



SCOTTISH INNOVATIVE ACTIONS PROGRAMME FINAL PROJECT LEARNING REPORT

- The final project learning report should be submitted to SEP Ltd **no later than two months** after the date of completion of the pilot project.
- The information included in this report will be used to assist with evaluating the learning and outputs from the pilot projects supported through the Innovative Actions programme.
- This form is separate to the final grant claim and progress report form, which should be submitted within four months of the completion date of the project.

PROGRAMME	Scottish Innovative Actions Programme 2004-2005
PROJECT TITLE	Access to Skills
PROJECT REFERENCE	IA/SE/Skills/AL4/003
ACTION LINE (Please Highlight)	Action Line 1 – The Scottish Innovation System Action Line 2 – Stimulating SME Demand for Innovation Action Line 3 – Knowledge Access & Knowledge Management Action Line 4 – Innovation Marketing & Product Launch

PROJECT APPLICANT

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PROJECT DELIVERY & LEARNING

Describe how the pilot project was actually delivered in practice.
<p>The project to create an online marketing community as a resource for innovative SME's was initially planned to have 4 stages Firstly specification of the community website, commissioning and writing of content which was to be done in parallel with the commissioning and building of the actual site and finally site launch.</p> <p>Early on in the development of the specification it was determined that the online community would make a good home for the outputs of the other three action line 4 projects and that they would comprise a significant portion of the content for this site at least at its inception. And where the four action line 4 projects were initially conceived as four separate independent project and were planned to all run in parallel it became clear that this project would be dependant on the outputs of the other 3 in terms of content and specification. Delays in the other three projects had a knock on effect to this project with the effect of this one being completed last and leaving little time for the completion of the project, its launch and any period of evaluation of uptake and usage of the community.</p>



Describe the top 3 learning points from delivery of the pilot project.
<p>Engaging the private sector and asking the private sector to identify the issues with innovation, marketing and product launch and asking them to come up with proposals for the solutions to these issues certainly delivered some innovative projects and hopefully some relevant and practical solutions,</p> <p>Considering the four projects as independent projects was in hindsight the correct way forward for this action line. Our decision to use this project as a home for the outputs of the other three projects and as the basis for much of the content of the online community meant that the timescale of this project was outwith the control of the project deliverers as delays in the other three projects held back the implementation of this project. Having built in the contribution of the three other projects into the specification and the design it was not easy to adapt the solution once delays and slippage in the others became apparent.</p> <p>Too much consideration was given to delivering an inclusive 'marketing community' involving users and suppliers of marketing services the net result is the proposition of the community - its 'offer' - is unclear and this has proved a barrier to the acceptance and adoption of the site by the target market Innovative SME's</p>
Describe the most successful aspects of the pilot project and why.
<p>The most successful aspect of the pilot project is the delivery of a functioning online community with some 200 registered users/suppliers this despite the delays in the other projects leading to limited time at the end of the programme to put this into practice. www.scottishmarketingcommunity.com</p> <p>The selection of the 2 consultants, the content suppliers and managers of the site and the web hosting design company and the games design company and the working relationships developed between the two organisations was another great success.</p> <p>The two consultants commitment to the project such that there is a belief in the outcome and potential of the community and a willingness on their part to take the project on beyond the life of the programme as a self funding self sustaining product/tool.</p>
Describe the least successful aspects of the pilot project and how these aspects would be changed in the future.
<p>Our decision to incorporate the outputs of the other three Action line 4 projects as a major part of the content in the community site. Delays in the other three projects had a knock on effect to this project with the effect of this one being completed last and leaving little time for the completion of the project, its launch and any period of evaluation of uptake and usage of the community and no time to tune the proposition of the site to the target audience .</p>
Describe the next stage planned for the delivery and rollout of the pilot project.



Scottish Enterprise is exploring the option of providing a link to the game on its Business Gateway website as a self help tool for businesses and start ups looking at the issue of Marketing to bring awareness and wider understanding of marketing in business to as wide an audience of SME's as possible.

The 2 marketing consultants involved in the project are looking to be granted free licences to use the game as part of their offering to client companies – used as interactive workshops sessions as part of training and consultancy they offer to clients- we would envisage offering the same option to all marketing consultants and anyone who was interested. It simply requires accessing a URL.

The game currently sits on a website created as one of the outputs of an additional IA project under this action Line at URL <https://www.scottishmarketingcommunity.com> such is the belief in the product from the 2 consultants that one of them has offered to continue host the game themselves should the current host/website not continue to keep it available for their use and for anyone else be they user or competitor.

There has also been an expression of interest from education and that it has some potential for use in schools for teaching marketing we will actively explore this and make available the URL to all organisations or institutions that express and interest.

INNOVATION POLICY

Describe how the learning from the pilot project will be used to influence future innovation policy in Scotland.

This project, the issue being addressed: Access to Skills, was more about providing a resource in the form of a marketing community which SME's could utilise to access the skills, people, tools and knowledge they required to make the most of their innovation having been made aware of the topic marketing its importance and role within a business from another action line 4 project the marketing Game. Its influence on innovation policy is likely to be indirect, proving or disproving the usefulness of online communities as part of the solution to a lack of access and or utilisation of specific skills by SME's.

INNOVATION PRACTICE

Describe how the learning from the pilot project will be used to influence future innovation practice and delivery in Scotland.

It was always the contention with this project that it was a lack of skills and or utilisation of marketing skills or know how which resulted in a failure of SME's to capitalise and profit from their innovation. Following on from the marketing of marketing project (the game) in this action line which highlighted the role of marketing the tools, techniques and skills required and how they relate to the marketing cycle within a business this project sought to build and make available through an online community a marketing resource to make more tangible and accessible marketing best practice which SME's can draw on and share in .

COMMUNICATION & DISSEMINATION

Describe how the learning from the pilot project will be communicated and disseminated within your own organisation, to other organisations in Scotland and elsewhere in Europe.



The marketing community website was launched in January 2007 and since then some 200 members (SME') subscribed (both suppliers and users of design) to the site. When the site was launched it was featured on Scottish Enterprises intranet 'New today' page available to all 1500 SE employees. The web design company embarked on a web search engine optimisation exercise and a further viral marketing campaign is planned. Due to the lateness of the completion of this final project of four in Action Line 4 Scottish Enterprise and its partners Scottish Executive and Highlands and Islands Enterprise agreed to fund the site for a further ten months in order for the site to gain acceptance and usage. The current hosts and managers of the site are investigating enhancements and a redefinition of the site 'offer' with a view to them taking the project on after September 2007 as a self-financing and sustaining project.

PRIVATE SECTOR

Describe how the private sector was engaged during delivery and how they have responded to the new approach or mechanism delivered through the pilot project.

- The private sector were involved in a number of ways:
- Marketing consultants companies universities and other interested parties were invited to submit proposals for solutions to the issue of low uptake and utilisation of marketing skills within Innovative SME's
 - Web design and hosting of the site was tendered
 - Private sector suppliers were approached and lined up/contracted to provide ongoing content in the form of Q and A's, interviews and forums, articles and opinion pieces
 - The marketing Community website was launched and has some 200 members subscribing to the site

OUTPUTS & RESULTS

Describe the main qualitative outputs and results from the pilot project.

It is too early to say what the results of the pilot are. Though we would anticipate increased awareness of marketing and its importance to innovative SME's, greater understanding of the tools and techniques of marketing and the nature of the marketing cycle in the context of a business and ultimately greater utilisation of professional marketing skills leading to more innovative SME's capitalising on their innovation and innovations.

Some 200 companies have registered with the website to access and play the game

Please complete all the quantitative outputs and results relevant to your project in the list below. Please also add any others that are relevant to your project but not listed.

OUTPUTS	Total
No. of SMEs assisted by the project.	Circa 200
No. of new innovative mechanisms and approaches introduced by the project	1
No. of new links made between SMEs and universities / the research base as a result of the project	



Other	
RESULTS	
No. of new processes developed	
No. of new products developed	1
No. of SMEs with active plans ¹ in place to manage and exploit their intellectual assets	
No. of SMEs with active plans in place to develop longer term relationships with universities / the research base	
No. of SMEs with active plans in place to create new markets from their innovation / take their innovation to market	
No. of instances of actual knowledge / technology transfer from universities / research base to SMEs (e.g. spin outs, licence agreements, technical co-operation, etc)	
Other	

¹ Please note that the project applicant will be required to record the number of active plans in place with companies using a method suitable for the project concerned.