

Spider Networks Announces the Release of 'Beezy', Their Upgraded ePortfolio Solution

Interactive web communications leader launches Beezy, their upgraded ePortfolio; every schoolchild in Britain can now have an online personal portfolio showcasing best work and allow parents and teachers online access to that work

London, November 7, 2006 - Spider Networks, the power behind interactive web communications, today launches nationwide an upgrade to its online solution that supports one of the Government's key goals in transforming e-learning in Britain. Called Beezy, the ePortfolio solution enables every schoolchild in Britain to have a personal online portfolio showcasing best work and giving parents and teacher's limited online access to that work. The launch of Beezy follows refinements to the product with feedback from many of its customers, who have since adopted Spider's solution as the *de facto* online learning portal for all pre-14 students.

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) views ICT as core to British learning. A component of the DfES' vision and advice to LEAs is that each learner should have their own personal online learning portfolio by 2008, where work-in-progress and exemplar completed work can be stored and accessed from any Internet enabled PC.

Wolverhampton City Council teamed with Spider to become the first LEA to implement the DfES' vision in 2005. From the outset, Wolverhampton and Spider recognised that learner ownership of each online portfolio was vital, as was simplicity, security and customisation of each portfolio for sustained use. In differing school environments, the LEA and Spider also recognised that the varying degrees of ICT skills, and the low level of parental involvement in their children's work, would need to be considered and addressed for ePortfolio to become an authority-wide success.

Spider Networks has since implemented ePortfolio with Bromley LEA who have rolled it out to 12 of its schools and with Birmingham LEA who have made it a part of their PDA programme. Built especially for primary and secondary schools, the web-based application was developed to be driven and managed by learners, giving limited access to teachers and parents. Each child's e-Portfolio would be accessible from a standard PC web browser or handheld wireless device.

The new ePortfolio is a .net stand-alone version enabling the solution to integrate in to other MLEs or to be a part of Spider's Learning Platform. Microsoft has chosen Spider as a strategic partner in the ePortfolio market. Beezy is soon to be integrated to Microsoft's Learning Gateway and Sharepoint.

Paula Edmondson from Birmingham's REAL PDA Project said, "As a user of hand held technology, the e-portfolio solution provided by Spider Networks was a godsend. The minute Spider Networks demonstrated it we knew it was going to be a sure-fire hit with learners.

Using the software is simple. There is nothing onerous or difficult about it so non-techies or time-poor colleagues need have no fear. Spider Networks' support was excellent although hardly any was needed. This is a great product and such a good price. We look forward to using it again with our new PDA groups."

Andrew Ferrier, ICT Coordinator at Bromley LEA said, "We considered a number of ePortfolio providers and decided on Spider's solution as it was evident that they put the pupil at the heart of the solution. It's simple user interface and structured environment for our primary and secondary pupils is sure to be a big hit. The kids now have a place where they can keep their best work for teachers to comment while at the same time enjoying a personalised learning space for their own music, photos, art, writings, bookmarks and diary."

About Spider Networks

Based in London, Spider Networks Ltd. specialises in the development of web-based learning platforms, applications and portals for LEAs and Schools in the UK. EduKit, their upgraded learning platform has been developed over the last 8 years to meet the needs of leading LEAs and Schools. Spider's focus on the primary & secondary student's user experience and their flexibility in adapting to customer's needs differentiates them in the market. For further information on Spider Networks' solutions, visit www.spider-networks.net, or email enquiries@spider-networks.net.

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