

FILE

festival internacional de linguagem eletrônica
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guests 2004

Drica Guzzi

Name:

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Work Title:

Acessa São Paulo and Digital Divide

Abstract:

Acessa São Paulo (www.acessa.sp.gov.br) is an initiative by the State of São Paulo (www.saopaulo.sp.gov.br), conducted by the Official Press Office (www.imesp.com.br) to fight digital exclusion, bringing computer resources and Internet access to the low income population and stimulating human and social development in the communities.

The Community InfoCenters are open from Monday to Saturday during eleven hours per day. Each center has two monitors – trained by the USP Escola do Futuro [School of the Future], 10 computers with Internet connections, printers, webcams and scanners. Any person over 11 years of age may use the computers to access the Internet, develop his/her curriculum, do school research, use the electronic government services, send and receive emails etc.

Currently, Acessa São Paulo has 172 InfoCenters spread across the city of São Paulo, the interior of the state, and the coast area. Since its creation in 2000, Acessa São Paulo has handled more than 7 million service requests and presently has 385 thousand registered users.

The USP Escola do Futuro is responsible for the selection, preparation and technical and pedagogical evaluation of the monitors, who are trained to meet the specific needs of the population, such as searches for jobs, information on civil service exams, government and public services.

In addition, the USP Escola do Futuro also conducts research into InfoCenter user profiles. The results of the Pesquisa Online 2004 [2004 Online Survey] conducted in the first half of this year, with 5873 respondents, brought some interesting results. For example: 76% consider the computer an advance that is improving people's lives and 16% think that it is a faster and more efficient mean of communication, as 80% of users access the Internet to send and receive emails.

Supporting the digital inclusion program, USP Escola do Futuro also develops free-access pedagogical content, such as MiniCursos [Mini Courses] (www.minicursos.futuro.usp.br) and Cadernos Eletrônicos [Electronic Notebooks] (www.cadernos.futuro.usp.br).

The first are courses via Internet, with an average of four lessons. Each lesson provides a homework suggestion and indicates sites to complement the content. Upon completing a step, the user is evaluated with a multiple-choice test, which encourages him/her to study all material up to that point. The MiniCursos content is popular and has practical applications. Currently there are six MiniCursos online: How to make a résumé, How to tie a tie, Dengue, Personal security, Sugar-less sweets, and Internet etiquette.

Reinforcing the intention to contribute to digital inclusion in the low-income communities, the Cadernos Eletrônicos develop various computer skills and the Internet. There are currently 10 Cadernos Eletrônicos available, which can be printed out at the InfoCenters, including: How to create and manage emails, Website creation and publication etc.

Also of note in Acessa São Paulo are the weekly Internet surveys. This project, called Fala São Paulo [Speak São Paulo] (www.falasp.futuro.usp.br) covers a variety of subjects including Culture and Leisure, Health, and Jobs. The data are tabulated by sex, age and access location. These surveys, with subjects relevant to the community, currently average two thousand votes per week.

In 2004 ACESSA São Paulo had three post-graduate scholarships – two at the doctorate level and one at the masters level – to develop scientific research on the InfoCenters. The studies in Programa Conexões Científicas [Scientific Connections Program] (www.conexoes.futuro.usp.br) concern: How women relate with technology, InfoCenters and the working world, Digital inclusion strategies and InfoCenter daily operations. This work is part of the Scientific Connections Program created to intensify scientific work at the Escola do Futuro.

The latest content project developed by the Escola do Futuro is PIM, Passaporte de Internet e Multimídia [Internet and Multimedia Passport] (www.pim.futuro.usp.br), which is currently in testing and will be launched in the second half of the year. PIM, following the passport analogy, is designed to be a support for user net-surfing. After passing a test on basic email skills, Internet navigation, and text editing, participants receive a physical passport, similar to a conventional passport, to track his/her learning with passport stamps.

The stamps are records of specific content developed by the Escola do Futuro or partners, which can be accessed through the site. The first stamps offers are Blogs, Photologs and Site building. To receive a stamp, the user must follow detailed procedures on the site, which can vary in accord with the intended stamp.

Another objective of PIM is to develop an on-line community that promotes greater interaction among users through a forum and messaging among participants.

ACESSA São Paulo is also concerned with involving the community where the InfoCenters are installed. This is done by stimulating development of projects and activities that utilize technological resources in a creative and educational way. Rede de Projetos [Project Network] (www.rededeprojetos.futuro.usp.br) has been developed to schedule specific times in the InfoCenters for these activities so that users can publish community content, which in turn promotes community awareness.

Escola do Futuro is also responsible for the development and support of the entire InfoCenter administrative/management software system.

Biography:

Drica Guzzi tem com 33 anos, coordena o programa ACESSA São Paulo pela Escola do Futuro da USP www.futuro.usp.br, (Programa de Inclusão Digital do Governo do Estado de São Paulo, ligado a casa civil e executado pela Imesp www.acesa.sp.gov.br).

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