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DIGITAL DEVELOPMENTS

WHY A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN ACER AND DIGITAL
LEARNING AND TEACHING VICTORIA BENEFITS TEACHERS



Digital Learning
and Teaching Victoria

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Digital learning and teaching are critical components of a contemporary education. This is why the organisation Digital Learning and Teaching Victoria (DLTV) exists – to support Victorian teachers and schools in providing the best possible education to students. It’s also why Acer is a major industry partner to DLTV, because this objective aligns with Acer’s vision for the continued growth of the education sector.

This paper examines the resources and support on offer to members of the DLTV and how this teaching community also benefits from the organisation’s partnership with Acer.



ABOUT DLTV

Digital Learning and Teaching Victoria (DLTV) is a non-profit professional organisation whose key objective is to support teachers and schools in providing students with the best possible digital education.

“DLTV has a proud history in supporting Victoria teachers and students. We originally started as two separate groups focused on digital learning that were founded in the 1980s, then these groups merged to form DLTV in 2012,” explains DLTV Vice President, Matthew Harrison. “We have a vibrant network of life members from both founding organisations who continue to support the next generation of digital educators.”

Apart from providing professional learning and development in digital technologies, DLTV is largely about offering a community.

“We aim to be a transformative community, where innovative teachers can come together, build connections, and learn from each other,” Matt stresses. “This includes providing advocacy, training and resources for the Victorian and national digital technologies curriculum, as well as supporting the use of information communication technology across all other learning areas.”

Educators can also come together to support and share ideas with each other.

“As we know from 2020, this has never been more important,” Matt enthuses. “As a community we offer access to leading digital thinkers, connect teachers with the latest resources and teaching practices across a range of learning areas, and make life easier by supporting educators in delivering the state and national digital technologies curriculums.”

PARTNERING FOR PROGRESS



Acer is a major industry partner to DLTV – a relationship that the two organisations see as mutually beneficial.

“Acer and DLTV are both looking for ways to enhance outcomes for both students and teachers by collaborating about digital technology solutions in the classroom,” Matt elaborates. “We’re excited to have such a well-known partner in the education sector who have such extensive expertise in the area and a background in teaching and learning enhanced by technology.”

Rod Bassi, Oceanic Sales Director at Acer, notes that the partnership is a “win win” for both organisations.

“As Acer supplies notebooks to the majority of Victorian schools, we have many happy and long-term customers in the education sector who are using our products. By partnering with DLTV, we are able to share the benefits of our mutual partnership with our school customers,” he explains. “For example, DLTV have generously offered five Acer customer schools a complimentary one-year large school membership for those educators to enjoy and benefit from.”

Rod also points out that DLTV is distinctive in its objectives and offerings to the education sector.

“DLTV is a truly unique organisation that exists to provide leadership, support, services, programs and resources to all members,” he says. “While there are other organisations in other states that offer similar assistances, we believe that DLTV deliver these exceptionally well in Victoria, and that what they offer is sincerely engaging and meaningful to schools.”

Moreover, Rod says his company believes in the DLTV vision and that it aligns with that of Acer’s.

“We believe, now more than ever, educators view digital learning and teaching as a critically important part of their students’ learning, and schools are aspiring to deliver this well,” Rod points out. “Acer has been supporting schools and education in Victoria for well over 20 years and we see our partnership with DLTV as a further extension of that support. Acer and DLTV have many synergies and we are working together on some exciting joint initiatives for schools in a range of different ways.”

These joint initiatives include content creation and content sharing.



BUILDING AND SHARING RESOURCES

Through the partnership, Acer has provided DLTV with access to a wide range of education-focused content.

“In light of the fact that in the state of Victoria, almost all people were working and learning from home for much of 2020, Acer invested in producing a large amount of digital content specifically for the education market, including webinars, interviews, case studies and product information videos to better assist schools in making technology purchasing decisions,” Rod expands. “We’ve made this rich content available to DLTV so they are able to share it with their members – we both agree it is relevant, informative and useful to schools.”

From DLTV’s perspective, Acer’s industry relationships and knowledge will bring many opportunities to members.

“While our partnership is fairly recent, Acer and DLTV are already exploring initiatives for school leaders and teachers to create case studies, talks, professional learning opportunities and articles about using DigiTech in a school setting effectively and seamlessly,” explains Matt. “Acer does provide DLTV with some sponsorship, but what excites us most is the relationships that can be formed, and how these will improve learning outcomes for our members.”

Additionally, both organisations are in the process of planning roundtable conferences on digital learning and teaching initiatives throughout 2021.

“The first one we are planning, together with one our education channel partners, will have a focus on using virtual reality as a learning tool and how schools can integrate this into the curriculum,” says Rod. “We have pilot schools who are willing to work together with us on the journey and of course, all of the learnings and school experiences will be shared amongst the DLTV members.”

Through its network with education institutions, Acer can provide DLTV with experts to speak at DLTV events. A recent example is the ACCE2021 Online Symposium that DLTV hosted. Acer was involved as both a sponsor and in providing a keynote speaker.

“Distinguished Professor Fang Chen from the University of Technology in Sydney was a keynote speaker at the event,” explains Rod. “Professor Fang presented on the topic ‘Secondary technologies education and the need for AI and data science at this time’ which provided delegates with insights into

the student behavioural analytics project that ACER and UTS have been working together.”

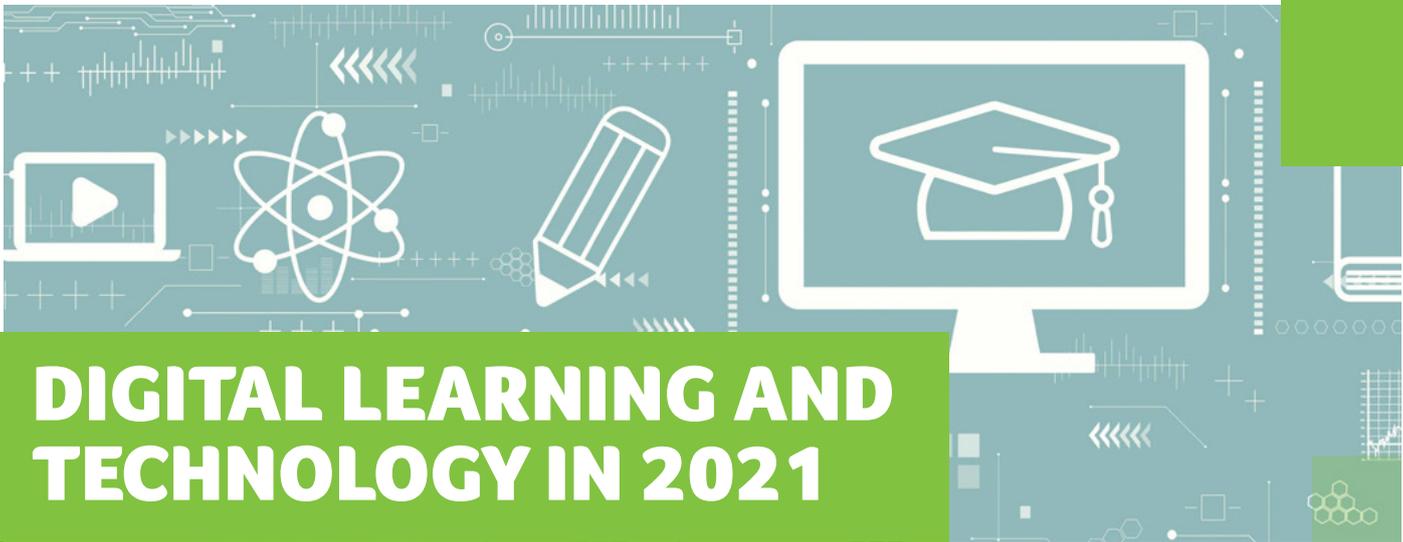
Rod further iterated that Acer is willing to support DLTV wherever they can.

“This also comes in the form of providing prizes such as notebooks and virtual reality headsets to DLTV members – we offer these to support DLTV membership drives and participation in DLTV hosted events.”



Unlock Limitless Learning





DIGITAL LEARNING AND TECHNOLOGY IN 2021

While both Acer and DLTV acknowledge the challenges that the pandemic brought to the education sector – especially in Victoria – they also agree there have been silver linings.

“In the past year, digital pedagogies have gone from being a nice idea to an essential component of how we teach and support our learners,” enthuses Matt. “We have seen an explosion in the use of assistive technologies enabling students with disabilities and neurological differences to be able to engage and participate in learning alongside their peers. Tools such as screen readers and picture to speech communication devices are becoming the ‘norm’ in our classrooms.”

Matt is especially enthusiastic about how digital technologies – such as online gaming – have been particularly embraced during the past year to support social learning as well as optimised academic learning.

“During COVID-19 when many children were feeling highly disconnected from their peers and anxious about not attending school, the use of online games such as Minecraft Education Edition proved to be a wonderful way to bring our students together in a sort of ‘virtual playground’,” he explains. “I’m really excited to see what happens in this space in the future.”

According to Matt, many of the DLTV members are enthusiastic proponents of digital games-based learning and school eSports clubs.

“I’ve visited a number of member schools who run inclusive lunchtime eSports clubs that use gaming as a vehicle to teach collaborative problem-solving and team skills. These clubs have been a wonderful way to support all students in a school and have been particularly welcomed by many students on the autism spectrum,” he elaborates. “By participating in these lunch time clubs, these students have reported feeling like they are building friendships and a sense of belonging to their school communities.”

Rod also notes that educators “have proven themselves up to the challenge” of providing effective online learning as a result of the pandemic experience.

“My thoughts around digital learning and technology are that the groundswell and embracement will continue,” says Rod. “Education was thrown largely into the deep end in 2020, and while it was tough on everyone, it also meant schools very rapidly got on board with the technology that was needed to deliver education and have now embraced it as the new normal.”



CONTINUED COLLABORATION

Both DLTV and Acer will continue to collaborate on events and professional development (PD) sessions for DLTV members as the year progresses.

“DLTV offer PD to schools and we can assist from the hardware side in shaping some new PDF offerings through the use of technologies such as virtual reality and gaming – which are focus areas for schools,” Rod expands.

Matt further points out that DLTV will continue to run their popular series of webinars and workshops and looks forward to reporting on positive stories from their collaboration with Acer.

“In between all of these events we will be continuing our resource bank and offering grants to our innovative members to take their digital teaching to the next level,” he says. “This sense of support for teachers and our students is what continues to drive our organisation. DLTV has never been more relevant or important.”

In response, Rod concludes, “Acer believes it is important to partner with organisations such as DLTV to support the education sector. We know the work DLTV does is not only extremely relevant, but necessary to educate, encourage and inspire all those working within the education sector in providing the best digital teaching and learning experiences that they can.”

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