

Nomination paper for OÜ Teooria

The nominee

OÜ Teooria is a small company that provides an e-learning solution aimed at learner drivers. The solution enables its users to learn driving theory online and includes both digital learning materials as well as the platform for learning activities. The service can be found at www.teooria.ee.

Method and service

In general, the company offers three kinds of learning solutions to satisfy different needs of its target group.

Firstly, there is a blended learning solution which the company provides in cooperation with driving schools all over Estonia. This solution includes both the online theory course as well as the driving lessons (provided by the partnered driving schools). The learner starts by choosing a driving school where s/he will take the driving lessons. The driving school chosen also assigns a theory instructor to the learner, whom they can ask questions in the forums of Teooria.ee. The learner takes the theory course online in the learning environment of Teooria.ee. In addition, s/he also attends three face-to-face active learning lessons (3 x 90 minutes) at the driving school they chose, and take driving lessons in parallel to the theory course.

Secondly, there is a revision package for learners who are attending a driving school and taking theory lessons in the classroom only, but want to revise before the final theory test at the driving school or the national theory test. This is a fully web-based learning solution which is not tied to any driving school.

Thirdly, there is a free account for exploring the learning environment and a limited amount of open educational resources, before deciding for a paid service. Anyone can sign up for a free account and use it for unlimited period.

Each of the three solutions has a specific functionality according to the needs of their users. For example the first solution, as it is tied to a partnered driving school, consists of two separate web platforms: the instructor's platform and the learner's platform. In the instructor's environment, the instructor can monitor learner's progress, send messages to learners and answer their questions. The learner's environment is where the learner works with the materials and communicates with the instructor. The second solution and the free account do not have that functionality (as they are not tied to any driving school).

The content includes different kinds of learning material in order to provide diverse learning experience. As one of the most important senses for a driver is his/her vision, then there is a lot of emphasis on visuals (authentic photos of traffic, drawings, videos, animations). However, the main learning materials have also voiceover and subtitles. The learning materials include:

- Short e-lessons with voice-over, authentic photos of Estonian traffic and drawings
- Interactive flash cards
- Instructional videos
- 3D-animations of intersections
- Theory tests

Target group and rationale

In Estonia, it is compulsory for a learner driver to take certain number of theory lessons (either online or in the classroom) and driving lessons. The service of Teooria.ee aims to make theory lessons accessible for those people, who cannot attend theory lessons at the driving school due to work or family-related duties, geographical location (working abroad) etc. In the virtual learning environment of Teooria.ee, they can learn at

their own pace and choose the time and place for learning. All they need is a device (PC or laptop, tablet with some limitations) and internet connection.

According to a user satisfaction survey OÜ Teooria conducted in 2013, the largest user group of Teooria.ee are young working people in the age of 24 – 29. This might be due to the fact that the cost of driver training is relatively high and many young people are not able to afford it before they have their own jobs. Despite the high cost, driving license remains a desirable asset, as it provides increased mobility and opens up new possibilities (greater freedom to choose work and leisure activities). However, besides working people in their mid-twenties, the service is used also among younger people (university students and high school graduates) and to some extent, among people in their thirties and above.

Results and evaluation

In four years (from 2010 when the site was launched up to September 2014) around 3700 young people have used the blended learning solution of Teooria.ee to get their category B driving license. However, with the users of revision package and free accounts, the overall number of users is much higher, with around 26 000 accounts registered during the four years when the service has been up.

The survey that the company conducted in 2013 was taken by 751 users. The users were sent slightly different surveys depending on whether they used blended solution (offered with the partnered driving schools), revision package or free account. The average rating to the learning materials ranged from 7,8 – 9,2 points on the 10-point scale. The average rating to the user experience and functionality ranged from 8,4 to 9,2 on the 10-point scale.

To maintain high rates of user satisfaction, OÜ Teooria makes constant improvements to the functionality and content of its learning solution based on the users' feedback.

The concept of online driver training is transferable to other Baltic and Nordic countries. Similar network of a web-based theory course provider and driving schools can be built in other countries as well. Such network would open up new opportunities both for driving schools as well as the learners. Taken into account that the driver training legislation is becoming more liberal in several European countries, then the learner drivers will and should have more freedom to choose how to acquire skills and knowledge required of the future driver. The end-result would be more accessible driver training.