



The Teach.com.au team, Adam Brimo centre

LEARNING

# Teach.com.au gives you CPD on demand

*ET staff* on a way to do CPD without leaving your desk

**C**PD, for something that is a requirement if you are to be a teacher, is surprisingly open ended, 20 hours of it must be completed each year but many of the blanks are left for the teacher to fill in.

There is a plethora of material available around the area, some of it great, some not so and with that in mind there's plenty of opportunity for time and money to be expended for little return.

And the ecology of events, activities and short courses that have sprung up to meet demand add to an at times bewildering CPD landscape which is compounded by some pretty loose definitions of what CPD can be; 'reading', whatever that means, is listed as an option.

So, some consolidation looked to be in order, which seemed an opportunity for Adam Brimo and his team, resulting in the creation of Teach.com.au.

"Teach.com.au is designed to fill a gap

in the teacher professional development market. At the moment there are a lot of options out there for teachers to do training on their own," Brimo says.

"There are a couple of considerations, one is, depending on where teachers are located, some of those hours of CPD have to be accredited either by NESAs, their school or district, so many options are available but not all are accredited.

"Many of the teacher training programs are still face-to-face, so what we're seeing is that teachers are looking for more and more structured online courses rather than a collection of material.

"There's a lot of material – a lot of guides and teacher resources but well-designed structured learning with defined learning outcomes aligned to the standards is something that we do see a gap in the market for."

Brimo and his co-developers have history in the area; he is the founder and CEO of OpenLearning, the MOOC

platform which has been winning users across the Asia Pacific, particularly in Australia and Malaysia, and had 1.5 million people accessing the service at last count.

At the core of that business is the site, rock solid by dint of its skilled developers based in Sydney, supporting millions of logins for globally distributed MOOCs with new content, users and partners arriving at a steady clip.

The Australian Government deployed the first government MOOC through OpenLearning to all State and Federal public servants and the Malaysian Ministry for Higher Education selected it as its National MOOC platform for its 20 public universities.

The platform's success reflects the pivot from multi-year degrees and diplomas towards a single subject format which lets universities access a new marketplace for their subjects and gives users the opportunity to upskill flexibly.

Lessons learned through the launch of

OpenLearning have been leveraged into this newer resource.

“The model for Teach.com.au is quite unique. Most online courses, particularly in teacher training, are sold on a per course basis which means you see a course you like and you pay the fee to take the course.

“Teach.com.au is an all you can eat subscription model like Netflix or Spotify, you just sign up, pay \$190 a year (yearly pricing makes more sense for teacher CPD as 20 hours of CPD is required per year) and you can take as many of the courses as you want, as many times as you want,” he says.

“OpenLearning is a learning platform and it has been around for about six years, and in that time we have worked with over 70 educational institutions and half a dozen teacher training providers, so we already had a lot of teachers coming onto OpenLearning either building and launching courses or taking courses.

“We noticed gaps in the market and our learning designers, who usually have

a background in teaching in primary and secondary school in addition to subject expertise in higher education, are well qualified to design or enhance online teacher training courses,” Brimo says.

“We’ve also included courses from some of our partners, for example UNSW Sydney has curriculum focused mathematics courses for teachers.”

The courses the Teach.com.au team developed are aligned to educational philosophy and strategies for use in the classroom and the uptake has been strong; there are courses on supporting student participation, setting clear expectations, managing student behaviour, helping students build the right mindset.

“Our goal is to get many teachers involved in Teach.com.au and add more content providers and teacher training organisations. We’re not looking to build all of the courses ourselves, at the moment we have 24 courses available but

we’re looking to on board more teacher training providers so they can sell more of their teacher training courses through this channel.

**The platform’s** success reflects the pivot from multi-year degrees and diplomas towards a **single subject format**

“We have tens of thousands of teachers on OpenLearning as a whole and a number have signed up for Teach.com.au.

“The idea of the courses is that they are 1–4 CPD hours and teachers can take the course any time, but the activities are quite collaborative and community based so they’ll be sharing ideas and resources and feedback with other teachers in the course.

“Courses are designed to be active, engaging and constructive, leading to a rich community of practice for teachers. This approach requires a small number of highly skilled facilitators to curate the community rather than tutors or subject matter experts as you might have in a traditional course,” Brimo says.



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