

ICT in the local community

In this essay, I will be talking about how ICT affects the local community. I shall be talking about how it is used in:

- Libraries
- Cyber cafés
- ATM machines

Libraries

In the libraries, a computerised booking system is used, instead of a manual booking system. The advantages of not having a manual booking are:

- There are no longer long queues waiting to borrow books.
- Booking systems are now much faster
- The actual booking takes a lot less time
- Booking by computers is more reliable, as in a manual booking system, if a member of staff was booking manually, they could very easily make a mistake.
- It is very easy to search for a book and see whether it is available in the library or if it has been lent out.
- It is simple to find where a specific book is inside the library

My local library has computers with access to the internet.

There are many advantages to this:

- Young people who do not have computers at home can do their homeworks/courseworks at the library and save it on a floppy/pen drive, which they can then take to school and hand in.
- They can search for information on the internet which helps them with their homeworks/courseworks.
- Asylum seekers or ordinary people whose first language is not English can use the libraries software to help them with their English.
- People without computers can come and surf the web, either to pass time or to search for jobs etc. The government benefits from this as the unemployment figures are getting lower.
- Having internet in the libraries helps keep kids off the streets, as they can have something to do in the libraries.

A personal case study for how people use ICT in the libraries is one of asylum seekers, Jay. He comes in to the library to use the internet, so he can search for jobs. Searching for a job on the internet is extremely simple, as there are many websites which allow people to see which jobs are available etc. recently, he found a job in a club and has applied for the post.

A social case study for ICT in the libraries is when Jay goes to the libraries to send emails, and chat to his relatives back at home. He can send personal pictures and letters too.

A work-related case study for ICT in the libraries is when my neighbour Phil goes in to the library to email his colleagues at work. He also uses MSN if he has to chat to colleagues/clients about business. He uses MSN mail to email people on the other side of the world.. For example, if Phil needs to chat to a client in Thailand, he can use the email, which is much faster, and cheaper, instead of using a phone. If the client isn't online the email is still there, waiting for him, till he does come online. Most of the times, both Phil and the client will agree a time to come online so they can chat about business etc.

Cyber cafes

Many people use cyber cafes to access the internet on the computers. The computers have many components: cameras, headphones, printers, microphones, speakers etc. all which you are charged for. The average charge is somewhere around £1 per hour which is extremely cheap.

Many people use cyber café's for personal reasons e.g. to play games in their spare time, surf the web or for their own personal reasons. They can also load Microsoft Access to access their diaries.

Cyber cafes can be used socially, to chat to friends and family all over the world. You can sign in to your MSN account and check your mails, see who is online and chat to your friends, colleagues etc.

You can also do work on the computers as Microsoft Office is available on the computers.

The only downside to cyber cafes is that there are no restrictions on the sites you can go on. Children can go to 18+ sites and parents cannot do anything about this which makes them constantly worry.

Cyber cafes can also be used to work in. my friend ismail does not have a computer at home. On normal weekdays, he works in the school library to finish his work off. During weekends, instead of going to the local library, he goes to the cyber café to work. This is because in the local library, he would only get a 30-minute session. On top of this, he would probably have to wait a few hours to get on to a computer as there are long queues in the library. Also, there would be no peace there, as kids normally play there and other people chat all day. This means he would not be able to work as well as he could and also that he would not be able to concentrate well.

In cyber cafes, he normally pays for a 2-hour session. He has a lot of quiet as not as many people go to cyber cafes as to the library. This means he is able to concentrate fully on his work.

He does also does not have to wait long for a computer to be free as there are many computers in a cyber café.

A main advantage of using ATM machines instead of withdrawing cash from a bank is the ATM machines are open 24 hours a day and 7 days a week! This means no matter when your job starts and ends, you can withdraw your money.

A.T.M machines

ATM machines are external banks. They are machines on the sides of banks which are used to get quick and easy access to your money. Instead of going inside the bank and wasting time, we can just insert our card and withdraw money easily which saves a lot of time. ATM machines can be found in several places:

- 1) Outside the banks
- 2) On the wall of the supermarkets
- 3) In corner shops
- 4) In car parks
- 5) In retail parks

This makes it extremely easy to withdraw money. We can go almost anywhere and withdraw money without ever having to take a long trip to the bank.

A case study is of my friends' mother. She works from 9am-5pm and doesn't have much free time. On the way back to her house, she has to quickly shop, then pick up her children from a friend's house. As she has to be extremely fast, she uses the ATM machines on the walls of the supermarkets instead of going inside the bank. This is to save time as driving to the bank is very time consuming. Also, there may be a big queue inside the bank and it would take even longer to get the money out.

With ATM machines, it takes about a minute to get money out. Once she gets the money out, she goes inside the supermarket, shops and gets home in time to cook their meal.

In theme parks or zoos, ATM machines can be found in several places. They are found at these places so if a person is running out of money and wishes to take more out, they can easily withdraw some from the ATM machines rather than go all the way to a bank! This saves a huge amount of time.

The reason there are several of these machines put is mainly to reduce queues. This saves time for the people visiting the theme parks or zoos.

To withdraw money from ATM machines, all that is needed is a bank card. The owner of the card also has a PIN number which he/she uses to access the account. The person just inserts the card and chooses one of several options. They can withdraw cash with a receipt, or without a receipt. They can print off a mini statement or a full statement. They can order a new cheque book or just simply check their bank balance. As long as their card and PIN number are kept safe, there is hardly any chance of fraud.

Overall, I believe the different ways in which ICT is being used is great for the community. There is less time wasting and people can get things done much quicker! Most things are now much simpler and people can learn about things they would never have been able to learn about without ICT! They can find jobs in a matter of minutes!

