A Virtual Meeting About Technology Trends in Education

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More than 500 participants from all over Latin America gathered last year for the Education Summit — a free online event organized by Liberty Networks to discuss the digital education transformation and challenges facing schools today.

It was a morning chock full of learning, during which eight prominent panelists from Colombia and Honduras highlighted the power of technology and the internet and how they allowed students and teachers to connect during the pandemic.

During his welcoming remarks, Mario Marciano, Director B2B Latam noted that, in addition to connecting with customers, Liberty Networks' primary objective is to keep customers updated on digital trends. Referring to the "Fourth Industrial Revolution", Mario discussed how the pandemic accelerated something that was inevitable: the digital transformation of our world, and its impact in education.

> "The Education of today is completely different than what it was only a couple years ago. It now needs to combine our goals, our skills and talents; and the challenge we face now is how to put it at the service of others and the environment, and make sure it plays a more decisive role in social construction..."
>
> - Joanna Prieto

Joanna Prieto, international Lecturer and winner of distinguished awards in five continents, kicked things off by highlighting the education sector's challenge of enabling people to develop 'future-proof' skills by noting that **"Every change is an opportunity"**.

We are living in a VUCA world: Volatile, with a lot of Uncertainty, full of Complexity and Ambiguity; where the accelerated transformation also forces us to change our inner world.

According to Joanna, the world needs to have the right talent and new skills—Top Skills or Soft Skills—that will enable people to face the new future. Problem solving, critical and analytical thinking, self-management, leadership and resilience are some of them.

Cinthya Sanchez, Consultant and Project Manager, cited in 2020 by Forbes as one of Latin America's leading minds in Digital Transformation, spoke about the importance of education in forming high-impact teams to accelerate digital transformation strategies:

> "Technology trends need to be grounded, not only in strategies, but in different education models."

According to the Gartner CIO Agenda report, education today must be adaptive and immersive, where technology should the channel bringing it all together. Within this report, cybersecurity is at the top of the list for investments made in higher education this year, followed by enterprise resource planning and business intelligence. **Change management has also a very important role to play in our educational institution's digital transformation strategy.**

Juan Diego Jimenez, from Universidad de los Andes, also participated on this session and talked about the importance of building cohesive teams and the need for diversity and inclusion to generate meaningful transformations. His experience within the Universidad de los Andes in Colombia, allowed him to experience first-hand how diversity of roles within IT teams strengthens the team and enables them to generate solutions that achieve better results.

> "A revolution does not happen when a society/ institution adopts new tools, revolution really happens when it adopts new behaviors."
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> - Juan Diego Jimenez

In the middle of the day, we had an excellent panel discussion where Dr. Marlon Brevé, Dean of the Universidad Tecnológica Centroamericana, Jose Luis Moncada, General Director of Honduras Digital Channel and Raquel Fernández, Specialist in the Education Division of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) discussed the outlook for education post COVID-19.

For UNITEC in Honduras, the pandemic accelerated a digital education process they were already implementing, forcing them to increase their bandwidth to ensure that their students could connect to the different virtual classrooms in an agile way. Along with this change, they decided to enhance their learning management platform, investing in broadcasting technology to ensure a better classroom experience for students.

The shift to virtual education has been difficult for students at all stages, but now that we are all a couple of years into it, there Is a much more pragmatic approach around virtual education. So much so that now the socio-

economic realities of countries and individuals are the key determining factor in adoption and use. For José Luis Moncada, there is already a wider educational offering, and there is a lot of emerging technology that is now facilitating these new educational models, but the real question is how will we guarantee inclusion and access for different segments of population.

"On average, Institutions had to implement 5+ new technologies/platforms to continue to operate during the pandemic."

For Raquel Fernández, when we talk about digital transformation in education, we rely on two main themes: the first, the use of technology to enhance learning; and the second, technology for management and decision-making. How do we build an educational model that meets today's needs? We must think about changing the traditional models of education and migrate to a lifelong learning model. According to the World Economic Forum's 2020 report, 50% of all employees will need to be retrained by 2025.

"Cybercriminals see students as easy targets"

- CheckPoint Data Intelligence

Juan Diego Jiménez also spoke at the summit, highlighting the risks of work and education at home. For him, the biggest risk factors are digital literacy and misinformation. There are different mechanisms to help us control these risks. Training and education of students, techas, partners and staff is fundamental to securing the school's and learner data at home. Today, clear policies on the use of electronic equipment are increasingly necessary, with regular updates and information about the risks faced by each institution in order to maintain security.

Misael Arguijo is convinced that students carried most of the burden on this pandemic-induced transformation: it is not easy to adapt and transition away from an education methodology that is more than 80 years old. Education has changed forever and human interactions are critical to student development, which is why the biggest challenge for institutions today: how to leverage technology to generate learning interactions in the virtual world.

Tulio Tercero closed the session. A success story of entrepreneurship and education with his business, Nerdy Punk. He helped us reflect on the necessary transformations in learning methodologies and how education and play must be fully integrated in order to enhance the skill development for children and adults.

It is necessary to develop a didactically effective education model that allows human beings to build the technological skills necessary to adapt quickly to this challenging digital transformation.

"The future will belong to those who learn how to learn"

- Tulio Tercero

The needs of educational centers today are as diverse as they are urgent. Our infrastructure and experience make us the right partner to carry out the project of facilitating and optimizing the experience of your educational community. Liberty Networks can provide the tools, technology and network necessary to take back, evolve and transform the education sector.