

New Ways to Learn – Avantis Case Study May 2014

Avantis is a leading supplier of award-winning tablet solutions for the classroom. In 2011, Avantis launched LearnPad, the world's first tablet solution designed specifically for use in education. Since then, thousands of devices have been deployed around the world. To further increase awareness of the device and to support its successful implementation in the classroom, last year Avantis decided to look for a LearnPad training partner. Dave Mann, commercial director at LearnPad shares his experience working with New Ways to Learn.

Having spent the last two years working hard to establish the LearnPad's global presence, we knew that in order to continue to grow, we needed to introduce a training partner to work alongside our user schools and colleges. With previous experience of setting up training partnerships, I was mindful that I wanted to find a partner who was an expert in their field and who understood the education sector inside out.

The key feature of the LearnPad is that it turns a commercial tablet offering into one which can be used for education. It has a safe, secure and customisable student interface, it comes with a range of pre-installed content designed to meet specific areas of the teaching curriculum and has a unique web based central management portal to allow teachers and network managers to control multiple LearnPads. We needed a training partner who could highlight the full functionality of the device in an engaging and tangible way - the last thing we would ever want to do is put one, let alone 30 or 40, devices into a school and they not be used correctly.

When I first met with New Ways to Learn, I was immediately impressed with the breadth of their knowledge and the company's track record for delivering outstanding training in education. What's more, with over 30 years' collective experience in education as teachers, and middle and senior leaders, I knew the team would be able to effectively communicate with educators and understand their needs. It was also clear from meeting the New Ways to Learn team that they were very passionate about the effective use of technology in education, a vision we share.

It's fair to say that in the education sector, there is a range of potential training partners to choose from, however for Avantis, New Ways to Learn were the only one. It's been eight months since they began delivering LearnPad training at our user schools and colleges, and this has grown to be a significant part of our business.



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As previously mentioned, I've implemented training partnerships in the past, so I had a good idea of the type of training I wanted New Ways to Learn to deliver. That said though, the company's extensive experience meant they were able to give me sound advice on what would and wouldn't work. We sat down together and approached things from both a training angle and a product one, ensuring all of the key features and functionality of the LearnPad would be covered with the end user in mind every time.

We work closely with New Ways to Learn when we introduce new features; incorporating this into the training they run. While we started off with me defining what I wanted the training to be like, I'm quite happy now to allow them to use their expertise and create a variety of different methods and styles to deliver this, depending on the school infrastructure and staff setting. So New Ways to Learn have free reign to adapt their work depending on what they are faced with.

As standard, New Ways to Learn do a follow up questionnaire and ask for feedback from schools on both the product itself and the training they have received and send this on to me. This way, both our companies gain a good understanding of the improvements that we can make on the device's features and how the training is delivered. From the completed questionnaires to date, 98 per cent of schools have given us a very high satisfaction rating, in particular on the training they received from New Ways to Learn. This is testament to the excellent work the team do. In fact, a large majority of these schools have already gotten in touch and requested more LearnPads and training for the next academic year, which is obviously fantastic news for both companies.

I certainly see Avantis' relationship with New Ways to Learn as a long term one. They're an integral part of the team and an important element of LearnPad's commercial strategy over the next three or four years. Our working relationship with the company is so great that we even had New Ways to Learn's managing director, Sanjesh Sharma, on our stand at Bett last year.

I would absolutely recommend New Ways to Learn to other educational suppliers looking for a training partner, not too many though as we'd like to keep them for ourselves!

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