Content Evaluation Template

This template should be used for desk-based Content evaluations of CD-ROMs and Websites that are designed for student or teacher use.

Please complete those areas marked in grey and return it to TEEM.

Please don't use bullet points, bold or italic type in your evaluation, as this will not be recognised when the file is uploaded to the TEEM website.

1. GENERAL INFORMATION
This information is very important to your evaluation. Much of it can be found in the evaluation brief that came from TEEM.

Name of Evaluator:	Peter Halfpenny

Product information

Title:	Mediator 7 Pro
Publisher:	Matchware
TEEM ID ref:	41C001

Details of use

Date of use:	04/08/2003 (Format: DD/MM/YYYY)
Duration of use:	7 Days

Year group(s):	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4
	☐ Year 1	☐ Year 3	☒ Year 7	☐ Year 10
	☐ Year 2	☐ Year 4	☒ Year 8	☐ Year 11
		☐ Year 5	☒ Year 9	
		☐ Year 6		

Subject(s):	This title is cross-curricular	
	Curricular product	ICT Tool product
	Subject 1:	Tool 1: Multimedia Presentations
	Subject 2:	Tool 2:
	Subject 3:	Tool 3:
	Subject 4:	
	Subject 5:	
	Subject 6:	

Technical details

Internet access	The internet was used during this evaluation		
	If used, please state the internet access used (per machine): ADSL *(e.g. 56Kbps modem, 64Kbps ISDN, 1Mbps ASDL, 2Mbps leased line)*		
Hardware	Computer used:	PC	
	Processor:	Intel Pentium IV	Speed:	2.6GHz
		(Please select the closest match)	

	Memory:	512MB		
	Graphics:	Was a special graphics card used?	☐ Yes	
		If yes:		
		Graphics card type:	Memory:	
	Screen resolution:	1024 x 768		
	Disk space	60Gb *To include 'MB' or 'GB' after the figure – e.g. 12GB.*		
	Peripherals	☒ CD-ROM ☒ DVD-ROM ☐ Interactive Whiteboard		
Operating system	Windows	XP e.g. 98 SE, NT, 2000 or XP, etc.		
	Linux			
	Mac OS	e.g. 9.1or X, etc.		
Browsers	Microsoft Explorer	6.0 e.g. 5.0 or 5.5 etc.		
	Netscape Navigator	e.g. 4.0, 5.0 or 6.0 etc.		
	Opera			
Other software	☒ Microsoft Word		☒ Macromedia Flash	
	☒ Microsoft Excel		☒ Quicktime	
	☒ Microsoft Powerpoint		☒ Real Player	
	☒ Microsoft Access		☒ Adobe Acrobat	

2. CONTENT

A. Description

Description

Matchware Mediator 7 Pro is a a multimedia design package that creates HTML, Flash and CD-ROM presentations. The program enables the user to easily combine text, images, sounds, animations and videos into their presentations. This software is very powerful tool which contains many advanced features, but its limited subset of commands and simple drag and drop approach is well suited for use by students and teachers in a school environment.

The building of a Mediator page is just a simple three-step process. The first stage is to use the toolbox to drag and drop various objects onto your page. These could be text boxes, buttons, pictures, animated GIFs, sounds or videos. The next step is to right click on selected objects to add an event to the object, such as a mouse click. The final stage is to select the action or actions that are to be associated with that event. There is a wide range of actions that can be connected with an event, including page links, animated pictures, sounds, web-links, email links and even programing actions. The finished presentation can be saved in many formats, including HTML, Flash and EXE. Also included in the package is a CD-ROM builder that enables the saved presentation to run on any PC, together with an FTP manager for uploading completed websites to the Internet. The inbuilt Wizard function contains seven templates which the students can adapt for their own use by simply substituting their own text and graphics into the given presentation.

One of the main advantages for students in using Mediator is that they only have to learn to use one piece of software to produce slideshow presentations and multimedia websites. Compared to the earlier version 6 of this software, the program now has a more professional user interface, and several new features that gives it superior power when measured against similar multimedia authoring packages.

Supporting documentation

Supplied with the software is a user manual (over 400 pages) which contains comprehensive user instructions. The software itself contains a large help file that can be accessed at any time from the drop-down menu. This help file has a very useful 'quickstart' section that shows the user easy-to-follow steps for the creation of a simple multimedia presentation. Although the documentation supplied with the package is very substantial, most users should be able to learn the important commands without the need to consult the user manual. The documentation does not contain ideas for classroom use, but the program could be used in any school subject area whenever a multimedia slideshow or website is needed.

Technical Support

Online technical support is available using the Matchware support website or via email. The publishers also offer technical support by telephone and fax.

Teacher Controls

There are no teacher controls built into the software.

B. Curriculum relevance

Purpose of the Program

The main purpose of the program is to allow the user to create multimedia presentations and websites.

Curriculum Relevance

In the Key Stage 3 Curriculum the main uses of the package would probably be for the creation of slideshows and the construction of websites.

The software is content free and can be successfully used with any Key Stage 3 subject that requires the pupils to produce either a multimedia slideshow or a website. The software would be useful in many Key Stage 3 subject areas, but would be especially helpful when used within the Key Stage 3 ICT Strategy. In particular, the Strategy requires students in Year 7 to create, refine and evaluate a presentation for a given purpose and audience. Pupils also have to consider appropriate use of images, sound, fonts and colour. In Year 8, students need to use web technology to design and create a virtual visit to a school. The Mediator authoring package

therefore provides a viable alternative to Microsoft software for carrying out these tasks.

Extent

Although the software can be classed as content-free, the package does contain a large number of high quality images that could be used in many different school presentations. There is also a significant number of animated GIFs that may be useful in either a slideshow or website.

C. Analysis of contents

Appropriateness

The Wizards use language and vocabulary that the majority of Key Stage 3 pupils should be able to understand. Although the templates are not specifically designed for educational use, several of them could be suitable for use by Key Stage 3 students. In particular, the slideshow template would be useful when students require a simple presentation that progresses from page to page. The computer-based training Wizard could also be useful in many subject areas, since it allows the students to set up a presentation that contains their own multiple choice or formal questions. Even the product catalogue could be adapted for school use, to allow pupils to create a slideshow containing pictures and text.

Most of the other Wizard categories simply contain electronic versions of various DTP applications, such as greeting cards, photo albums and invitations. Students would certainly enjoy using these, but they would have little Curriculum relevance.

Structure of information   *NOT REQUIRED FOR TEACHER RESOURCES*

After an initial introduction to the main features of the software, most Key Stage 3 students that have used Windows applications before should find that this program is relatively easy to use. Compared to previous versions of the software, Mediator is now simpler to operate and has the benefit of a Windows XP appearance. When the program starts the user is given a choice of creating a new presentation, opening an existing document or using the Wizard. If a new document is selected then the user is given the option to generate a standard, Flash, HTML or beginner presentation. The main commands for the software can be found in normal Windows drop-down menus or as a button on one of the toolbars.

Quality

The quality of the slideshows and websites produced by the software are excellent. In addition, it is possible to incorporate into the programs high quality images or the user's own images, sounds and videos into the final multimedia presentations.

Courseware (onscreen exercises) and activities

There are no onscreen exercises or activities supplied with the software, but the examples contained in the 'quickstart' help section could be easily followed when

students and teachers are learning how to use the program.

3. DIFFERENTIATION

The program could be used by higher ability Key Stage 2 pupils, although with respect to Curriculum relevance the package maybe more suitable for Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 students. When a new document is created, the user has choice of producing a standard, Flash, HTML or beginner presentation. The beginner document contains only the basic features available in a standard Mediator 7 presentation and limits the number of commands shown to the user. This option would be useful as a means of differentiation, enabling the software to be accessed by less able Key Stage 3 students. The use of the Wizard could also enable the less able students to produce presentations by simply substituting their own text and graphics into the software's own templates.

4. SUMMARY

Mediator 7 Pro is an excellent multimedia design package that has a simple drag and drop design environment. The program enables even the novice computer user to produce quality presentations and websites. When saving the final presentation the software allows the user to save work to a CD-ROM, floppy disk or as a screen saver. In addition, a website can be saved in HTML or Flash format and all presentations can be saved as various types of executable files. This authoring tool could be used in many Key Stage 3 subject areas that require pupils to produce either a multimedia slideshow or website, but would certainly offer schools a useful alternative to Microsoft products when working with the Key Stage 3 ICT Strategy.