Unit 3 Report
How I Use ICT at Home and at School

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to investigate the way I do things at home and at school using ICT. The report is about the range of technologies I use, where, when, for what purpose I use them and if they are the best tools for the job. I personally use many different technologies such as the internet, the WWW, e-mail, instant messaging, text messaging (SMS), WAP, laptops, digital broadcasting, DVD, digital audio players, a calculator, digital alarm, VHS, games consoles, a mobile phone and CD-ROMs. The internet is a global network of inter-connected computers; internet users can access web sites and communicate using e-mail. The internet is only made useable by an interface called the WWW. E-mail or electronic mail allows you to communicate with people all over the world for the cost of a local telephone call. Instant messaging is a new form of communication; it enables people to have a live conversation over the internet. WAP or wireless application protocol enables mobile phones to connect to the internet. Laptops are smaller portable PCs that can be run on battery or by the mains electricity. Digital broadcasting can be accessed via a digi-box and this lets you access hundreds of different TV channels and get interactive with programs. DVD or digital versatile discs have an extremely high storage capacity and are run by DVD players and may eventually replace the VHS. Digital audio players are MP3 players which allow you to download MP3 to the actual machine. A calculator may not be seen as technology as it is so old but it is, it's used to calculate large and complicated sums instantly. A Digital alarm is also a piece of old technology and this tells the time and sounds an alarm at a specified time. VHS are similar to the DVD but has a much smaller storage capacity. Games consoles are revolutionising the computer games industry, they allow you to play the latest 3D games and the newest ones can play DVD and CD now. Mobile phones are quite self explanatory, it is a mobile piece of technology from which you can call and send text messages to and from anywhere, as well as playing games and using WAP. A CD-rom lets a computer read information from compact disc.

Using ICT at Home

I use most technologies at home for both personal and social purposes. I use the internet and WAP both socially and personally. For social uses I use chat rooms, play multiplayer games with other people who are online all around the globe, use e-mailing and instant messaging. For personal use I use e-mail and search engines such as www.google.com and www.alta-vista.com to find out about a certain topic either out of interest or to help finding information on a piece of

homework. It is not a way to use e-mail technology for personal reasons because e-mail is designed for interaction and for social reasons, communicating with friends and family. Laptops and PCs can be used equally for social and personal reasons. All the software programs such as Microsoft Office or Works, downloaded games or music can only be used as personal applications. However the internet, e-mail and instant messaging can be used socially. Digital broadcasting can also be used for both personal and social uses. By watching the channels it is being used in a personal way whereas when the viewer becomes interactive either playing games voting or joining in with a program, for example Big Brother, it is being used socially. I use both DVDs and VHS personally because I cannot interact with other people through them, although on some DVDs you can play games. I use my mobile phone constantly, mainly in a social way by using text messages and the telephone calls and the WAP function. I also use the games, alarm clock and calendar or personal planner on my phone; these functions are personal type functions. I use the CD-Rom as a personal and social technology because I can use it alone or with other people.

Evaluation

I use the internet daily, I use it mainly to search for homework or schoolwork help, to communicate with my friends, play games and search for websites containing things of interest to me. A great advantage is that it is always useable where there is a land phone line and won't go away. However it has one disadvantage which will not go away; the cost, you have to pay for using the internet and it is quite highly priced. If I am finding information for schoolwork I usually search on www.google.com it has a fantastic ranged search; this can sometimes be a bad thing for example if I am unsure on what I should be searching for exactly or my key word is too vague then the search results will be more vague and less relevant. Homework help sites are good because they do specialised searches; the internet has an extremely wide range of search pages helping to refine the search results. There are three different methods of communicating with people on the internet, one is e-mail; this is slower better for long pieces of writing an pictures and audio, another is chatrooms; this is where you can have a continuous conversation but you cannot control who you speak to so if you want a private chatroom then instant messengers are better; they can monitor who you talk to and only people who are on your list may talk to you.

I use my mobile phone daily for both social and personal reasons. One advantage is that it is portable; you can move it with you easily. I use it to send text messages, play games, call people and for alarm clocks. The games can be multiplayer on some phones (not mine) or single

player it only has a small selection of games up to five different games on one phone.

There is no disadvantage to using a digital alarm clock, either on the clock or external except if the time is inaccurate.

Text (SMS) messages are ideal for a quick cheap way of getting in touch with friends but if a long conversation is needed then I suggest an instant messenger or phone call.

WAP is similar to the internet in its advantages and disadvantages except it is more expensive and a little more restricted as instant messengers aren't available on WAP.

I use my laptop daily, I use a PC occasionally if my laptop brakes. Laptops and PCs are very similar but a disadvantage of using a laptop rather than PC is that it has less memory storage. They can have the same functions such as the internet, programs such as Microsoft works or office.

I use digital broadcasting daily I use it to watch hundreds of channels and rarely use it interactively. One disadvantage of using digital broadcasting is that a lot of the channels are not to the buyer's choice.

DVD and VHS are exactly the same except that DVDs have more memory and better quality so these are likely to replace VHSs completely.

CD-Rom drives can be used to play music or games form or to copy a piece of music to. The only disadvantage is that the CDs are sensitive to scratches.

Using ICT at School

At school I mainly use the technologies for personal as it is communication via school technology is to be avoided. I use the internet both socially and personally. For personal uses I use e-mailing to get information form different websites and organisations about my schoolwork. I also use search engines such as www.google.com and www.alta-vista.com for the same reason. Laptops aren't usually used in school. PCs are used for personal reasons. All the software programs such as Microsoft Office or Works are used as personal applications. However the internet and e-mail can be used socially, but this is not usually the case. VHS are often used to show educational videos or if there is a cover or free lesson and there is no work they watch films.
 I use my mobile phone between lessons mainly in a social way by using text messages to friends and family. Occasionally we are allowed to use educational 3D games for example Chevrons Pyramid which is a mathematical problems game. I use calculators to help with maths calculations.

Evaluation

At school I use the internet around once a week; I use it to research information on class work. The only disadvantage to me is that there are restrictions on what you are allowed to view. E-mail should not be

used in school unless supervised, whenever I rarely use it I check to see if I have received an e-mail from someone who may have information to help with my coursework. This is a good way of receiving information but it is much quicker and easier to use a search page. Mobile phones also should not be used in school and I rarely use it unless there is an emergency in which I need to contact my parents via text message it is good for a short message and it's cheap. There are no faults with calculators unless the batteries run out but otherwise they do the job perfectly.

Legislation

Conclusion