

MTS - Rural Down Partnership

Company Overview

MTS is an experienced provider of training in local communities through the use of mobile, custom-built, multi-media training suites which enable IT training to be delivered in any location. The innovative delivery of this training targets individuals who would not normally be able to access training. MTS believe that by bringing training into local communities, they can create a safe, non-threatening learning environment which will help to allay fears that non traditional learners will have upon returning to study.

The Challenge

Last year, MTS was contracted to offer computer training to the farming and fishing communities in County Down. They were asked to provide the same service this year.

The Solution

MTS is again offering IC3, the Internet and Computing Core Certification Programme. The first pilot, which ran last year, resulted in 40 people from the community attending 25 weeks of courses and sitting three separate examinations. Only two were not able to sit the final examinations which gave a 97 percent completion rate.

Implementation

The popularity of the course and high completion rates so impressed the LEADER+ team that the programme has been expanded to offer 56 places this year.

MTS is now recruiting for courses in Rathfriland, Loughanisland and Grayabbey which are due to begin at the end of September 2004. The fully accredited course, which will run for 25 weeks, specifically focuses on the skills needed for individuals and small businesses to successfully operate in today's electronic society.

Results

Michael Humphreys, training manager with MTS said the decision to offer IC3 in place of other well known computer introductory courses was a gamble in 2003 but one which has paid off. "It is a well documented fact that while people will sign up for courses, it is notoriously difficult to achieve completion, especially when there are examinations involved.

"However, such is the applicability and ease of teaching of the IC3 syllabus that our delegates had no such difficulty or reluctance," says Humphreys.

Humphreys looks back over the past year with a certain pride at the results. "The average student was 50 years of age and approximately half of them had never turned on a computer. For many, the last qualification they earned would have been at school. We feel very privileged to be part of this programme, are delighted with the flexibility of the course and above all are very proud of the students."