“Business Update” – MSM Studio’s solution for TVET students of Africa

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I. MSM Studio’s offering for the African market

MSM Studio would like to make it possible for African students of TVET to boost their career chances by improving their competency in business English.

This goal will be met in that African students of TVET will be granted access to a dedicated Learning Management System supplied with the e-learning course under the name of “Business Update” that covers the key language skills needed in all economic sectors, occupations and specific work tasks.

II. Why MSM Studio’s offering is relevant to TVET

The increasingly complex demand of globalization and the social changes make English language (especially in Africa with her hundreds of cultures and native languages) the key skill needed in all economic sectors, occupations and specific work tasks. “Business Update” puts students at ease with English-language communication in authentic company settings. It provides students with the English skills they need for work, using a carefully planned combination of task-based and multi-functional practice. It teaches specialist vocabulary and provides authentic scenarios in which skills can be practiced. The approach to learning prepares students in dealing with real-life workplace situations, such as telephoning, working with facts and figures, taking orders and dealing with customer enquiries.

“Business Update” is directly referring to a range of learning experiences which are relevant to the world of work. Therefore, “Business Update” is a best choice of English language training for vocational education.

III. The African focus

1. Price/affordability

The affordable pricing model that MSM Studio offers for the African market can be described as a “1 euro strategy”. This translates into “one euro per student per year”. Example:

There are 3 vocational schools in an African country. Each school has 400 students. The annual fee would then be: €1 x 3 schools x 400 students = €1,200. The fee will cover the cost of:

- creating and managing 3 virtual classes on MSM Studio’s learning management system (1 class = 400 students)
- granting access to the “Business Update” course to 1200 students for 12 months
- monitoring the students’ progress, supporting them in technical and content-related matters
2. Accessibility/Scalability

Accessibility: “Business Update” can be accessed on-line via a standard webbrowser, using basic computer equipment with basic Internet access.

Scalability: the number of schools/students granted access to “Business Update” and managed by MSM Studio’s learning management system is virtually unlimited.

3. Content (adopted to African context)

“Business Update” is a product originally created for global markets, which obviously also includes Africa. Educational material, reading and listening passages are set in a world-wide context; independent of country origins or politics. There are many texts, articles, videos, interviews with examples of different cultures and different people dealing with work and business. Furthermore, in the version of the course that is intended to be used in Africa, some additional adaptations have been implement to make the African context even more noticeable (eg. African accents in voiceovers and more artwork/videos showing African people and sceneries). Example:

IV. Innovative digital delivery

“Business Update” is an e-learning course equipped with some of the most innovative features used in contemporary distance education, such as gamification, dynamic learning paths, and AI-aided tools for learning grammar and vocabulary.
V. Renewable energies

Many of Business Update texts cover the topic of renewable energies. For example:

Listening – at a conference
Listen to these people introducing themselves at a conference and complete their profiles.

Max Johnson
Company: Solar energy inc.
Position: energy consultant
Country: America
Reason for attendance: Learn about US hydropower projects
Activity/Workshop choices: wind energy seminars

Ditter Hansmann
Company: Minettems for the environment
Country: Germany
Reason for attendance: Learning about offshore renewable energy projects
Activity/Workshop choices: Solar panel installation, environmental engineer

Key language

Put the words in order.

Contact Mr. Gray. L.
That's C-A-N-Y.
What company are you from?

Future International.

Dealing with a problem

That's wrong. There must be a mistake.
the change of don't any second I have

have have a letter it confirming

Write to Mrs. Grant confirming her participation in the Energy conference.

a) Inform her that the change of date has been made.
b) Confirm the workshop she has registered for (solar energy), but that you have not yet received her payment.
c) Remind her that payment is needed prior to the start of the conference.
d) Refer to the Correspondence section in the Workbook. (Write about 200 words.)

You are a consultant for an energy company. Write to your boss, asking to attend a conference on renewable energy. Say when and where it is, why you want to go, which workshops you want to attend, and why. (Write about 200 words.)

Dear Sir/Madam,
I am writing to you on behalf of Benjamin to let you know that...
VI. Gender equity

“Business Update” maintains gender equity. Both male and female characters appear in the product’s materials. Female characters often represent higher management, share their experience with other team members, represent values respected by colleagues in an organization. Examples:

VII. Keywords

TVET, vocational, business English, e-learning, LMS, WCAG, accessibility, AI, adaptive learning, gamification

VIII. The scope and key features of “Business Update”

“Business Update” has 138 lessons containing 1,000+ interactive screens with 2,000+ activities, videos, animations, games and songs.

The course is for adults and young adults who are working or going to work in business management and need English. They may be in part-time or full-time work, education or vocational training.

Students should have some basic knowledge of the English language, probably a minimum of two years in a school environment (ALTE Level 1, CEF Level A2) to start with the pre-intermediate level; and a minimum of three years in a school environment (ALTE Level 2, CEF Level B1) to do the intermediate level. Level 1 will help students to be ready to do the BEC Preliminary exam; level 2 is a good preparation for the BEC Vantage exam.

Personalized learning is essential in language teaching. “Business Update” provides a rich source of material which can be personalized by students in creative parts of the lesson (speaking and writing
tasks), where learners are encouraged to practice what they have learnt, and in a uniquely personal way. Personalization is strongly supported by artificial intelligence (AI) which has been built into the course. There are dynamic learning paths, with a choice of easy or difficult activities, based on the self-assessment quiz present in every unit. There is also personal learning path feedback based on the results in the progress check lessons.

“Business Update” supports students’ autonomy and helps them to work independently on areas that interest them, as well as on areas that they find difficult. It also provides the possibility of undertaking additional practice. The automatic marking function gives instant feedback and encourages students to repeat exercises as needed. Students are also given hints when they face problems with solving activities and they are rewarded for answering correctly which is very motivating.

“Business Update” is fully compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), and thus can be used by people with disabilities.

“Business Update” is partly based on ELT material published by Garnet Education (UK).