the data, about 10% of Poles aged 65+ are able to use basic computer programs and the Internet. Nowadays, having these skills is a must! Lack of skills in the use of new technologies contributes to the marginalisation of society, causing digital exclusion. Not only access, but also the ability to use the Internet has a huge impact on the quality of life and comfort at work. Therefore, lighthouse keepers come to help seniors!

INFORMATION ABOUT IDEA PCRS

PCRS [Digital Poland of Equal Opportunities] is an initiative addressed to a group of Poles aged 50+, implemented by the Association named ,,Miasta w Internecie" and the Ministry of Administration and Digitization. Its aim is to bring older people into the digital world and to enable them to use content and services available on the Internet.

The lighthouse keepers play a huge role in this initiative! Who are they? Lighthouse keepers are young people who are interested in digitisation and want to help older people change their thinking about the Internet by showing the benefits of using the Internet. They act as local social animators in the field of digital education of the generation 50+.

A lot of people took part in this project. Approximately 3 000 lighthouse keepers from all over Poland were trained to become local leaders who helped overcome the shyness, fears and various barriers of seniors related to digitalization. The education of seniors took place

in many communes all over Poland. The meeting place for the participants were local public places with access to the Internet, i. e. : libraries, telecentres and others.

Class programme:
- support for web browsers,
- Internet usage: shopping, looking for information and advice, using banking services, looking for jobs, etc.,
- use of an e-mail: sending attachments, documents, photographs,
- use of instant messengers,
- listening to music, watching movies.

Conclusion

Nowadays, every person should be able to use a computer, programs, Internet, mobile phone and many other ICT devices. Access to these devices is easy, but it is not enough. It is important to educate and show the possibilities of digital products to people for whom this is a foreign environment. The involvement of young people is also an excellent example of action to reduce intergenerational disparities.

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