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Republika ng Pilipinas
Kagawaran ng Edukasyon
Tanggapan ng Pangalawang Kalihim

AIDE MEMOIRE
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CONTEXTUALIZING THE DAVAO DE ORO WEBINAR INCIDENT

Background

On June 17, 2020, several news outfits and other social media accounts posted photos of public school teachers seemingly camping out beside a highway in Maco, Davao de Oro to look for signal coverage so they can participate in a webinar organized by DepEd Region XI and the DepEd Central Office Information and Communications Technology Service - Educational Technology Unit (ICTS-EdTech). The photos went viral and all of media and social media networks went gaga.



LOOK: Public school teachers in Maco, Davao de Oro installed several tents along the highway in the upland areas of the town to find mobile signal for them to join in the webinars organized by DepEd as preparation for opening of classes on Aug. 24. | via Mart Sambalud, Inquirer Regions



29K

2.2K Comments 15K Shares



Ilang guro ang nag-set up ng tent sa gilid ng kalsada sa Brgy. New Leyte, Maco, Davao de Oro para makakuha ng signal at makasali sa 3 araw na webinar ng DepEd.
Kuwento ni Jeson Arias Celebre na nag-post ng litrato, ginawa nila ito dahil walang signal sa kanilang mga bahay at nasa 15 minuto ang kailangang lakarin mula sa paaralan papunta sa lugar na may signal. Chriksen Bulosan, ABS-CBN News (Photo: Jeson Arias Mangca Celebre)

See Translation



Anne Escaño Lee and 5.8K others

685 Comments 833 Shares

Inquirer: <https://www.facebook.com/inquirerdotnet/posts/10159266352939453>
ABS-CBN: <https://www.facebook.com/abscbnNEWS/posts/10158474159370168>



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The webinar was initiated by DepEd Region XI Human Resources and Development Division, through Regional Director Evelyn Fetalvero and Mr. Guinto, the Regional IT Officer.

The activity titled **“The New Normal Classroom Modality Teaching”** covers three days (June 17-19, 2020), with sessions running from 9:00AM to 12:00noon and 1:00PM to 4:00PM.

On its first day, the webinar session posted on Facebook by Mr. Guinto logged over **156,000 views**. Around **45,000 teachers** from all over Region XI participated in the webinar with many others joining via watch parties and shared over Facebook.

Scale and Consequence

The webinar, by far, is the largest DepEd online activity that has reached so many participants and viewers, beating all other webinars conducted at the national level. Such was the scale of the activity that **Kotobee and Streamyard, two online tools used during the webinar, reported server issues due to the sudden influx of users.**

Geige Vandentop, Streamyard’s co-founder got in touch directly with ICTS thru Mark Anthony Sy, EdTech Unit Head, when their server began to experience an unexpected number of users accessing from the Philippines in the morning of June 17, 2020. This was followed by Kotobee encountering technical issues in the afternoon session when about 45,000 teachers simultaneously accessed the site. Both online tools apparently reached their limit of the number of users accessing their servers at the same time.

ICTS is currently getting in touch with both developers to prevent similar issues from happening in the future, especially when classes open on August 24, 2020.

Streamyard is used by ICTS to conduct large scale trainings. Previous webinars averaged between 15,000-40,000 participants but **the limit was reached that day with 45,000 teachers attending the webinar.** Streamyard was a crucial tool that **ICTS** used when it **trained 324,486 public school teachers to respond to COVID-19 using ICT-based teaching between April and May in various**



<https://www.facebook.com/ric.guinto/videos/2936276943094090>



webinars. It is an essential tool that will be used to prepare millions of learners who will be using DepEd Commons for the incoming school year.

Kotobee is the software that ICTS uses to convert Self-Learning Modules (SLMs) into e-books. Teachers are being trained so that they can create their own e-books that are inclusive and contextualized to the local requirements of their learners. This tool is simply the “Manila paper of the future” that will empower teachers to use technology in their respective classes.

Aside from Streamyard and Kotobee, **ICTS trainings brought down another education website called WIX last 28 May 2020. WIX is an Israeli-based system that allows teachers to create Curriculum Pages or Websites, Instructional Video Materials, and Teacher Video Blogs.**

Thrilled by the influx of the huge number of users from the Philippines, WIX contacted DepEd through the Philippine Embassy in Tel Aviv to express their support to the Department’s efforts in shifting to online education. They are currently working on additional training modules and preparing to showcase the Philippines as one of the best practices in scaling online learning.

Webinar Quality

Despite the large number of participants, the quality of the webinars is ensured by requiring participants to take an online test which participants must pass before receiving certificates. The online test is taken via the recently developed **DepEd Learning Management System (LMS)**. The LMS is currently being tested to ensure that it does not break down when a large number of users will simultaneously access it. Once it is ready, it will be deployed so teachers can have a system where they can conduct online classes, collaboration activities, and online quizzes.

Region XI ICT Team is reporting widely positive responses from the field, with teachers expressing their joy and gratitude for the opportunity to learn and be able to prepare for the opening of classes.

Actions Taken

The DepEd RXI ICT Team is currently coordinating with Davao de Oro and its other Schools Division Offices (SDOs) to gather issues encountered during the webinar, both technical and logistics-wise.

ICTS through the EdTech Unit is reaching out to Kotobee, Streamyard, WIX, and other developers regarding DepEd’s situation for the incoming school year.

Significance

The magnitude of teachers who have shown their interest in learning ICT-based teaching is a testament of their commitment to learn new ways of teaching that will ensure the safety of our children. The Philippines is rapidly



shifting to adopt online education technologies **at a scale that international organizations have never seen or even anticipated.**

While the Department is ramping up the skills of its teachers, it is also moving towards orienting the millions of parents, learners, and teachers who have expressed their desire to continue learning through the DepEd Commons. It is worthy to note that, as the various websites experienced technical difficulties, **DepEd Commons with about 8,228,287 unique users as of June 17, 2020 has not encountered major server issues** since it was launched on March 15, 2020 and even at the heights of webinars with huge number of participants and remains functional and accessible for its users.

The demand for online learning is huge and it is very important that internet service providers, telecommunications companies, local government units (LGUs), and the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) work together in the spirit of Bayanihan to provide internet services and connectivity to teachers who are ready to learn and be capacitated to facilitate learning under these very trying times.

And while news and posts on social media portray DepEd as heartless and unaware of our public teachers' challenges, **these very same teachers are thankful for the opportunity to learn and equip themselves with the skills appropriate for the unique challenges posed by the New Normal. Their desire to upskill themselves and their excitement over the webinar sessions is testament of their resourcefulness and fortitude despite the lack of mobile coverage in their areas.**

All these experiences are part of the learning process the Department and each stakeholder is going through in proactive response to the New Normal.

The webinar conducted and viewed by more than a hundred thousand participants was free and voluntary. ICTS Director Abram Abanil congratulated DepEd Region XI Director Evelyn Fetalvero for the successful webinar, albeit the unprecedented number of participants brought down the websites used. RD Fetalvero responded, *"This is because our teachers really want to learn about the new teaching modalities in the new normal classroom. We can take it as a positive note how open and passionate our teachers are towards the capability-building program of the Region to prepare them for the new normal. They really exerted effort to join the virtual training as the same time observing stringent health and safety measures."*

For information and guidance.


ALAIN DEL B. PASCUA
Undersecretary




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