

The Information Age

A comprehensive look at the world's current technological state, and an insight into some of the issues faced and how they have and are being overcome.

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By James Pollard

Evaluation

Overall, I think I have carried out what was expected of me very well. I believe that my e-book is a success, as it is easy to read, informative and yet on a level that caters for people of all knowledge levels as it is comprehensive.

I've found that working closely to the Teachers Resources guide supplied by Edexcel had helped hugely in my understanding of the project. As well as that, researching from a number of different sources such as newspapers, books, conversing with people and of course the internet, have kept me up to date and given me a broader range of knowledge on the subject. Both of these helped me hugely in producing an e-book to the best of my ability.

E-Book

I feel my e-book is easy to read and informative to those who are not as technologically minded as myself. I have achieved this by imagining I am explaining the situation to my grandmother, and ensuring that I use the simplest terms when necessary, and explaining any technical or complicated areas to make it easier to understand for people of all ability. This means that anyone who does have a good grasp on the subject can skip the explanation, whilst understanding the points brought forward regarding the subject, whilst also giving people who are new to technology a quick catch-up on the subject. This said, on a topic which is very in-depth, and vital to understand how it works in order to understand the points being brought across, it can get a little irritating having to skip section after section, as it could be easy to skip something actually rather important. However this is always the case when trying to write to cater for a person of all knowledge levels, especially as the e-book is written for someone in the future, who may not have any understanding of today's modern technology at all.

My Personal Performance

I feel that I have also succeeded personally whilst writing the e-book for a number of reasons. Firstly, after previous experience of writing large projects such as e-portfolios and e-books, I spent extra attention when managing my time, as it is critical I complete it on time without letting it affect any other future assignments I am given. To do this I created a Gantt chart, with the deadline I was given, and all the broken down sections and things to do with the e-book. This was successful, as I finished the e-book with plenty of time to spend enhancing it, and checking to see whether any of the material was or was not necessary.

I did encounter a few problems however, mostly unavoidable. One of the biggest problems as trying to create a section – and indeed a whole e-book – that flowed, and read well all as one. Due to the way I work best in, I write large sections all in one sitting, as I find it easier to record my train of thought, ideas and plans I have in mind. Whilst working in class, in 1 & 2 hour bursts, it was not very helpful because I kept having to make notes to remind myself of what I was thinking when I wrote it, and what I was going to go on and talk about. Although I did adopt a working style at home which let me to just that, I do feel that my ability to create a creative, and flowing e-book and cross-linking was limited slightly, despite my best efforts.

Suggestions for Improvement

If I were to redo the entire e-book, making sure to avoid any problems that occurred the first time, one of the main things I would try to take into consideration would be to write down every detail of information I read/hear/think of that I would use in my e-book. One of the biggest problems when it came to writing up my e-book, was remembering who I was speaking to when I heard or thought of a certain fact, or which newspaper or book I read something in. It was also difficult when I had read something knowing it would be of use, but then forget it when writing up. As well as this, I would be sure to use a different program to write up my e-book as using Microsoft Word meant that all my tables and alignments were constantly being changed, meaning that it appears messy and unorganised.

I did find also that even though I did do a wide range of research, varying from talking to friends, family and professionals to books and newspapers, I did use most of my quotes/examples from the internet. Not so much because it was easier to quote or reference, but because there was the widest range of information available, and because it is so easy to search for using search engines. One thing I would be sure to do next time round, would be to get a varied range of sources, even if it means searching through books, newspapers and television programmes until I find relevant facts and information.

Feedback from Peers

In order to get a sense of what other people think of my e-book, I asked a friend to evaluate it. What he said is printed below;

“James clearly shows an interest in the technological aspect of life. His writing demonstrates a sound knowledge of both the fundamental aspects of life in the information age, as well as the more detailed and specialist factors.

Whilst writing this project he sometimes found it hard to manage his time, however it seems he works best getting it all out the way in one large session – planning is perhaps still an issue he needs to work on. The e-book he produced has a clear, consistent layout and covers most aspects of the topic.

One further way in which James could possibly improve the standard of his work, is to get a wider range of sources, perhaps ones that would not be as obvious – perhaps archives or library books – which would demonstrate a very disciplined approach to the topic.

All in all, it’s a very good piece of work, Well done James!”

Alex McCullingham
Scientist in Modern Medicine

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Acting upon Feedback

One possible area of improvement which has been brought to my attention by my peer reviews is the different sources of information. For example, most of my sources have been from the internet – however to get an even more comprehensive insight, I must use a wider range including books, magazines and especially interviews or emails to professionals around the subject.

One other improvement I could make is by including more multimedia. For example, recording an interview between me and a peer or a professional would be another good idea to include in future improvements or rewrites of the unit.

Another suggestion brought to my attention in which I have acted upon, is by separating the entire unit into their individual sections. For example, instead of having it all in one large PDF file, the online services had its own file, likewise with the life in the information age section etc. This was brought to my attention by my main feedback peer. Not only does it mean that there are less troubles with formatting, but it breaks up the unit and makes it easier to read as it is not so intimidating seeing all of the work at once.

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