



## **JISC RSC Scotland South & West Case Study @ Cumbernauld College**

### **Case Study Title      Xbox 360 with Kinect**



### **Summary**

The Xbox 360 Kinect is a games console which tracks the player's body movement. Cumbernauld College has been exploring the use of the Xbox Kinect for the following:

- Learner engagement
- Promoting health and fitness
- Team-building
- Learner-led projects
- Curricular activities, including drama
- Short-term loans for staff
- Gesture computing

### **About the Institution**

Cumbernauld College has two campuses. The main campus is situated in the centre of Cumbernauld town, close to many local amenities including the Tryst Sports Centre, Broadwood Stadium, Cumbernauld Theatre and the town centre shopping complex. The second campus is based in East Dunbartonshire.

## Background

Cumbernauld College has successfully used games consoles for learner engagement, health and fitness, teamwork and curricular activities in both campuses over the past few years and the Nintendo Wii with the Wii Fit and Just Dance have been particularly popular.

When the Xbox Kinect became available in December 2010, it seemed a natural progression to purchase this console. Whereas the Wii tracks the player's movement through a handset, the Kinect tracks the movement of the whole body.

Our initial purchase was an Xbox 360 with Kinect and two games: Kinect Adventures and Kinect Sports. We have recently added Yoostar, an acting game.



## The Activity

So far, the Xbox has been used in the following contexts:

### Computing 1

The lecturer used the Xbox Kinect during the guidance class as a fun activity and a gentle introduction to gesture computing while she interviewed the student one by one about course progress and discreetly referred some to other departments, e.g. learner support.

### Computing 2

This group were not getting well and there had been personality clashes. The lecturer used the Xbox Kinect for team games to encourage new bonds and group cohesion. This strategy worked as one student was heard to remark, "Whose idea was that? That was great!"

### **Pathways to Hospitality and Tourism**

The class take a unit called Personal Development – Self Awareness as part of their course and their aim was to become fitter and healthier. They enjoyed playing Kinect Sports and Adventures and as a next step they have booked a fitness assessment with our Sports Department.

### **Supported Programmes – Yoostar**

Yoostar is an acting game. Movie clips are played and the player becomes part of each clip, acting and reading their lines from the screen in the style of a karaoke. This game has been successfully piloted with students from our Supported Programmes department as part of their curricular drama activities.

### **Staff loans**

Several members of staff have borrowed the Xbox Kinect on weekend loans as a “try before you buy” to promote health and fitness. One member of staff in particular borrowed it for his daughter as he felt she was spending too much time on her computer and could become overweight. She enjoyed the Kinect games and he has now bought a console for the family to enjoy.



### **The Outcomes**

The Xbox with Kinect has only been in the college for a few months, it has already shown in worth in terms of learner and staff engagement and supporting curricular activities.

Adrian Paterson, one of the Supported Programmes lecturers uses the Xbox Kinect with his classes and has found many benefits from using both the Xbox Kinect and Yoostar:

***“Obviously there is the physical and mental aspect of the games with the associated benefits but my students go on a journey from the moment they start playing the games till they finish. The students start off, sometimes a little wary and approach the concept with some degree of trepidation, however, not a huge time later they are laughing and learning and improving all sorts of skills. These include***

*motor skills, coordination; turn taking, shadowing and experimentation. Their soft skills are improved by the games and the interaction and support of students and staff alike. Most importantly, they also always leave with a smile on their face and wanting to do it again... I use the phrase 'stealth learning' as I notice improvements and developments but I'm sure that the students are just having fun and getting better organically with no pressure or stress. In short, it's a fab way for people to learn and develop in all sorts of ways."*

### Tips for other organisations:

- The Xbox Kinect needs more space than the Wii to play – players should be at least 8 feet from the screen and need room to move around. You will need to clear the classroom or use a larger space.
- Players need to jump in quite a few games, e.g. Kinect Adventures, so you should choose a room where they can jump without disturbing those underneath. Using the Kinect brings a lot of hilarity and the accompanying music and voiceover are quite loud – be prepared for this.
- One of our games discs came up with a notice saying that it was corrupted – it had only been used a few times. Having researched this on the internet, we thought it was laser burn. We took it to Gamestation to be fixed (£1.99) – they told us it was scratched due to being left in the machine as the Xbox startup process fires out prongs that can damage discs. All users have been instructed to remove discs from the machine at the end of play – and to avoid knocking the Xbox while play is in progress.
- The Xbox Kinect takes photographs of the action while games are in progress. To store these you will need to attach some kind of external memory – or buy the more expensive Xbox with the 250GB memory in the first place. We have had to buy an extra hard drive to store videos of students using the Yoostar game.

### Future Plans

- To expand our use in terms of everything described above
- To use the Xbox in the College nursery with the children of students and staff.
- To use the Xbox Kinect for learner engagement activities such as Freshers' Week
- To promote use of the Kinect for learner-led units such as Working with Others
- To create activities using the Kinect software when Microsoft release the code – this will allow us to explore gesture computing.

### Staff involved:

Colleen Hurren, Learning and Teaching Technologist and the following lecturers: Kelly Cunningham, Carol Davie, Adrian Paterson, Linda Aitcheson and Alison Love.

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