DigiEduHack Solution
Aalto Main Event - How make kids read again
Challenge: "Once upon a time there was a nation that stopped reading. The end." vs. And they read happily ever after

CS Literacy for Dummies

Computer Science Literacy for Dummies

A low-threshold, easy-to-use online course about what coding is, not how to code. The course can be accessed anywhere, and if successful it could become an educational export.

Team: CS Literacy

Team members

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Members roles and background

Janne M. Salo, team member

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B.A. Design, Aalto University

B.A. History of Art, distinction, Yale University

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Solution Details

Solution description

A low-threshold, easy-to-use online course provided by FITech. A course that teaches about CS (i.e. not how to code, but what is coding). The course can be accessed anywhere, and if successful it could become an educational export by FITech.

The course shows: inspiring stories of CS applications, what kind of data is used in CS projects, and how project time lines work in coding related projects.

The goal is to understand how coding works, and how it could benefit you and your field. You do not need to code, but understand it.

—>Metaphor: The course teaches you HOW to listen to music. Not, how to compose it. Think about a movie director. She has to know about types of music and their emotional impact. While she does not need to know how to compose them, she has to be able to communicate with the film music composer. To express her wishes for the style, the mood, etc. The director and the composer have to share some mutual language to make the project shine.

Solution context

Instead of teaching how to code, most people need to only know what coding is. Our online course helps people to see the big picture of CS and to learn about its implications.

Today, teams in businesses need to understand what coding is, while they do not need to code themselves.

There are 230 million *knowledge workers in the world (McKinsey & Company), but only 18.5 million are programmers (IDC).*

Solution target group

Higher education students, recent graduates, employed people.

People involved in knowledge work who do not need to code, but need to operate in teams that involve coding/CS. According to McKinsey & Company, there are 230 million people in this field.

Solution impact

Measurement of success: How many individuals complete the course.

- Increased CS literacy.
- Use of existing platform (FITech)
- Curated content
- University credits
- Paradigm shift of how we teach coding to people who do not need to code. Today, we teach about "what coding is" by making these people take an elementary level coding course. This is problematic since these people do not need to become coders, they only have to understand what it is. More strategic approach is needed in the future: teaching what coding is. This requires a new type of a course.

Solution tweet text

What is coding? Learn to know, not to code. #CSliteracy #92%ofKnowledgeWorkers

Solution innovativeness

Paradigm shift from teaching how to code to WHAT CODING IS. Currently, CS-related courses (online and in contact) deal with coding basics, instead of focusing on explaining its uses and implications.

Solution transferability

The course can be used by anyone who does not need to become a coder. It can become an educational export across the EU, and the world.

Solution sustainability

Short term: in contact course to figure out what content is useful for non-coders. What makes them tickle. (spring 2020)

Mid-term: online course (scalability, low threshold) (fall 2020)

Long-term: the app/online course becomes an educational export (2021 & beyond)

Solution team work

Amazingly well. Yes! And we will. :)