

Report of Study visit - Digital Storytelling 2017 (MAKS - Yinternet.org)

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About the Host Organisation

[Maks vzw](#) is situated in Cureghem, one of the poorest neighborhoods of Brussels. The vast majority of the population is coming from first, second or third generation migration. Maks started its activities in 1999 in order to **take action against poverty**. In this this area, 50% of the population were under the poverty scale. This non-profit organization stimulates Brussels citizens, primarily through the neighbourhoods of Cureghem and Molenbeek, to develop their talents and competences with different services. In 1999, Maks's approach was to consult them about their needs. One thing remained: their need for digital skills and devices. The people were either too poor to buy any devices, didn't have enough of them for the use of the whole family or didn't know how to repair them when they broke down. Maks answered to their need by opening a computer learning center.

Today (2017), Maks keeps adapting its activities to the needs of its target groups. Computers and other devices have become cheaper, nowadays, thus more accessible to a larger amount of people. This has a double effect: on one hand, the need for using computers in a learning center has decreased. On the other hand, the need of learning how to use these technologies has increased. Maks has responded to this change by creating various workshops to match this need. In result, as Maks keeps using technologies as a support for its services, the organization knows about their fast changing nature and how to adapt to it. Maks is composed of [three services](#):

Maks Digital encourages young and old people to improve their digital skills

Maks Work coaches job seekers in their search for a job through individual counseling, group sessions, trainings and language courses.

Maks Graphic Agency provides qualitative graphic design services to clients from the nonprofit sector while training low educated job seekers on the workflow.

Our study visit with MAKS allowed us (Yinternet.org) to get to know them and exchange on several other projects and partnerships..

About the Visiting Organisation

Yinternet.org (Yorg) Foundation was created in 1998 on the invitation of Swiss Confederation to facilitate, identify and promote new learning culture within digital environments (non-profit organization, under supervision of the federal Dept of Internal affairs). Its research and training programmes contribute to promote entrepreneurial spirit and equal chances within the new knowledge society. It cooperates with governments, public institutions, SMEs & NGOs, and coordinates various private/public partnerships. Its foundation council is composed of directors of superior school and universities of Western CH.

Yinternet.org has a scientific committee (<http://elearning.yinternet.org/page/la-fondation>) that is composed of some of the major international experts on digital inclusion and common good in information society. Over 5'000 NGO leaders, trainers, entrepreneurs and unemployed have been trained in 10 years under Yinternet.org responsibility, within various programmes for socio-digital inclusion under mandate of private and public institutions.

Outcomes and results of our study visit

Understanding MAKS

The organization is directed by Veronique Von Leener (<https://maksvzw.org/fr/qui-sommes-nous>). During our visit, she clearly explained every Maks sector and projects, supported by stories from personal experience. As Maks is doing a lot of different activities, this presentation was very useful to get an idea and structure of all of their main activities:

Activity: [creakids](#)

Every Wednesday takes place [creakids](#) in Maks's housing. Animators, trained by Maks Digital, organize various activities aiming to develop children's creativity with the support of technologies. This way children are learning to code in a playful atmosphere. On our visiting Wednesday (07.06), children learnt about Manga. The afternoon started with a discussion on the subject, then they learnt how to find a good tutorial to draw a manga themselves and finally started drawing their own.



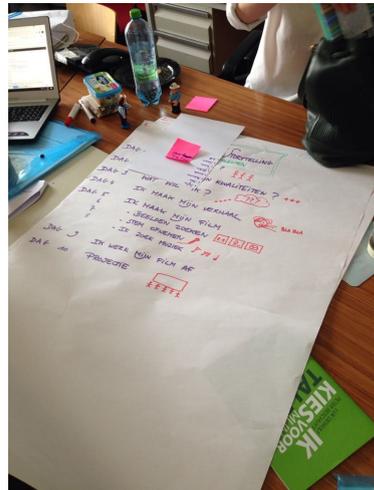
Facebook photo: Capital Digital - Brussel/Bruxelles

Activity: [Digital Storytelling \(DST\)](#) against illiteracy
MAKS team was organizing a [digital storytelling for analphabet people](#) based on a guide on how to learn to use an ipad. The organizers were careful about every step of their DST project because they had to take into account their audience can't read or write.

The discussion about Digital Storytelling with Joëlle, one of the organizer was enlightening. She's a psychologist and explained how Digital Storytelling are a way to let people express themselves, being creative, being conscious their idea is worth listening to it.

You can find more details on our Digital Storytelling short guide that comes as a part of this report.

Writing a Digital Storytelling step by step plan for analphabet people (photos)



Activity: everything about coding

Eric presented me what “coding” is and the various projects Maks is organizing to teach every generation about “how to code”. To develop such activities that needs devices to work, Maks has his own technology office with Ipads, laptops, games, robots. An employee is responsible to check the equipment and keep it up to date. All Maks devices are reused material, received from business changing all their computer equipment. The [BeCode](#) is an eight months' coding school Maks is partnering with. As Maks is working with the people in the neighbourhood, they can promote BeCode to their target audience and create better synergies around coding. BeCode is a french working system, based on Simplon, thinking that web development skills are going to be highly demanded in the next years. This training gives a chance to people from every backgrounds to learn and find a job within the months following the internship. IT is currently creating a “dating site” to get easily in touch with worker from other organization.



“People following a BeCode training are passionated student. When you talk, all the room is listening to you and asking question. It's different from a school system where I used to teach, when you're trying to catch the student's attention. A



school is supposed to be a fun place because every human like learning. With that kind of training, we come back to this. It's amazing to see the BeCode student learning at their own pace, and teaching each other" - BeCode. A testimony of the project responsible working for his own coding clients and at the same time, teacher for BeCode.

Workshop “how to apply to a job with a computer

Nowadays, so many jobs are connected with digital skills. The problem is that not everybody knows how to develop them. In order to remove the boundaries for the unemployed people to find a job, Maks work created a course for them. It starts with creating an email address, then sending your CV and cover letter (made by Maks for them), learn where to find job offers to and apply for it. A trainer is teaching and then supporting them through this process, giving advice and emotional support too. The workshop we visited (June, 2017) was very encouraging which is very important as it's not always funny and easy to be job seeking.

Discovering more Maks activities

As the poverty scale is very high in the area, helping the inhabitant to find a job was the first step for them to emerge from it. **Maks work** is one service offered by Maks providing counselling and supporting the people through their process of finding a job by organizing various services to develop their skills, including:

- Coaching towards a fitting profession or training
- Support job application
- Preparation for a job interview
- Create a [digital CV](#), which goals are quite similar to the digital storytelling one (see the DST guide goals).
- [Language course](#): learn Dutch as it's one of the language of the country
- Course to learn [how to work with a computer](#)

There are some formation within Maks like BeCode that have already been mentioned, or [Multimedia sellers](#) training at the end of which people can start working in this field. Some job coaching trainings are made for special audience such as 50+ (older than fifty years old), [Roma](#), students looking for a student job or [analphabets](#).

Maks employ people as well, who are [PTP contracted](#) ("Professional Transition Contract") for two years. PTP people don't have any degree, working for Maks as animators (for example in DST workshop) or in the administration, cleaning, media field. They are getting a lot of experience during this two year and are independent after working there.

Study visit achievements

The main achievement of our visit was the creation of a short guide on our Digital Storytelling (DST). DST comprises short videos made with images and voice off by the storyteller. The main objective is to allow him/her to share his/her opinion, experience to other, with an emotional component, in order to further empower them. DST is also teaching

people to learn how to use language to talk about their story, their thoughts on a subject, not just describing actions or event. DST main **learning goals** include the development of:

- Computer science and computer skills:
- Creativity and imagination
- Analysis and reflection, particularly people getting to know themselves better.
- Strategy and media literacy: demystifying the digital so that people become prosumers

The short guide is available online (ILINC post) for the DIGITAL ALL network to consult. Both DST and “everything about coding” will be included in the training activities in the Yinternet.org campaign (<http://elearning.yinternet.org>) .

Dissemination of results

We have prepared and will publish 3 posts on ILINC and Yinternet.org websites.

- A presentation of Maks: its activities and services
- Everything about coding activities
- DST: a short guide to Digital Storytelling

All these info will be published in two separate newsletters of Yinternet.org (August and September 2017)

Challenges

The project itself, including visits, documentation and training events took place as planned. The most challenging part remains the possibility of finding areas and proposals for MAKS and Yorg to work together and further develop their common methodologies. In this common projects and proposals efforts, Yorg is preparing to respond to an open Call for proposals and projects (<http://www.jeunesetmedias.ch/fr/accueil.html>, August 2017) on the prevention of radicalization on the Internet (Swiss targeted population). The call is for projects aiming to prevent radicalization on the Internet, as well as, violent extremism.

Digital Storytelling and collaborative competences against youth radicalisation is a powerful concept for a common project proposal. Our main idea is to create an environment for developing digital and collaborative competences both online and for training events. In this way, they will develop their critical thinking skills, become familiar with the digital algorithms used by Facebook, Twitter and Google, as well as, with the scripts presenting conspiracy theories.

Yinternet.org will lead the effort of this proposal and will share the results of this effort with the DIGITAL ALL network members.