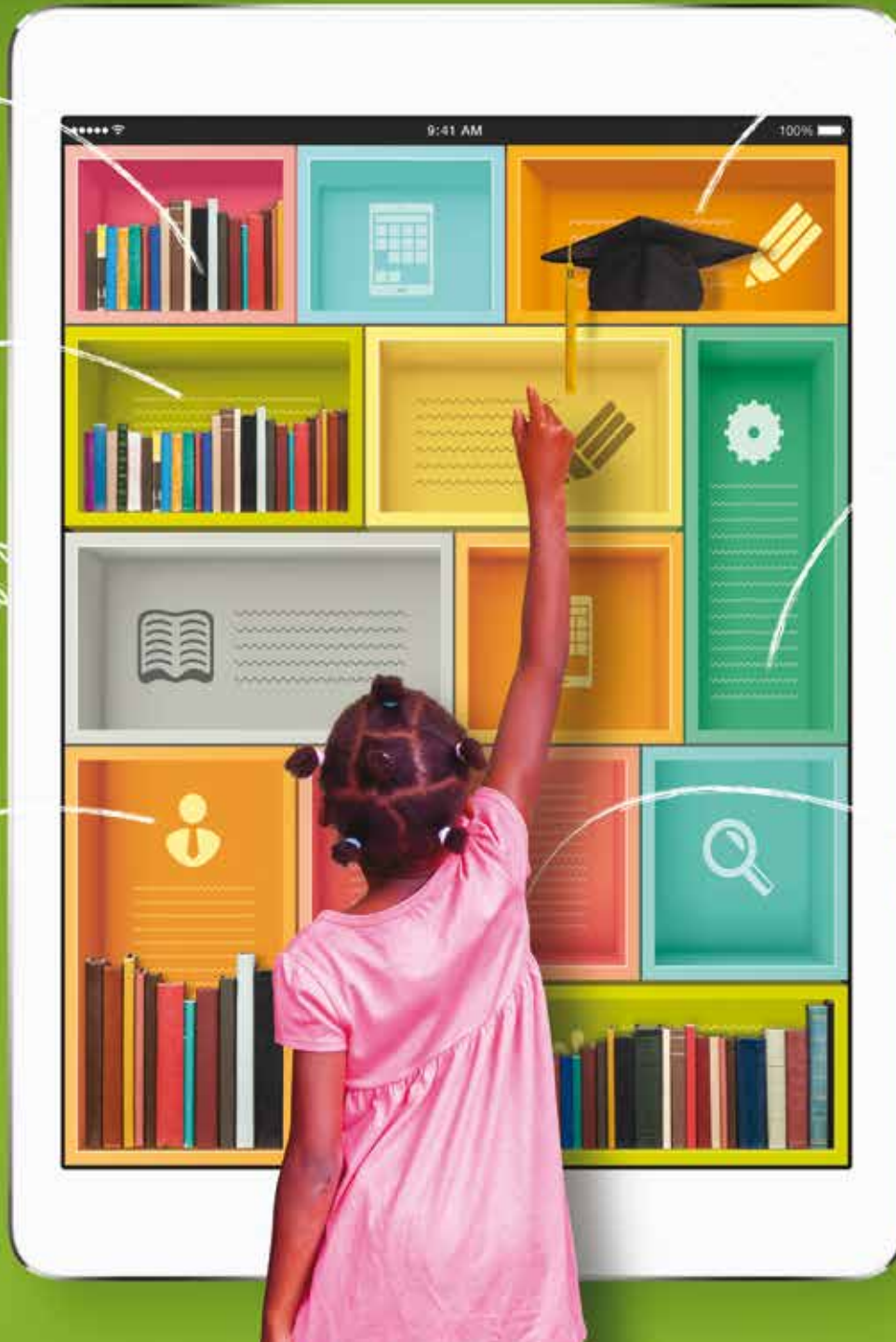


PEARSON

CHANGING EDUCATION DYNAMICS



DigiKit™

An offline digital solution to enhance learning

At Pearson, we are committed to helping you find the best solutions to prepare learners to be successful in the face of the changing demands of the 21st century.

DigiKit will help you embark on the digital learning journey by giving you access to a collection of digital resources to enhance the classroom experience. Using limited digital infrastructure and overcoming school Internet connectivity issues, **DigiKit** is user-friendly and will make teaching and learning more interactive, instructive and memorable for learners.

This media rich content has been loaded onto individual USB flash drives for **Mathematics, Physical Sciences and Life Sciences** for **Grade 10, 11 and 12**.



Over 90 animations (2D and 3D) and simulations.



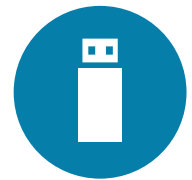
CAPS aligned content customised for the South African curriculum.



Easy to navigate, animations and simulations are grouped into topics for each subject.



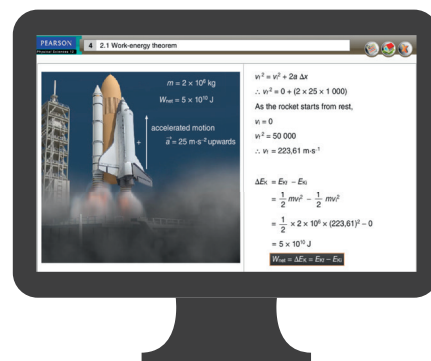
User-friendly, animations and simulations easily projected from computer for front of class use.



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DigiKit enables teachers to:

- Show 2D and 3D animations and simulations that illustrate complex theories and concepts.
- Explain Mathematics and Science problems in detail and in relevant context.



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Physical Sciences

Life Sciences

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PEARSON

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“Education is the most powerful weapon that you can use to change the world.” This quote from the late, great Nelson Mandela summarises how many people working at Pearson feel about the vital role that education plays. As a company, we're passionate about providing the tools and services to help learners, teachers, parents, school management and districts, as well as municipal, provincial and national education departments make a positive impact.

Pearson is the world's largest education company, with a presence in over 70 countries. We have a wealth of experience and knowledge from which to draw that we can apply to South Africa. Of course, every country is different, and South Africa has its own unique challenges and educational requirements, and by playing an active part in the country's education system, we understand this well. In the pages of this magazine, you'll find a lot of detail about the different parts of our story; how, through the publication of textbooks, direct delivery through education institutions, and e-education, we're helping to get learners ready for life, work and self-actualisation, such as Andani Masikhwa. Andani graduated from MGI with a BSc Computer Science (Cum Laude). He has strong belief that MGI played a key part in helping turn his life around. "I can't underestimate the role of MGI in my formation as an individual and preparing me for work life. It's here where I learned to understand the value of academic success and the importance of my skills development. The tertiary years were an essential part of my life: it taught me to be social, work



Photography by Karolina Komendera

hard and to take onus of my life. MGI really prepared me well for the job market and the IT industry. When I went for an interview I was able to relate and answer all the questions that were being posed to me. MGI has prepared me to work diligently and to act professionally."

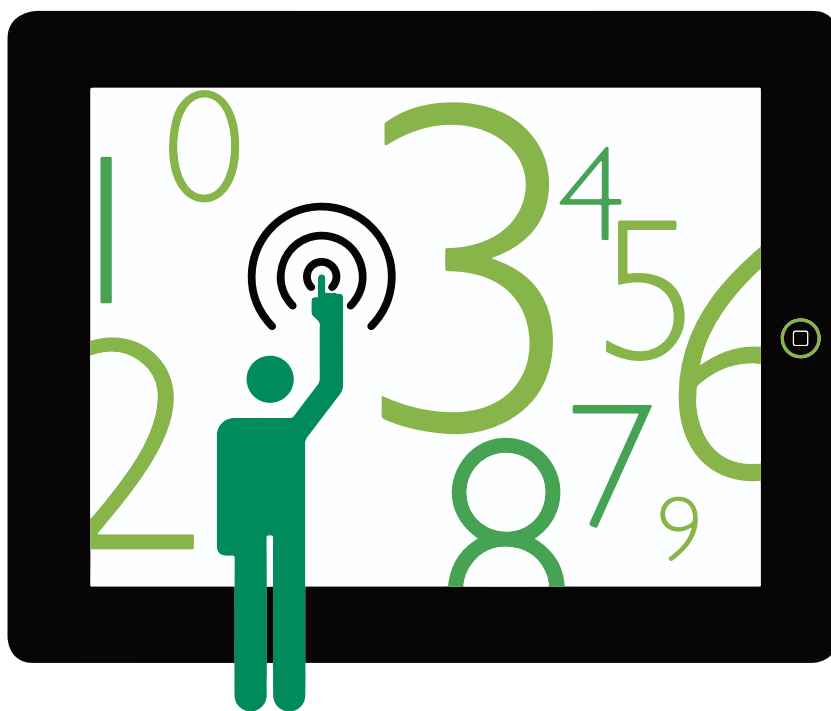
Andani is just one of many young people that, through our different learning and education offerings, Pearson is helping to get ready for work and life.

The world is changing and changing fast; the skills needed in this modern world have also moved on, especially with the arrival of digital technologies. By reading through the stories, you'll find how the various parts of Pearson are supporting the evolving needs of our education system and its learners.

We have an exciting story to tell. I hope that by reading about the assorted aspects of Pearson, you will discover how we're helping to play our part in improving the outcomes and lives of many South Africans. Through this gained knowledge, as Madiba said, we believe they will help to change their lives, the lives of those around them and help to uplift South Africa, or, indeed, the world.

Ursula Ndhlovu
Editor

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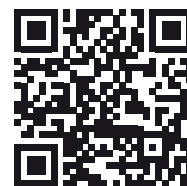
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To view the digital version of this publication scan the QR code or visit: books.itweb.co.za/pearson

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WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION TO SOUTH AFRICA

Pearson wants to change the way that education is delivered across South Africa, making it more personal and effective, thereby improving outcomes for learners.



Years ago, if you had consulted the London Stock Exchange results in the *Financial Times*, then strolled around Madame Tussauds' waxworks holding a glass of Bordeaux, you would have experienced four of Pearson's very diverse ventures.


Today, to sample its products you can send your children to a Pearson-owned school, enrol them at a Pearson university and be confident that all their textbooks and course materials were written and published by Pearson experts. Wine, waxworks, a stake in the London Stock Exchange and the Fleet

Street stable have all been replaced by a single-minded focus on education.

"I don't think there was one trigger event that caused Pearson to decide to invest in education, but we started investing in textbooks, which led to a large part of our business being in selling to the education sector," says Riaan Jonck, CEO of Pearson South Africa.

The depth and breadth of its activities vary around the world. The business is further aligned to its values of being decent, brave and imaginative, with a commitment to always being accountable. Pearson owns primary and secondary schools in many countries and designs the syllabuses and develops the content. It also operates schools on behalf of other companies, handling every aspect of the business. In some cases it only handles certain services for other school groups, such as marketing and recruitment processes, or the financial side.

"We provide textbooks for most subjects, written by specialists and vetted by a team of experts. We created online content, not just converting physical textbooks into



Riaan Jonck, CEO,
Pearson South Africa

electronic formats, but adding multimedia and interactive content such as tests and assessment tools,” adds Jonck.

At the top end Pearson runs its own universities, graduating students with the promise that their education has made them ready for the workplace.

“Making sure we have good quality educational materials in schools is the biggest impact we can make, and having teachers able to use them. The sum of those two things is 90 percent of the impact,” Jonck says.

DIFFERENT BY DESIGN

Pearson has long recognised that teachers have varying teaching styles and learners have various learning styles, which is why the different brands within the group publish learning materials in a variety of formats.

“We’re trying to cater for all students so they can consume academic material in the best way for how their brains are coded. It’s easy to define a curriculum to follow a certain track, but it’s very difficult to fit every learner into following that track. If that was the case, all publishers

“ In South Africa, we have become the education partner to government, teachers, parents and students – a role we do not take lightly. ”

Riaan Jonck, Pearson

“Making sure we have good quality educational materials in schools is the biggest impact we can make, and having teachers able to use them. The sum of those two things is 90 percent of the impact.”

Riaan Jonck, Pearson

would have written the same thing and no one would have a unique proposition,” Jonck says.

Now academic publishers are facing another shift as digital content is becoming more common. Pearson is embracing that eagerly because of the opportunities it opens up for more effective education. “We have already changed our skills sets to match the focus on education and we can easily do so again to match the move to digital publishing,” Jonck says.

“Think about the new world it opens up to the learner and the teacher. You have digital content that the learner interacts with and it requires less ‘chalk and talk’ from a teacher because the learner can see what’s happening on their digital device. You can introduce a short interactive test

after that to assess the learner’s ability and their understanding of the subject and feed that back to the student.”

Much of the work that goes into Pearson’s product development today focuses on the ability not just to engage with the learner through the content, but to assess their understanding and feed that back to the learner, the teacher and the parents. “If you’re able to identify the learners that fall off the mean learning curve you’re able to introduce interventions to get them back onto the curve. It becomes a personalised learning journey instead of being one of 10 or 100 in the class getting taught at.”

Even so, Jonck still sees a place for physical printed books. “To take a textbook away would be a sin,” he says. “All students learn differently and some like a textbook, and we don’t want to take that experience away from them.”

THE VALUE OF TEACHERS

Before the children can benefit, their teachers must know how to use the material at hand, however. “If we introduce any subject or service

to an educational environment the one thing that matters most in making it a success or a failure is the teachers’ ability to use that product or service,” Jonck says. “It’s something we’ve seen in introducing digital content in the US, India and Brazil – the biggest influencer over the efficacy of a particular product is the teachers’ ability to utilise it efficiently. They go back to the status quo if you don’t convert them to using that product.”

In South Africa, the biggest part of Pearson’s business lies in creating high quality educational content to public and private sector schools.

To make sure the teachers can use those materials properly, Pearson trains 60 000 teachers a year to use its content. Any school can send its teachers for free training with options including one-day workshops, week-long courses, or courses lasting from three months to a year that lead to professional qualifications recognised by the Sector Education and Training Authority.

“If you look at the teacher profile in South Africa you’ll find a lot are under-qualified. They’re teaching subjects at a level that may be higher than the level they qualified for so they have to be professionally developed,” Jonck says.

While these professional development courses result in tangible benefits, Pearson is anxious to do more, by running its own teacher training courses at university

level. However, the process of getting its curriculum and qualifications approved by the Department of Higher Education will take at least two years, and possibly up to four. "As an education company we can't just stand by and see this going wrong the way it is," Jonck says.

The legacy of Apartheid is still damaging us today, he says, because it left generations of teachers unfit for purpose, and yet they're teaching today. But it isn't getting better, as local research has confirmed there's an enormous gap between the skills people need to be an effective teacher and what they learn on teacher training courses at universities even now. In the worst examples, only 15 percent of what potential teachers are learning is actually relevant in the classroom.

"That's the reality. We have new people coming through, but they're being taught skills that aren't fit for the classroom today," Jonck says. "We see our role as an education company in South Africa as helping to improve the education system and we're not going to stand on the sidelines."

AN EARLY START

The age at which education starts is another problem, since the sooner children begin tackling literacy and numeracy, the greater their chance of academic success compared with trying to fix literacy and numeracy deficiencies at a later age. "We're desperately trying to make sure literacy gets attention very early on," Jonck says. "The earlier you get involved, the better the chances of a child surviving this academic world." Pearson is supporting that through corporate social responsibility investments in early childhood development.

To say the education system in South Africa is an enormous problem is a gross understatement, he believes. "It's one of the biggest problems. We have the largest amount of young people between 14 and 25 in Africa, compared to all the continents on earth. If we don't teach them properly we will have little skill, an enormous amount of unemployment and we'd still have to import skills from other parts of the world, and that will never positively contribute to the economy. Our job as Pearson is to be part of the solution."

Many African students are desperate to study overseas, because they believe African education is sub-standard, Jonck says. "As an education company we've got the opportunity to make sure it's on standard and competes with the best in the world. In South Africa, we've become the partner in education for government, teachers, parents and students – a role we don't take lightly." **P**

HANDS-ON EDUCATION

Pearson is directly involved in educating children and university students through its operations in South Africa.

The Pearson Affordable Learning Fund holds a 40 percent stake in Spark Schools, which runs four schools in Johannesburg and plans to open more next year. For universities, it operates the CTI and MGI campuses, educating 11 300 students at 13 campuses across the country.

As well as giving students a great education, a major point of these investments is to prove that high standards of education can be provided for a reasonable fee, Jonck says. Private schools are doing a phenomenal job, but their fees make them too elite to solve the country's massive problem.

Spark schools get impressive results by using technology and by hiring dedicated, well-qualified teachers, yet they only charge about R1 000 a month, making them far more affordable than most.

The MGI and CTI campuses offer degrees in a wide range of subjects including psychology, biomedics, accounting, graphic design and information technology.

Every first-year student is given a tablet with all their books loaded onto it. "There's a very strong correlation between learners having access to books or digital content and their academic performance. Very few learners who don't have books succeed, so we include it in our price," Jonck says.

These institutions serve as a showcase to the government to say this is what could be done in public schools. "We make the economics work at prices cheaper than the government pays per child," Jonck says. "Running our own schools gives us the ability to showcase that you can run schools at a low cost with the right approach, and with the principals and teachers using technology. That's the sole reason why we'd like to own more schools – to make those proof points to governments."

Brian Wafawarowa, Executive
Director: Learning Services, Pearson



CHANGING EDUCATION DYNAMICS

The negative stories around textbook delivery may soon become a thing of the past.

In many developing countries like South Africa, where for different reasons, many schools don't have enough good teachers, a reliable textbook can be the saviour.

Brian Wafawarowa, Pearson's Executive Director: Learning Services, knows that first-hand. "When I was at high school, I got the itch to do commerce in my final year, but my school didn't offer it because they didn't have a teacher for it," he says. "So I got a book called *Commerce Today*, which, I'm happy to say, was published by the company I work for now. It was so good, I came out with a B grade." Teachers are invaluable. The ideal learning setup comprises a good qualified teacher, a good textbook and a suitable learning environment but this is less often the case. In a less favourable setup, a diligent learner with a good textbook can also achieve impressive results, he says.

Research by Unesco confirms textbooks play a huge role in developing countries where teachers are scarce or inadequately skilled. "Sometimes teachers don't have the qualifications for the subjects they teach, or adequate training, or an adequate understanding of the curriculum. The books we've developed take these factors into account," Wafawarowa says. Unfortunately, Pearson has no control over what happens to the books once they're delivered.

While the Department of Basic Education would like to give a textbook to every learner, the costs are prohibitive. "That's a real concern. You want to give quality and durable textbooks at an affordable price. But you can't compromise the learning outcomes to get the prices as low as possible so we haven't been able to reach full book coverage," Wafawarowa says.

“Pearson is working to provide interactive learning solutions instead of just a textbook.”

Brian Wafawarowa, Pearson

BUILDING A DIGITAL FUTURE

The printed format also has its limitations. “There’s a lot more we’d love to do in our textbooks, but if a static textbook was to incorporate all the interactivity, the gamification and the feedback we’d like, it would be 100 times more cumbersome to navigate.”

The digital era is poised to solve those problems of use, cost and the limitations of print. But first, the right format has to be found and costs have to come down.

The initial enthusiasm for ‘text behind glass’, that simply converted a printed book into a digital format, has waned and with good reason. The only convenience is being able to carry all your books in a lightweight device, and that small benefit doesn’t justify the expense of hardware, software and the conversion exercise. It also wastes the opportunity to add multimedia and interactive elements like assessment and feedback facilities that can move the education process and learning outcomes up several notches.

“Pearson is working to provide interactive learning solutions instead of just a textbook. These include learning tools that comprise digital assets such as video and audio, learner and content and learner management systems, teacher development and assessment systems,” Wafawarowa says.

“We’re creating learner management systems that allow the learner to complete activities or take assessments and get instant feedback. Teachers can immediately see how each learner is faring through their response to different questions.

“We’re also able to plot a desired learning curve of where a learner should be along the curriculum and check their individual progress against that,” he says.

These ‘Test and Improve’ tools can assess an individual learner and deliver a recommendation of any additional stimulation or remedial interventions.

CHARGING TROLLEYS

The problem of ill-equipped schools and inadequately-trained teachers can now be overcome in the digital world, as Pearson’s systems come in different formats. Some are online for schools with reliable bandwidth, others are offline with content loaded onto laptops or mobile devices fitted with extra memory capacity. When there’s no electricity or connectivity, learning can still take place on the devices themselves.

In one of our pilot projects, we supplied tablets to both rural and urban schools, along with charging trolleys where the devices are charged at night and stored for security reasons. Every day the learners collect a device and follow the lessons from the stored content. When connectivity is available, the children can use online assessment tools and interactive elements to enhance the experience.

Wafawarowa believes physical textbooks will largely disappear within five years. Currently, more than 80 percent of lessons conducted in South Africa use physical books rather than electronic content. Not all the essential books are available electronically yet, and even in schools where tablets are used, printed books remain in use.

“Textbooks will go away because the dual mode will become unnecessary. It’s here at the moment

because of the unreliability of connectivity and power, so textbooks remain your assurance. I think beyond five years there will be a major swing,” Wafawarowa says. Major IT companies are funding satellite coverage over Africa to enhance rural connectivity. With this in place, e-learning will flourish, he predicts, and he welcomes the transition.

“Content remains important and Pearson is very rich on that because we developed lots of content in the textbook environment. Its deployment is changing, but teachers will still prefer better content, so if we make it available on the appropriate platform, I believe they will stick to our content. We see ourselves retaining our superior presence in the textbook environment and converting it into a superior presence in the digital environment with the extra services we’re developing.”

What will help its success is the training Pearson offers to help teachers understand how to use technology and adapt it for different types of learners. The company has conducted research into learner types and defined the best way to help different learners, from the academically gifted who are easily bored, to those who are struggling and need to be paced appropriately.

The different publishing brands within Pearson have always catered for different types of learners, and its electronic versions will be no different. **P**



THE E-LEARNING ECOSYSTEM

Delivering electronic content to schools demands a much broader ecosystem of players than printed textbooks ever needed. The new ecosystem includes the cellular networks to deliver content over their bandwidth, and IT companies to design material to suit the different digital devices. “One challenge is the interoperability between devices like Android or Apple and the need for us to develop content that’s device-agnostic,” Pearson’s Brian Wafawarowa says.

“We’re working on partnering with suitable black-empowered IT companies to help roll out electronic content nationwide. Our teams and partners help with teacher training and equipment testing, then remain onsite once the system goes live for troubleshooting and assisting with user and technical issues.”

“We can’t cover the full range of skills

required in the deployment processes because we’re pedagogy experts, not engineers and technologists. We find young enterprises that are enthusiastic about digital deployment and work with them to make sure our content is effectively used,” he says.

Once again, success largely hinges on the skills of the teachers, however. “The learners take to technology like ducklings to water. They jump in and explore; usually it’s the teachers who hold them back because they’re not as familiar with the technology,” Wafawarowa says. Even when the teachers overcome any fears and reluctance, the authorities can be a problem if they don’t want to shift to e-learning.

To combat that, Pearson is developing change management courses for policy-makers. But give a child a laptop, and they will probably figure out how to use it themselves.

THE CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE

The forward-thinking employees at Pearson have realised that the shift to a digitised learning environment starts with them.

In the past few years, the number of unemployed youth, many of whom lack formal education, has grown. This trend has seen the South African government introducing policies and incentive schemes to tackle the challenge. Private sector players have realised the power of collaboration and are committed to doing their part to see the numbers turn around.

Pearson has recognised that it not only needs the right products to prepare future generations for the working world, but that investing in a workforce with the relevant knowledge, skills and drive is critical.

Executive Director of Human Resources, Alice Bhebhe, states: "At Pearson, we're committed to equipping the youth with the skills required for this information-based economy. We're concerned with the calibre of individuals the

new world of work needs and what opportunities we create for them to meaningfully participate in the 21st century world in which they find themselves."

STARTING AT THE SOURCE

So where does the company begin its journey to see this vision realised? "We need to be the change we want to see," says Bhebhe. She believes having a workforce geared for an increasingly digital environment is critical for the sustainability of the business. "We want to make a measurable difference in people's lives. We want people to thrive through learning and are cognisant of the fact that the way that people learn is continuously changing - and we need to support these new ways of learning."

According to Bhebhe, Pearson lives and breathes learning. "As a leading learning company, we're committed

to making sure we're developing employees' potential and current skills." This, she adds, is done through a rigorous performance and development management process that takes into account the different ways people learn and creates an environment that allows people to flourish. The various learning platforms available enable employees to take ownership of their skills development. "Employees must take the initiative and realise that to remain relevant, they need to be continuously learning. We encourage everyone to dedicate an hour every week to learning."


THINKING AHEAD

The uptake may be slow in most parts of the South African education sector; but the digitisation of learning at universities is already a major focus area for Pearson, which is why the company is investing in introducing new digital skills to its employees on an ongoing basis. Says Bhebhe: "We take everyone through a digital course of some sort, not only to learn how to work with digital products, but to appreciate and understand the importance of working within an increasingly digitised world. For example, all Pearson colleagues were challenged to participate in the global Hour of Code [of programming] which was spearheaded by the likes of Bill Gates.

Importantly, she says this training will ensure that in a digital world, Pearson's workforce will be in the same headspace as the learners it's trying to prepare. "We set up many sessions to create an understanding of, for example, what it means to move from print to digital and what that means for our industry. Every

“We need to be the change that we want to see.”

Alice Bhebhe,
Pearson, inspired by Ghandi



Alice Bhebhe, Executive
Director: Human
Resources, Pearson

person is put through these sessions, from warehouse employees to executives, to understand that our world of work has changed," she says.

Pearson sees itself as an employer of choice that is able to attract and retain talent. With an increasing number of learnerships per year, Bhebhe believes most people want to work in an environment where they're continuously learning and improving their employability. Pearson's managers are proactive in identifying and nurturing talent and creating an environment where individuals can grow.

Bhebhe says that, at times, certain skills might be required that are not yet available internally, in which case an external person with those skills will be brought in to deliver on the task at hand. "We believe in the potential of people, and we make sure that it's nurtured within the company. However, that doesn't mean we won't bring skills in from outside," she says.

So, when looking externally, what traits and skills is Pearson hoping to spot? "We look for people who are brave, ambitious, imaginative, outcomes-based, decent and want to make an impact," says Bhebhe. Furthermore, they need to be creative, flexible, accountable, respectful, and have empathy. "As much as we understand the skills required for the 21st century, we're preparing people for jobs that haven't even been created yet. We therefore need people who understand the need to be adaptable in order to remain relevant."

IT'S NOT A JOB

Working at Pearson, says Bhebhe, also means making a measurable difference in the world in terms of social responsibility. "Our employees are encouraged to do that. It's not just a job, it's about purpose and creating meaning in the world."

And, with its commendable approach, there's no doubt that Pearson is being recognised as a thought leader. Bhebhe highlights the values of being brave, decent, imaginative and accountable as being embedded in the organisational culture.

There's a shift happening in the way people learn, and while there's still a long way to go to digitise education, Pearson is a proud participant in the journey. "Innovation is key, but we're forward-thinking without being unrealistic as to the current situation's requirements. We can only lead people to that future if we're ready ourselves. We're making sure that we're strengthening those muscles for the future so that we can be an effective partner in education". **P**

BEING 'IN' THE EDUCATION GAME

Through the Midrand Graduate Institute (MGI) and CTI Institutes Pearson is graduating over 2 000 young people per year and has first-hand experience and knowledge of what's needed on the frontline of tertiary education to create future generations of work-ready graduates.

Pearson has joined other public and private universities to address some of the quality, access and employability issues affecting today's learners by operating its own higher education institutes, with the MGI and CTI subsidiaries operating 13 campuses across the country. Next year the intention is to brand these campuses as the Pearson Institute of Higher Education. They're equivalent to universities, offering degrees and Master's studies in a wide variety of fields, but they can't be called universities under the Higher Education Act.

Executive Director: Direct Delivery Mark Cunningham says the institute is built on five pillars: Accessibility, Affordability, Technology, Employability and Academic Quality. "These are the elements that drive everything we do."





Mark Cunningham,
Executive Director:
Direct Delivery (MGI
and CTI), Pearson

READY FOR WORK

The goal of employability is highly topical, since universities around the world are being forced to question an educational mismatch with skills needed in the working world. Often the curriculum bears little relation to what's needed for the job a student is training for, making them unsuitable for employment and frustrating companies with vacancies to fill.

"That's a fundamental challenge for higher education not just in South Africa, it's a global challenge," Cunningham says. "There's a shift in the sector to ensure that graduates exit as employable. That's a key focus area for us."

The buzzword right now is ROE – Return on Education. "If you're going to invest thousands of rands on higher education, what's your return on that?" Cunningham asks. "We're trying to position ourselves slightly differently from traditional universities, which have a big focus on research. Universities are in the business of knowledge and we're in the business of learning. Higher education provides a person with a deep understanding of a particular field and develops them cognitively, and we want that knowledge and cognitive development to be applied to the working world."

Pearson's CTI and MGI are strong believers in using information technology to educate their students, which still isn't ubiquitous in local universities. "We provide all our students with a tablet with all their 'textbooks' and reading materials delivered digitally to make it more accessible. It also aligns to employability, because technology is pervasive in the workplace. If students haven't been exposed to technology through

their studies they can find entering the working world more challenging.”

About three quarters of Pearson's CTI and MGI graduates move into work or further study. That highlights the need to continuously re-look at what higher education in South Africa is delivering, and ensure that students graduate in the right fields with the right skills for today's economy.

A BETTER FIT

“It's really important for industry and higher education institutes to seek alignment,” Cunnington says. “We've done a lot of research into the future needs of industry and we're using that to design new programmes or evolve our existing programmes so they continue to match

industry needs. We also engage with industry directly.”

In the Eastern Cape, for example, the campus is talking to Mercedes Benz to see what skills are needed by this major employer in the region. All the MGI and CTI campuses negotiate internships for their students with local companies.

It's important to give students a broad, life-enhancing experience, however, and not just become a factory churning out work-ready graduates. “We need to find a harmonious balance between still delivering what a higher education should be, but match that to the needs of industry,” Cunnington says. “There's no point going to all these wonderful graduation ceremonies and seeing all the smiling graduates with their certificates, if they're not able to find the kind of work they should after investing all the time and effort into achieving that qualification.”

The students, parents and sponsors are investing their own money too, since there are no government grants to attend CTI or MGI. That's where the pillar of affordability comes in. “We try to find the right balance between academic quality and making it as affordable as possible. We assist through loans, scholarships based on academic merit and through deferred payment options. We're trying to innovate around ways that people can fund their education.”

Deferred payments, for example, allow students who are close to graduating to pay a small monthly fee and pay the bulk of their fees once they have a job. This year 600 places were

made available to students, in a clear demonstration of confidence that its graduates are highly employable.

COMPETITIVE COLLABORATION

While Pearson's CTI and MGI campuses operate in competition to universities for the same cohort of eligible students, it's not proprietorial with the knowledge it accrues from that direct involvement. The company readily shares its insights, which may help South Africa move up from its place of 75th from 76 measured countries on OECD's global education rankings.

“The benefit of us being involved in the direct delivery of higher education is that we gain insights we can share with other universities. We've become like a partner where they use Pearson textbooks, e-books and digital services for their courses and we can get involved in course and curriculum design because we've built up a significant amount of knowledge we can share,” Cunnington says. Pearson has further launched a Lecturer Academy to provide training in technology and other subjects.

A lot of the material comes through Pearson's experience as an e-learning house. For example, the My Lab online tutorials are massively successful worldwide, and approximately 80 000 students in public universities in South Africa use those technologies. Wits University uses My Lab chemistry

“The benefit of Pearson being involved in the direct delivery of higher education is that we are able to have a direct impact in higher education learner outcomes, and further gain insights we can potentially share with other universities.”

Mark Cunnington, Pearson

programmes for about 25 percent of its course material.

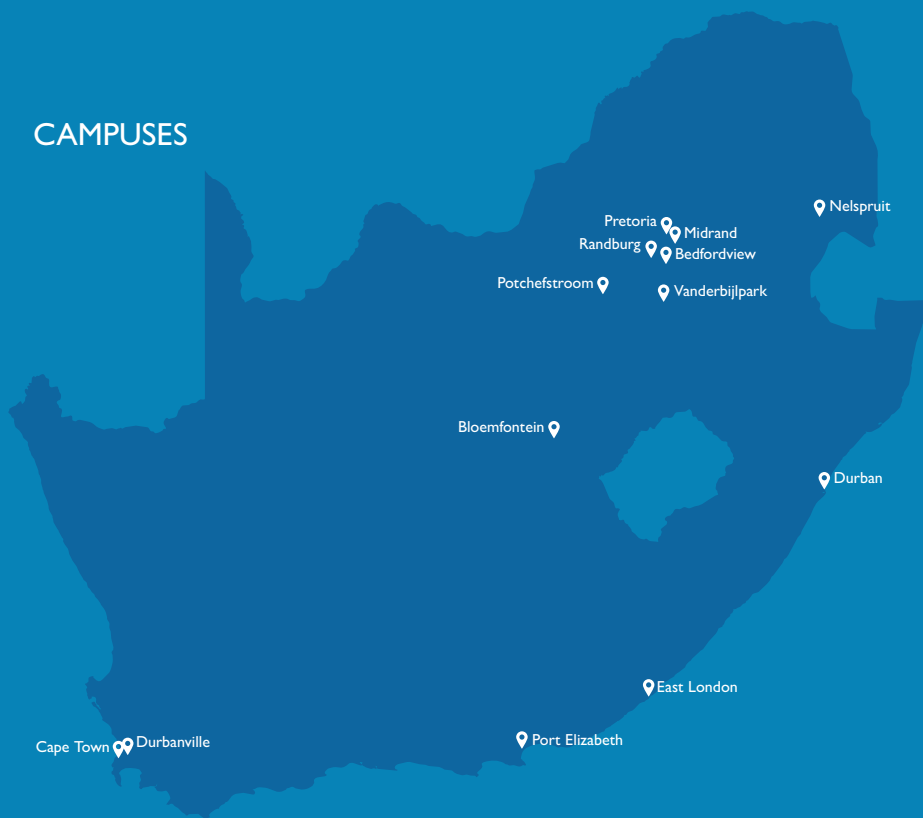
Pearson's online assessment technologies are also invaluable for helping to spot students at risk of falling behind. The data can show how far students have progressed in completing their work and which ones have a greater probability of not completing the course, so the lecturers can put extra support in place timeously, in the course of the year.

Pearson's CTI and MGI campuses have become a welcome showcase and are using their collective knowledge to advise other institutions about the type of technologies that best enhance student learning for improved outcomes and the infrastructure required.

The company's 10-year vision includes introducing new programmes, acquisitions of other institutions to increase its reach into vocational and technical training, and moving into online delivery.

"It comes back to accessibility. As higher education evolves and the lifelong learning concept increases, people who are already working and aspire to a higher education but can't break their careers could study online," Cunningham says. "Online technologies are a huge part of providing accessible and affordable education and if another qualification would be helpful to your career we want to be able to offer that." **P**

CAMPUSES



COURSES OFFERED

Qualifications offered and supported across four faculties:



Commerce



Information
Technology



Creative Arts and
Communication



Law &
Social Sciences

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

11 300

(both full-time and part-time)



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RETHINKING EDUCATION

Publishing market leader Pearson is rethinking learning and forging ahead into digital education and investment in schools and universities. Looking at future trends will help to provide today's learners with the skills needed for their own prosperity and to help boost South Africa's global competitiveness.





Zodwa Pakade, Executive
Director: Corporate Affairs,
Pearson South Africa



Quality education is a fundamental lever in helping move people from poverty to prosperity. The United Nations recognises the fact in its global call to action. It places education as one of its Sustainable Development Goals, which aim to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all.

Closer to home, the government's National Development Plan (NDP), a strategy set out in 2013 to transform South Africa by 2030, lists education and skills as one of nine critical pillars to be addressed.

While there's much political will and significant budget devoted to education, we still have a lot of work to do when it comes to consistent execution. "The education system still faces numerous systemic challenges, such as infrastructural issues, teacher qualification, social dynamics within schools and leadership of schools and districts. These can't be easily solved," notes Zodwa Pakade, Executive Director, Corporate Affairs, Pearson South Africa. "However, much has been achieved in the past two decades. Look at basic education and how government manages that environment; there are robust policies, norms, standards and quality checks in place. The matric pass rate was as low as 40 percent in the late 1990s. It has improved considerably – it was 75.8 percent in 2014. Pearson has noted that as a provider of the CAPS-aligned educational content for many years, the quality required continues to increase and improve," she says.

In partnership with the private sector, government has put in place interventions to address the systemic challenges. "For example," says Pakade, "we as an industry support government with regard to the content that gets developed for teachers and students, and temper that with an understanding of the stages of education the student goes through from grade 0 to grade 12 – at a basic education level.

Pearson's strategy to help support the evolution of the local education environment has three key prongs: textbooks, direct delivery and e-education.

TEXTBOOKS

"Our strategy to provide content in the form of textbooks to schools, TVET colleges and universities remains core to our business. We're currently delivering over 23 million textbooks to schools in South Africa,

“
Literacy remains a priority,
as much as ensuring that the
skillsets produced by the
education industry are to
industry’s requirements. The
biggest driver of our strategy
is the passion in Pearson to
see South Africa rise – to see
people of all ages flourish in
their lives through learning.”

Zodwa Pakade, Pearson

and these books continue to be valuable resources in classrooms across South Africa. This content is produced by the hundreds of local authors and subject specialists that we work with to develop classroom resources. We’re realising that over time we will have to transition this business into the digital world, and it’s been really exciting to get some early learning with ongoing pilots in various schools. We’re beginning to see the slow-down in this market, and we’re articulating our digital strategy to align with this

transformation in the education industry.

“From a teaching perspective, institutions of leadership and the private sector get involved in teacher development. Pearson, for example, trains over 60 000 teachers a year. We train them in content, but also the ability to teach according to needs of different types of students.”

Pearson is also involved in capacity-building for different districts. “We’re currently in over 1 700 schools where we conduct three-year turnaround programmes, that go from district officials through to the classrooms.” Whether it’s in a print environment or digital, Pakade believes that teachers will remain central to the learning process.

Such public and private sector collaboration will go some way to addressing the systemic

challenges. However, perhaps the ultimate measurement of success is the improvement of learner outcomes. If education is indeed the change agent to take citizens from poverty to prosperity, the service delivery mechanisms, namely schools, colleges and universities will need to prepare young people with a formal education as well as work-ready skills to earn a decent living and flourish. “It’s heartbreaking to see the number of unemployed graduates, because it means their skillsets aren’t suited to industry’s requirements. We have to think about what employers require in the years ahead and then track that back to ensure we’re equipping those learners with what they’ll need for tomorrow’s world of work.”

DIRECT DELIVERY

Employability, affordability, access and quality are key themes being addressed in Pearson’s next strategy pillar, which is to own and operate schools, colleges and higher education institutions. “At Pearson, we’re looking at improved outcomes from grade 0 through 12, so we’re looking at improved educational foundations and matric passes to enable more young people to go into higher education. When learners get to TVET and universities, we’re talking

about 21st century skills, and through our own institutions we ensure that students are educated on how to think and problem-solve, so that when they enter the workplace, where they don't only have the skills required, they can be moulded into a career they weren't necessarily trained for. Young people need to be able to straddle careers seamlessly; they can't focus on just one thing, they need more than just a technical skill, they'll need a broad package," says Pakade.

"We're learning a great deal at MGI and CTI, and through our investment in Spark Schools."

"We're also thinking about models of student funding, a very topical issue in South Africa, to ensure that young people are not excluded from getting a quality education."

E-EDUCATION

ICT in Education is key to speed up the implementation of technology and internet connectivity to schools. The national strategy should provide a national impetus to complement existing provincial initiatives such as Gauteng's digital classroom programme. This sets the scene for a modern teaching and learning environment, allowing young people to learn in the classroom, at home or wherever there's connectivity.

"Through our own experience globally, we know that digital content delivered directly to students is an incredibly positive disruption. It allows changes in learner and teacher support materials to be made as and when needed, for a much lower cost and higher speed than reprinting and redistributing textbooks. It also allows for a much richer resourced, interactive learning environment, with videos and areas for further study easily accessible."

"We will be leading with our digital education strategy in content, ICT teacher training, learner management systems and assessments." In the analogue approach, a teacher of a class of 60 pupils can only teach to the middle of the class; they can't always reach the individual. Technology evens the playing field. It allows ongoing assessments and interventions where pupils haven't grasped a core subject fundamental that's now holding them back.

"With digitally-driven learning, the student you're getting out of the system is a good quality learner who will be ready for the modern workplace," says Pakade. "We need to understand that technology is only an enabler in this environment – education is still key. Where the focus is on the tablets, technology and tools, the implementation will fail. There's also a change management process that needs to take place around teaching and learning in the digital world. Teacher training is

GETTING TRANSFORMATION RIGHT

"To enable sustainable growth into the future, Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) plays a central role in executing our strategies. We've looked holistically across the education market to ensure we are playing our part in transforming the industry, and in turn growing both the employee and supplier base for Pearson. We are building a sustainable B-BBEE model that focuses on ownership of and employment at Pearson; supplier development; suppliers and services, creating small enterprises and socio-economic development," says Pearson's Zodwa Pakade.

vital, as is the quality of the pedagogy.

"Technology and education companies need to work in partnership. We often talk about how many schools are connected, but that doesn't necessarily translate to how many learners are on digital platforms and getting better grades. If we're to be successful in improving education, we need to implement correctly and measure the right things."

Another aspect to consider is that the entire education system needs to be on board. "We can't have young people coming out of a digital environment at Grade 12, then going back into a paper-based one when they enter tertiary education. There needs to be a seamless education system, where the different parts move in tandem, it's about phasing and scheduling." **P**

DIGITAL: THE EDUCATION GAME-CHANGER

Integrating ICT in schools and universities has the potential to change the face of education in South Africa, and ultimately provide a more skilled workforce.

The global e-learning market is likely to reach \$107 billion by 2015, compared to \$56.2 billion in 2014, according to the ICWE Germany's *eLearning Africa Report 2015*. It's an area that's certainly blossoming, and the implications are good for learners and future employers alike.

Given the many challenges South Africa has to overcome to get current and future workforces skilled and globally competitive, improving the quality of education at primary, secondary and tertiary levels is key.

"Much of the development happening globally in digital learning is being influenced by what's taking place in North America, where textbooks are rapidly being transformed into digital content across schools and

higher education institutions," says Mike Ogden, Finance Executive Director, Pearson South Africa.

To meet the demands of the burgeoning global digital learning market, Pearson has developed digital curricula and school and learner management systems to personalise, customise, deliver, and track progress.

IMPROVING OUTCOMES

"One of the benefits of digital education is that every learner can learn at their own pace," says Ogden. "It allows for more focus on the individual learner. Learners are able to continually assess themselves, determine how they're doing and identify areas of weakness with and without the intervention of a teacher. This is particularly beneficial in a developing country like South Africa."

In any classroom situation, he adds, there are learners left behind and those who forge ahead. Because the teacher's focus is on working through a linear curriculum at a predetermined pace, and not at a speed of the learner's own choosing, the result is that some will fall behind while others become bored. Digital learning is far more flexible and allows for individual determination of the pace of learning.

Another benefit of digital learning is that it encourages collaboration. In schools where digital learning has been

rolled out, children are more likely to form groups and discuss ways to solve problems. "In the traditional classroom environment, only the most confident learners will ask questions," says Ogden. "Group learning is far less intimidating because it's based on peer-to-peer exchanges. It has also been proved that individuals are much more likely to retain information learned in this way."

The main obstacle in the path to digital education is that South African schools remain under-resourced. Although the past six years have brought much-needed bandwidth to the country, user access is still limited in outlying areas. The cost of devices such as tablets is also a consideration, particularly when theft is a major risk.

TEACHER ENGAGEMENT

Interestingly, in a recent digital pilot that Pearson undertook in several schools, the biggest hurdle in the adoption process was the teachers themselves. "We've made massive investments in technology to be able to provide a comprehensive digital platform, which includes providing tablets for learners so they can work from home, a major benefit of e-learning. However, the move to digital requires teachers to change their approach and to start acting more like facilitators who enable learning. That requires additional teacher training, along with change management, which must be part and parcel of any digital e-learning solution."

Investment in technological infrastructure will be critical to ensuring the rollout of digital

“One of the greatest benefits of digital education is that every learner can learn at their own pace.”

Mike Ogden, Pearson

learning technology. Education institutions have to consider their education technology strategies in tandem with capital expenditure (capex) strategies to determine their needs, counting elements such as new buildings alongside major refurbishment of their digital infrastructure, which will have to support learning anytime, anywhere.

“With local and international publishers adopting digital and rolling out cloud-based learner management systems, education institutions are likely to move to subscription-based solutions, where they pay annual licence fees for access to software. Recouping capex is likely to take between three to five years,” notes Ogden.

For businesses that provide the education community with learning materials and management systems, says Ogden, the biggest shift will be in offering more touch points across the entire education system.

“In the past, we delivered textbooks and the customer paid for them. Now, it’s about having long-term relationships with learners, teachers, administrators and parents from preschool through to university graduation. That requires taking ownership of every process along the way. We think of it as an Enterprise Resource Planning system for education. Given the possible phasing out of textbooks over time, the only way that education service providers will survive, is to provide innovative solutions that cover the entire education lifecycle.” **P**

Mike Ogden,
Executive Director:
Finance, Pearson



THE DIGITAL ADVANTAGE

e-Books are available instantly and can be edited and updated immediately. They also come with useful tools and interactive programmes that keep learners engaged. Publishers can insert videos, interactive charts, tests, assessments and education games. All of these elements help to create a more immersive experience for learners.

“The younger generation has adopted mobile technology with enthusiasm,” says Pearson’s Mike Ogden. “Children are surrounded by technology everywhere, so it makes

sense to apply it positively in the learning environment. As an education company, we’re excited about being part of this digital education journey, and about the improved education outcomes we foresee.”

ICWE Germany’s *eLearning Africa Report* reveals, however, that despite the many advantages of digital education, teachers, trainers and managers in Africa are reluctant to deploy it.

The report concludes that ‘raising the awareness and skills of teachers – and learners – is crucial for ICT integration to be successful’.

CREATING THE CLASSROOM OF THE FUTURE

Technology is melting away classroom walls to give pupils and students access to more content, better learning experiences. Can these technologies help South Africa overcome its educational woes?

Technology is driving huge changes in classrooms around the globe, and South Africa is no exception. By opening up new horizons to students and their teachers, and by potentially providing more egalitarian access to educational resources, these developments have big potential for a country like South Africa, which continues to battle to produce enough learners of the right calibre.

However, says Nirvani Dhevcharan, Executive Director, Technology at Pearson, technology is not the full answer. Based on its global experience as a leading provider of educational content, Pearson strongly believes that educational challenges require a multi-dimensional, end-to-end solution.

"Technology opens up so many possibilities out there, but there are many challenges as well – if you

don't do the right kind of planning, you will come unstuck," Dhevcharan says.

"Based on our own experience at our CTI and MGI campuses, I would say that detailed and advanced planning is the most critical success factor when it comes to using technology effectively in educational contexts."

Dhevcharan says that one of the main technology trends in education is the availability of open educational resources. In the tertiary education space, institutions like Harvard, the University of Toronto and the University of the Western Cape locally are pioneers in making their content available for free.

The Department of Basic Education is making learning material available to all schools via its Thutong National Educational Portal.

Much other content is not free, of course, so managing digital licensing fees becomes a key challenge for institutions.

Another important trend is 'bring your own device', which is seeing pupils and students using their own smart mobile devices to access digital content. While institutions obviously want to leverage this trend, device management is a critical

challenge, as is connectivity. South Africa further has a reality of poverty among many communities, with many learners in no-fee schools.

"There's no 'one-size-fits-all' solution to connectivity – it all depends on the institution's resources and where it is," she notes. "For well-resourced schools in urban areas, educational content hosted in the 'cloud' can provide easy access for students, but we've used secure memory cards to provide approved content on our own campuses where the infrastructure was lacking. An onsite server can also provide another option."

THINK 'TOTAL SOLUTION'

However, as noted above, technology solutions need to be looked at within the total context of the school or university. Dhevcharan has horror stories to tell of schools where companies have donated tablets and connectivity, but the tablets remain locked up in the storeroom, unused.

Public-private partnerships are often touted as the way forward for education, but when the profit motive is paramount then these kinds of problems surface. Another issue is the fact that telecommunications service providers can't make a business case to provide the infrastructure to the rural schools, which arguably need the technology the most.

One key consideration is teachers. Many remain, unsurprisingly, committed to traditional pedagogical methods because that's what they know, understand and trust. By contrast, their pupils and students are 'digital natives', and are already using technology in their social lives. Even more worrying, initiatives to roll out technology into schools and universities are not always being matched by similar rollouts



Nirvani Dhevcharran, Executive
Director: Technology, Pearson

“Technology opens up so many possibilities out there, but there are many challenges as well.”

Nirvani Dhevcharran,
Pearson

”

to teachers' training colleges. Poor teacher training was recently identified by Hlengiwe Mkhize, Deputy Minister in the Department of Telecommunications and Postal Services, as a barrier to the use of ICT in schools.

Pearson's emphasis on teacher education and change management when implementing solutions is thus an important success factor – see the story *Helping create the educators the country needs* on page 26 for more information.

IT'S ALL IN THE BLEND

For Pearson, blended learning is going to be the defining characteristic of tomorrow's classrooms, with teachers continuing to play a critical role in helping students to use all the new types of content effectively, and in providing broader guidance. But to make this work, teachers will have to be helped to come to terms with technology, how to use it in the classroom – and also how to cope with a new generation of technologically-empowered pupils. Getting teachers trained before the technology is rolled out to students is part of the solution, as is the presence of onsite facilitators for a suitable period to help ensure the technology is embedded into the way teaching is conducted.

“We're very selective about whom we partner with in these projects – our content offering has to be integrated into the infrastructure and hardware portion, or it just won't work,” Dhevcharran observes. “Box dropping doesn't work when it comes to a complex, long-term project like education.”

THE RIGHT KIND OF CONTENT

Pearson's core focus is providing educational content digitally. In South Africa, given the history of non-delivery of textbooks, simply creating e-textbooks has the potential to solve an ongoing logistical nightmare. However, it is aiming higher given its emphasis on student-centred learning.

“We're looking for more than just text behind glass to provide interactive experiences that fast-track learning,” says Dhevcharran. One such initiative is X-Kit Mobile, which allows students to perform an initial maths assessment for free, create an avatar and share results via Twitter and Facebook. Pupils can then progress to higher levels by registering with the site; their parents are able to pay the nominal charges using airtime.

“It's all about making it useful, easy to access and with measurable results,” Dhevcharran concludes: “Technology has huge potential to benefit education, but only if one takes an integrated approach.” **P**

HELPING CREATE EDUCATORS THE COUNTRY NEEDS

The quality and skills of teachers are vital when it comes to creating the country – and economy – we all want. Pearson's Teacher Education and Leadership Academy is playing a growing role in this important area.

No South African is blind to the fact that the education system is just not operating at full potential. Generations of young adults are leaving school without the skills they need to get jobs in the modern economy, and many of those going to university require further, and costly, interventions to succeed.

These gloomy realities exist despite massive investments in education by government – 6.23 percent of gross domestic product was spent on public education in 2013, around 18 percent of the annual budget.

"We're clear that resourcing is only part of the winning recipe – the foundation of any successful educational system



Alan Tait, Executive
Director: Sales, Pearson

“

We're clear that resourcing is only part of the winning recipe – the foundation of any successful educational system is the quality, skills and motivation of the teachers.”

Alan Tait, Pearson

is the quality, skills and motivation of the teachers.

“Without great teachers, the best content, facilities and technology really don't stand a chance,” says Alan Tait, Executive Director, Sales at Pearson. “For this reason, we put considerable resources behind our Pearson Teacher Education and Leadership Academy globally and, of course, here in South Africa.”

Tait says the Academy indicates just how seriously Pearson takes its role. “It's not enough simply to publish the best content, we have to make sure educators have the pedagogical and other skills to use it to the greatest effect.”

In this day and age, of course, pedagogy is becoming ever more entwined with technology. Content is going digital, and technology is infiltrating classrooms in the form of smartboards, video and so on. Teachers' effectiveness will increasingly be linked to their ability to use technology in the classroom.

TECHNOLOGY CHANGES EVERYTHING

“Technology is also changing the way pupils and students learn – they have access to online resources like past exam papers, videoed lectures and so on,

and they're using online tests to assess progress,” Tait says. “Teachers need to understand the impact of these aspects on how they teach.”

One consequence is that the old ‘teacher knows best’ mindset is under threat as pupils become more empowered. A similar process is already evident in society more generally, where businesses and even governments are struggling to deal with customers and citizens who are more informed and demanding.

Another important dimension is that technology makes it much easier for management teams to monitor what teachers are doing, so keeping a watchful eye on their performance.

“All of these are basically positive developments but teachers need professional help to develop the necessary skills to excel in this new world,” notes Tait. “That's what the academy is all about. We know that once teachers are empowered and skilled, the rest pretty much follows.”

Given the growing role of technology in multiple facets of education, it's not surprising that a survey conducted by the South African Principals' Association indicated that ICT help was the top priority for teachers – at least from the point of view of their bosses.

FINDING SOLUTIONS

The Pearson Academy provides training to around 60 000 teachers a year; typically using a blend of classroom-based and online options. Much of the training offered is free. The reality is that the vast majority of schools have neither the connectivity nor the hardware to make online teaching practical. Typically, then, the training is offered to a cluster of schools using the most convenient of them as a venue, or one of the Department of Basic Education's teacher training centres.

Another option is using one of the 13 CTI campuses around the country. CTI is a private institute of higher learning with around 11 300 students. Pearson acquired a majority stake in CTI in 2011 – a development that Tait says was highly significant.

"The acquisition of CTI meant that, as a company, we're no longer just a service provider, but a consumer of educational services," he says. "That gives us a rather unique view of our core business."

In effect, CTI acts as a laboratory or testing ground, providing deep practical insights into the realities of teaching in the 21st century – what works and what doesn't, at the most basic level. Although it's a university, CTI gives Pearson insight into pedagogical trends and issues that are applicable to all teaching; it pre-eminently

provides a way of understanding the impact of technology on the whole learning process or value chain that's highly useful to all teachers.

For example, CTI's campuses went paperless a few years ago, something no other South African institution has undertaken on the same scale. "We understand the process of moving to a technology platform in education from the inside – that kind of insight is priceless, and it informs the training we give to teachers attending our academy," he says.

The courses cover a wide range of topics, from subject-matter teaching to school management and 21st century skills. The flagship course is, of course, ICT in Education, and its 12 modules span the absolute basics to advanced deep dives into the use of ICT in specific teaching situations.

MAKING THE LEARNING STICK

Tait says one of the key differentiators of Pearson's approach is the ongoing involvement of facilitators. He believes it's unrealistic to expect a two-day training course to be absorbed and integrated into long-established teaching practice. Pearson's preferred solution is to link training with the onsite presence of a trained facilitator for a period of time. This approach means the teacher is helped to turn the theory gained during the training into classroom practice.

"This practical partnership down at the pedagogical coalface is what makes the training stick, and become part of how the teacher operates going forward," he says. "In fact, I would almost go so far as to say that we should insist that all training should include facilitation as part of the deal."

Another important issue is getting teachers to request the types of training intervention that the academy can deliver. One of the important dynamics here is the move by the Department of Basic Education to professionalise the teaching profession. This will involve building

a culture of ongoing learning to keep existing skills updated and to add new ones – 'continuous professional development' is the jargon term. Like accountants or lawyers, teachers will soon have to undertake a certain number of hours of training to maintain their status as registered professionals. This is being rolled out in a phased manner: principals in 2015, management teams in 2016 and teachers in 2017.

In this regard, it's vital to note that the Pearson Academy courses are accredited by both the Media, Information and Communication Technologies (MICT) and Education, Training and Development Practices (EDTP) Sector Education and Training Authorities, and endorsed by the South African Council for Educators. Thus, teachers wanting to build their professional profiles can do so by taking courses offered by the academy.

Looking at the bigger picture, Tait says that Pearson is quite clear about the need to partner with all stakeholders to overcome the challenges faced by the sector: "We don't have the time to start from the beginning – we have a lot of the content and intellectual capital already, and we want to work with the unions and government to take things forward." **P**

DISTRICT CAPACITY BUILDING

Often, compliance and quick fixes to improve education environments and results, especially in rural areas, don't succeed in the long term. What's needed is a sustainable approach, based on the district and school's unique needs.

In the majority of South Africa's schools teaching and learning methods have remained unchanged for decades. But how children need to learn to operate and compete effectively in the 21st century has changed substantially. A systematic shift away from rigid and prescriptive practices, value and attitudes towards more democratic and participatory practices as espoused in our education policies is required so that everyone involved in the education process can realise the benefits of embracing new inclusive ways of doing things.

As Trust Director for the Pearson Marang Educational Trust (PMET), this is Veronique Genniker's passion. The former teacher is now responsible for the leadership of PMET, a corporate social initiative by Pearson South Africa to develop and support disadvantaged and under-performing schools in all nine provinces across the country.

Describing the thousands of children she has worked with over the years as her 'babies' she's adamant that the Department of Basic Education (DBE) can't

engage with all our country's education woes in isolation. And that's where PMET comes in. The trust has reached over 1 700 schools across five provinces with its three-year school turnaround strategy. "We're proud to work in partnership with the DBE in its efforts to support school districts and schools to meaningfully implement our democratic policies. There simply isn't enough manpower within the DBE to develop and support all of South Africa's schools, particularly in the deep rural areas," says Genniker.

Most school development and support is currently located in urban schools, but the schools that need the most attention are the rural ones, she continues. Many of them can only be accessed via gravel roads; they lack electricity, proper sanitation and get very limited services from the municipality because they're located far away from any municipal town. "These deep rural schools appear to have been abandoned, leaving the learners and teachers to achieve against major odds."

She believes that private and public partnerships are essential to address these problems, but stresses that these initiatives can only work if school districts choose the correct partners; partners who add value. The development and support interventions run by PMET are based on what the schools and districts have identified as their unique hurdles and concerns. "We don't come in, observe and tell them what they need. That would be disrespectful and unprofessional, because dictating to people what we think they do and don't need often results in a lack of buy-in on the proposed interventions."

Key to the success of PMET's professional development and support programme, notes Genniker, is getting all stakeholders involved – from the school management teams, school governing bodies, teachers, parents, local chiefs, municipalities, community members, unions and government departments. "We take a full year to know and understand the context

of the school, the issues it faces and importantly, we're mindful and address the interpersonal relationships within the school and the broader community."

DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS

"Schools are not islands, therefore the school can't only be run by the principal or the teachers – it's located within a community," states Genniker. "Our major aim in schools is to develop human and personal agency so that school leaders are confident and well-equipped to engage with the broader school community for optimal and meaningful school functionality."

PMET also strives to develop more extensive partnership networks, she continues. This means connecting the schools with various government departments, municipalities and local police forums. This allows the schools without the necessary infrastructure and resources to succeed as they're provided with the support services they need. "It's vital for us to not create dependencies – we want to develop and promote self-managed schools. We want them to operate independently."

Describing their work as taking 'calculated responsible risks', Genniker notes how supported planning, thorough preparation and regular reflection are fundamental to the success of any professional development and support programme of this nature. Offering holistic professional development and support while neglecting the personal development aspect is problematic, she adds. All interventions should focus on integrating continuous professional and personal development and support.

"At the end of the day – the learners are the most important people in our work. Everything that PMET does ensures that learners are exposed to the best possible variety of participatory teaching and learning strategies so they can flourish during and outside of school. Improvement of quality learner results and creating self-managed schools is the crux of all PMET activities. All too often, organisations swoop in and do great work, only to leave and things goes back to how they have always been done before, which restricts learning opportunities for learners.

"Our schools need holistic long-term professional development and support to become self-managing quality and excellent schools. This is the most responsible way to foster real sustainable school development," she notes. It's through initiatives like PMET in partnership, with regular engagement and dialogue between government, the schools and all stakeholders that South Africa's precious children can access a variety of quality learning opportunities to lift them out of poverty. "It all comes down to the learner and providing them with their basic human rights so that they can flourish and become responsible citizens contributing to the growth of South Africa." P

“Our major aim is to nurture sustainable professional development and personal agency so that school leaders and teachers are confident and well-equipped to provide quality education to all learners.”

Veronique Genniker, Pearson Marang Educational Trust



Veronique Genniker, Trust Director, Pearson Marang Educational Trust

HOW IT ALL WORKS

Pearson Marang Educational Trust (PMET) approaches the various provinces and engages with each around the services it offers. Provincial officials select a struggling school district that could do with support. After visiting the district, PMET meets with the district director and management team to explain what support it would be able to provide. The district selects a cluster of 20 schools – four high schools and four primary schools that feed into each of these. PMET then meets with these 20 schools and once the offer of support has been accepted, PMET runs a full year baseline and basic school functionality assessment. Based on the findings, shortcomings and gaps are identified. Then, in collaboration with district officials and the schools, PMET structures a three year development and support intervention. This includes professional development for district officials and teachers, in-classroom support, district-wide workshops and providing schools with free access to all PMET training materials.

PEARSON IN SOUTH AFRICA



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Our print books are published in every national language of South Africa, recognising this is an important contribution to society. Our products now extend to resources for technical and vocational colleges and universities, providing textbooks, e-learning content and tutorial materials.

THE PEARSON MARANG EDUCATION TRUST

The Trust was launched in 2008 and works via a District Partnership Programme that adopts a holistic approach toward school improvement by supporting under-performing schools to become steadily achieving schools, capable of sustaining ongoing development. The work of the Trust has grown from 16 schools at inception of the programme to over 1 700 schools across South Africa in 2014.

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Pearson has undertaken the development of a digital solution where learners are able to experience a new and innovative way to learn in an interactive and engaging learning environment. This allows for learners and teachers to have:

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- Increased collaboration and development of critical 21st century skills such as digital literacy, problem-solving and critical thinking
- Individual diagnostic assessments to identify learning needs for every learner
- Individual feedback and tracking of each learner which enables personalised learning
- Time-saving and instant feedback assessment tools
- New experiences brought into the classroom, like science experiments or virtual field-trips
- Continued learning and support outside of the classroom through mobile learning opportunities.



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As part of the company's organic growth and investment in fast-growing economies, Pearson acquired the Midrand Graduate Institute (MGI) and CTI Education Group in 2010. Today, this group has 13 campuses and over 11 300 students across South Africa. ■

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