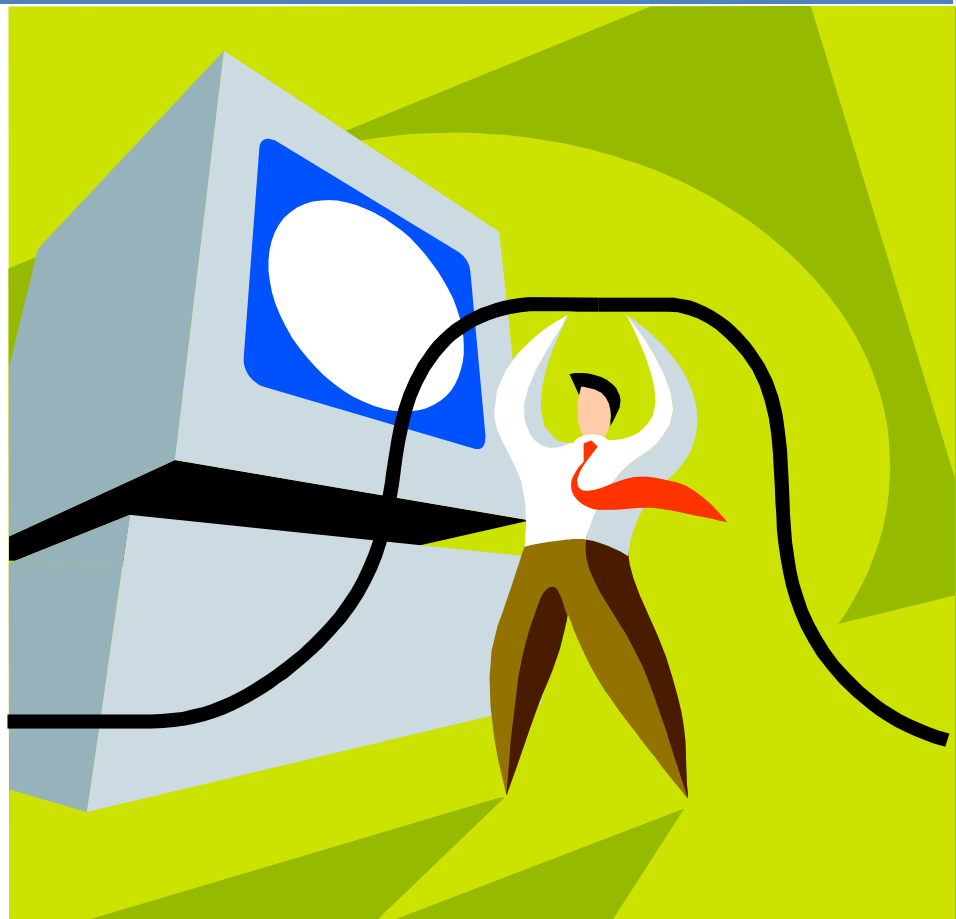


2012

Tech Fair Report



TESL Ontario Conference

11/8/2012

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Layout

For the last 5 years the conference was held at the Sheraton Centre, downtown Toronto. Technology Fair 2012 was located in the Essex Ballroom for the lab and Windsor room for presentation. As in previous year, the conference Event Manager took over all aspects of

rentals and recruitment of technical support. She rented 54 laptops (equipped with wireless network cards) from D.E. Systems who have been our partners since 2010. All other AV needs including data projectors and screens were rented



from AV Canada who -similar to D.E. Systems- became a reliable TESL Ontario Conference partner. A sophisticated image and sound system was setup in the grand ballroom (for plenary and dinner) to ensure that the audience can see and hear the speakers at all times.

This year, Eduard and Angel from D.E. Systems provided the onsite support of the Tech Fair. AV Canada provided technicians to oversee the overall conference needs and to ensure that glitches were dealt with promptly and did not interfere with the presentations.



The wireless lab was setup in early afternoon on Wednesday November 7th along with the latest application software packages to offer hands-on sessions at the conference using wireless technology. A total of 50 laptops were setup along with headsets, a data projector, routers, and cords for setting up the wireless lab.

The presentation room which was equipped with a laptop, data projector and Internet connection offered demonstration style presentations and workshops. As in previous years, laptops and data projectors were provided for the symposia sessions, Panel presentation and the plenary sessions and other sessions as per presenter request.

To ensure security, the laptops were all equipped with locks. The hotel issued access cards to Tech Fair staff for the duration of the conference. Even the cleaning crew were not admitted to this room until Saturday afternoon. A water station was setup outside the room.

Vendors

D.E. Systems and AV Canada –who have been capably providing support for our events since 2010 provided us with the equipment and services for the TESL Ontario Conference 2011.

Pre-Conference meeting with hotel staff

On October 24th, 2012, we attended a pre-conference meeting with all the stakeholders on location to provide opportunity for all to discuss issues, ask questions and get to know one another. Sheraton ensured that the infrastructure upgrades they have undergone will adequately address the connectivity issues.

Wednesday November 7, 2012

The Essex Ballroom was made available for setup as of 12 pm. The vendor was contracted to setup the laptops and the technicians tested the connectivity, the links, speed, and uploaded presentations. When I arrived, the room was setup except for the presentation screens. This year, AV Canada setup two screens later that evening to better facilitate the visuals.

Conference days: in general, the operations went smoothly. Hands-on and presentation style sessions were well attended. The communication channels that had been set up between the Tech Fair team, the conference planner, and the hotel worked smoothly. The technicians checked the equipment daily at the beginning of the day and attended to glitches promptly.

Type and Variety of Workshops

The participants enjoyed a wide range of workshops and a high calibre of presentations and had access to a myriad of sessions: hands-on workshops as well as research sessions on wireless and Web 2.0 technologies. The Technology Fair sessions were fully booked during the 3-day event.





Tech Fair Evaluation

A link to the conference evaluation page was sent to all delegates early November. The evaluation summary results will be sent by the conference planning team.

Volunteers

A considerable number of volunteers came from the TCDSB's ELT and TESL training programs. In general, the volunteers were exceptionally helpful with door monitoring and reporting technical problems to the technician.

Conclusion

In general everything went smoothly. All minor glitches that came up were promptly dealt with by Eduard and Angel. Once again, our technicians proved to be invaluable to the Tech Fair. AV Canada provided technical assistance for all other sessions. As always, there was ongoing demand from other conference presenters for assistance, software upload, etc. This was a complimentary service for those presenters who had not requested this service at the time they had put their applications in. Yet our technicians were able to accommodate all requests.

All in all, I feel that the Fair was very successful. The connectivity speed was adequate. The lab setup was impressive. A number of presenters expressed gratitude after their presentations went smoothly. The participants enjoyed the range of software and workshops available to them.

The success of the fair was due to the quality of equipment and dependency on knowledgeable and professional individuals who made this event a success. The setup on Wednesday afternoon indicated that the system was reliable and backup plans in place confirmed the experience and knowledge of the setup team. As in last year, Stefanie Wolf did a fabulous job of setting up the Technology Fair.