

Information Communications Technology Newsletter

May 2006: Foundation for Information Technology Accessibility (FITA) Improving the quality of life of disabled persons through ICT.

Software of the Month

Total Recorder

Total Recorder is a powerful, yet simple audio recording solution. This software is fully accessible to the visually impaired. Total Recorder records streaming audio directly from systems like Real Player, Windows Media Player, QuickTime and WinAmp. It can also record from cassette tapes, LPs, DVDs, CDs or through a microphone connected to your PC. The resulting recordings may be saved as wav, wma, mp3, Ogg Vorbis or FLAC audio files. The recordings may then be copied to a CD using a standard CD burner and associated software.

Total Recorder is available in Standard, Professional and Developer Editions. The Standard Edition has all of the recording functionality that allows users to record streaming audio or to record from cassettes, LPs, DVDs, CDs or through a microphone. It also has a built-in scheduler that allows for the scheduling of automated recordings.

The Standard Edition costs just \$17.95 (USD). You may download a trial version from http://www.highcriteria.com/productfr_tr.htm

Contributed by: Michael Micallef

Web Link of the Month

Merlot Educational Resource

Let's say you are college professor (or even a home school parent) and you want to explain the Ideal Gas Law ($PV=nRT$) in such a way that your kids will not only remember it but UNDERSTAND it! You'd probably create some sort of hands-on simulation. And, if you were techno savvy, you might even create a virtual simulation and post it online.

<http://www.merlot.org/>

But what if you didn't have the time or know-how to create your own online learning tool or simulation? Well, that's where MERLOT comes in. MERLOT -- the Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching -- is a free, peer-reviewed collection of over 13,000 different online learning tools and simulations developed (mostly) by college professors around the world. MERLOT is designed primarily for faculty and students of higher education, but I've discovered that a BUNCH of the stuff in MERLOT's archives will appeal to early teenage students as well.

FITA News

Welcome to the 29th issue of the FITA newsletter. Through this newsletter service we look forward to continue to bring you up to date information about:

- Assistive Technology News
- Services provided by Foundation for Information Technology Accessibility (FITA) and its partner organisations
- Progress registered in the area of ICT accessibility in Malta and Gozo.

FITA's services are made possible thanks to the support of the funding partners.

- [Malta Information Technology and Training Services Ltd.](#)
- [National Commission Persons with Disability](#)
- [Gasam Group of Companies](#)
- [Computime Ltd.](#)
- [Philip Toledo Ltd](#)
- [Megabyte Ltd](#)
- [The Computer Society of Malta](#)
- [Crimsonwing \(Malta\)](#)

We welcome your contributions. Email us on stanley.debono@gov.mt or michael.micallef@gov.mt.

Hins and Tips

MS Outlook keyboard shortcuts

Below are a few keyboard shortcuts for those who like to use the keyboard instead of the mouse. Try the following few keyboard shortcuts and you'll see your productivity increase substantially.

In MS-Outlook 2002/2003

- Send an e-mail message - Click NEW/MAIL MESSAGE or CTRL/n
- Add a new appointment to your

You can browse MERLOT's collection by subject area -- Arts, Business, Education, Humanities, Mathematics, Science and Technology, and Social Sciences -- but a better place to start might be the 2005 MERLOT awards page at

http://taste.merlot.org/catalog/awards/awards_2005.htm

News Articles

MCAST Library

Libraries form an essential part of any learning institution. Students turn to the library to carry forward the learning process started during lecture times. In learning how to access and evaluate information on their own, library users are well on their way to becoming independent life long learners. On the other hand, for academic and non academic staff, libraries are the source for continuing professional development particularly in their area of expertise.

One of the major capital investment projects on the main Corradino Campus on Paola Hill for the academic year 2003-2004 was the new Library Building on the main Campus in Paola and six other libraries that MCAST has on its other campuses. The library as a necessary requirement provides a broad and deep a range of information in multiple formats. The library also provides information literacy services which include clear library signage, a library web-site and on-line catalogue, short library tours to longer courses of instructions on library use. Moreover they provide individual and group assistance, especially through the MCAST Basic Skills Units and the National Youth Information Office.

During my visit at the MCAST main library at Corradino Hill Paola I was given a detailed tour of the library facilities by the assistant librarian who explained to me that the whole building is fully accessible including toilets and lifts. There is space between tables and shelves for wheelchair users to manouver with ease. Some books are on high shelves and wheelchair users will not reach them but I was assured that help by the staff would be provided.

The main library is open for all the students, lecturers and academic staff who attend the campus on full and part time courses. The library provides collections and services from four floors, with one floor dedicated to IT (Internet access and PC use) and AV services, through 83 PCs and 6 film viewing points respectively. Most books and magazines can be borrowed, whilst audio visual materials (films and CDs) can be used only on the premises. All book titles and categories can be seen on the on-line catalogue www.mcast.edu.mt/llrc

A section of the library building is used as a Learning Resource centre where the Information & Support and Basic Skills Unit is situated. Here individual and group assistance is provided. I hope that in the near future, specialised input devices, screen readers and magnifying software will be installed in the library computers so that people with mobility or visual impairments can use the on-line catalogue and

calendar - Click NEW/APPOINTMENT or CTRL/SHIFT/a

- Add a new task to your task list - Click NEW/TASK or CTRL/SHIFT/k
- Create a contact - Click NEW/CONTACT or CTRL/SHIFT/c
- Create a note - Click NEW/NOTE or CTRL/SHIFT/n

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library resources as well.

Main Library details

MCAST Main Campus, Corradino Hill â€” Paola

Telephone - 21894930/1/2

Librarian in Charge - Mr. Laurence Zerafa

Opening Hours : Monday to Friday all day from 08.15 am to 16.15 pm On Tuesday only the library : all day from 08.15 am to 19.15 pm

Libraries are closed on weekends and public holidays.

Contributed by: Mariella Beck

SCREAM Magazine

Scream is a magazine which Communications students studying Printing Processes at the University of Malta produce annually. Credit coordinator Dr Gorg Mallia (Please define proper title/role) describes Scream as â€œa very good example of learning by doingâ€