



EPALE Electronic Platform
for Adult Learning
in Europe



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ANIMATION OF REAL OR VIRTUAL GROUPS /COMMUNITIES

My experience as Epale Ambassador

By Andrea Ciantar



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Some fundamental questions:

- to what extent virtual communities are occasions for a real participation?
- How ICT tools can be real opportunities for learning and cooperation?
- What is, then, the relation between the "virtual community" and the "real" one?



The encounter with the real "community"...

Thematic meetings, across the national territory..



“Adult Education for the inclusion of people with mental health problems” (Udine)

“The shared innovation: the experience of the FabLab and digital literacy” (Firenze,)

“Adult education for healthy and Informed purchase in European projects” (Milano Expo)

“For a culture of equality and equal opportunities: educational pathways for freedom and awareness of women's rights” (Roma)

“Migrants: reflections on the new training needs of educators” (Catania)



The diversity of professional backgrounds and contexts of intervention of the participants was truly remarkable:

- different areas: school, non-formal education, vocational training
- operators who work with young people, with adults, with disadvantaged groups
- different profiles: educators, teachers, managers

Unexpected effects...

Desire to learn, to express themselves, establish connections ...

Events created with the aim of disseminate Epale, have intercepted, unexpectedly, a huge need to communicate and break the isolation

The need for dialogue, exchange, support, is instead a very strong need for those involved in education



- Professionals who have a thousand ideas, fantastic skills developed by working, certainly a lot of doubts, and certainly a thousand stories to tell
- And very few occasions to share this heritage with others, or to create something together with others

From “real” to “virtual”

After these meetings, the attempt was to transfer to the virtual level at least part of this intensity of participation:

- Implement the offer of content in Epale through content created in the conference;
- Increase the participation, through the instruments provided by Epale.

Why have we not fully succeeded in this aim?



The tool: the portal



The portal is a bit like Europe
Great ambition, great multiplicity and...
high possibility to get confused!

Technical improvements?

How to make the portal more user-friendly?

- An advanced search template? To allow to search through different fields (eg. I am interested to see if there are "open resources" on "integration" in "Italy" ...).
- Some of the "structural" content may be translated adequately (not through the automatic translator)
- ecc ...



User groups for testing

- Above all the idea could be to verify the usability of the portal through a "user group" in each country, that could include the various user categories, from experts to young people, etc., in order to systematically verify what does not work, and make the necessary improvements.

Virtual communities and “Audience Development”

- Digital Engagement is closely related not only to the possibility to access to contents, but also to the possibility to motivate the user as content producer

How can I valorize the contents?

How do I ensure that to publish something on my the portal becomes significant, "cool", for the user?

- The mapping of the target is another decisive element, in order to describe the participants' segments, to adjust and calibrating the message for them
- We also know that the best “Digital Engagement Strategy” sees a mix of real and virtual
- ... and so on...

Audience strategy

- An audience strategy is therefore essential, constructed taking in account the user feedbacks.
- For example, an interesting tool is the "digital engagement framework"

Digital Engagement Framework

Assets

- > What is it that makes you stand out?
- > What does your organisation have to offer?
- > What makes you unique?



Outreach

- > How can we reach out to new audiences?
- > Where do we have to be to meet our audience online?



Content

- > Which specific assets will you focus on?



Activities

- > How will you make the connection between your audience and your assets?



Platform

- > Where can you find your audience?
- > Which platforms do you use?



Engagement

- > How do we turn passers-by into brand advocates that are highly engaged?



Audience

- > Who do you reach and who do you want to reach?
- > What does your audience look like?



Ambition

- > Why do you use digital media?
- > Where do you want to go?



Goal

- > What do you want to achieve?



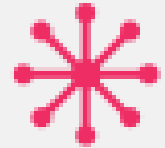
Values

- > What are the things you stand for?



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http://digitalengagementframework.com/digenfra3/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Digital_engagement_booklet.pdf

Two proposals

1) Collection of ideas and proposals

- Proposals and ideas emerged from the meetings/events will be "treasured", gathering them through the portal
- Creation of an ***annual report*** through the ***collection and analysis-systematization*** of the proposals and ideas (national or European level?), in order to give a concrete purpose...

2) Collection of experiences in education

- To collect stories, experiences about education, through multimedia storytelling tools...



Looking forward to create an animated virtual network, well connected to a real network.

