



PORIRUA DIGITAL CITY

A CITY OF WELL CONNECTED COMMUNITIES



DIGITAL PORIRUA TRUST

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The Digital Porirua Trust has been set up by Porirua City Council, with support from the Porirua business community, to provide a supportive environment for people to explore and learn about Information Communications and Technology (ICT).

The Digital Porirua Trust has established a network of community learning environments in church halls, marae, community centres and schools within the community.

These form part of the wider Digital Porirua project that recognises the important part technology plays in joining our communities, helping people work together, increasing business productivity and helping individuals reach their aspirations.

The growth of the community learning environments has been made possible by a \$400,000USD Education Grant from Hewlett-Packard, along with support from Microsoft and the Department of Internal Affairs.

COMMUNITY ACCESS POINTS

A number of Community Access Points (CAPs), consisting of computers, servers and printers, have been established at community sites around Porirua, with more planned over the next two years.

Programmes have been established at the sites using the technology, and today people from across the broader Porirua community are exploring new digital technology in an environment where they feel comfortable – at little or no cost.

The goals are:

- To assist with the learning and development of individuals in using technology, and
- To provide after school and homework facilities, as well as school holiday programmes and activities.

SCHOOL NETPODS

Local schools also form an important part of the network with eight primary schools having received clusters of four to eight computers, called netpods, offering students and teachers access to the latest technology and new learning possibilities.

WWW.OURPORIRUA.COM

www.ourporirua.com is a community website which has been developed for local clubs, businesses and special interest groups to create and manage their own web presence.

Porirua City is home to people from all over the world and www.ourporirua.com enables the community groups to develop websites that reflect their culture and their unique place within the broader Porirua community, and to do so in their native language.

For more information please visit www.ourporirua.com.



MANA EDUCATION CENTRE

Mana Education Centre was established in 2006 as a charitable community trust. In this time the centre has grown into an established and well-known safe learning environment for everyone in the community. It offers a variety of courses, from basic writing skills and mathematics for school age children to leadership and management courses for local businesses.

Mana Education Centre is one of only a handful of centres around the country that offer such a wide variety of courses and resources. Each year the centre has grown in popularity with approximately 5000 people using the facilities or attending a course there in 2008.

The centre's team currently includes four full time teachers and one part timer.

"The centre is heavily dependent on computers as a learning resource, from our classrooms to seminar rooms. Up until recently we were using aging computers and never quite knew whether they would work or not when we turned them on," says Christine Bruce, Retail Manager for Mana Education Centre.

"The grant from Hewlett-Packard and support from the Digital Porirua Trust has offered us a safe and reliable network, high quality technology to use in courses and made our office more productive than we could have imagined. It's important to us that we can offer the best for our community and now we can."

Mana Education Centre received 30 new HP computers. The centre has plans to expand and already has seen an influx of people through its doors. Teachers, parents, care-givers and other members of the community will all benefit from the Hewlett-Packard grant.



HONGOEKA MARAE

The Hongoeka Marae is located near Plimmerton, five minutes from Porirua's central business district. There are over 20 families currently living on the Marae which is the Marae for a large number of Porirua Maori. The Marae owns and operates a local paua farm.

In 2008 a community access point was established on the Marae to create an area for members of all ages to learn about computers. People from the Hongoeka Marae gather every Monday to learn how to use Microsoft Office software programmes, internet explorer and email, and develop their digital media skills.

People from all backgrounds and experience levels participate in the courses which started with covering the basics, from turning on a computer and opening a word document, to more sophisticated technology including Web 2.0 applications such as Google Earth and photo editing software.

Lucy Richmond lives on Hongoeka Marae and has benefited from having the courses so close to home and constant access to the technology.

"It's so handy having the courses on the Marae, and I like learning in an environment I feel comfortable in and mixing with my family while I do," says Lucy.

"Over the past two years I've had the opportunity to develop my word processing skills and I believe the skills I have developed have helped broaden my opportunities in the workplace."



PORIRUA GOSPEL CHAPEL

Porirua Gospel Chapel was one of the first churches built in Cannon's Creek, Porirua East. It was established 45 years ago, around the same time the government began developing state housing in the area.

The chapel has a long history of running a variety of programmes targeted at youth, including after school and school holiday programmes. In earlier years it was so popular they had to shut the doors and turn children away.

“Despite changes in the make up of the families living in the area in recent years, the youth activity programme still provides a vital community service to over 30 local families each week,” says Brian McGettigan, Youth Programme Manager.

“We help the children who are not accepted into regular after school programmes, often as a result of behavioural issues.”

Over the years the chapel has developed into a multi-cultural learning environment where local community, immigrants and refugees can come to. The church leaders have recognised for a number of years the important role technology could play in learning within their community. They encouraged a young local man, Don Campbell to find old computers and fix them, and then loan them to local families – at its peak the programme managed 300 computers.

“We received part of the Hewlett-Packard grant that comprised 30 new computers, two servers and two printers. The new computers have allowed us to apply technology to learning in a number of fun new ways and has generated new excitement within the community,” says Brian.

In 2009, Porirua Gospel Chapel will use one of the new computers to create a community radio station that will broadcast to 800 homes in the area. Children will be able to enter the playlists and upload their own music.



THE GOLDEN GIRLS

Val Moriarty, Val Dorgan and Elizabeth Foster are three charismatic 80+ year olds who enjoy spending time at the Porirua RSA. Val Moriarty first heard that computer courses were available there during a visit and soon shared the information with her friends.

Each golden girl had a slightly different reason for wanting to learn how to use a computer but all three had one thing in common – they wanted to learn how to keep in touch with friends and family.

“I wanted to learn how to email so I could stay in touch with my daughter who works in Saudi Arabia. I soon found it was a great way to communicate with other members of my family and friends living throughout New Zealand,” says Val Moriarty.

Elizabeth Foster decided to join the course because she wanted to keep up with modern technology and keep her brain active.

“At first I was very nervous, but now I have developed more confidence and I enjoy my time at the centre learning what you can do with technology along with my friends,” says Elizabeth.

One of the challenges all three ladies faced during the course was the ability to retain information.

“When you get to a certain age your brain starts to work differently, so it’s good to be able to experiment with the technology in a place like the RSA where I am comfortable and can come and go at my own pace,” says Val Moriarty.

“There is no end to the information available online and I plan to keep on learning for some time,” she says.

PORIRUA CITY COMMUNITY IT EDUCATIONAL TRUST E-LEARNING PORIRUA

TRUST OBJECTIVES

- Improve literacy and attainment levels for children and parents
- Give greater ability for participants to obtain employment
- Result in reduced unemployment in our City
- Create Internet access to each home in Porirua City

APPLICATION CRITERIA

Applicants must:

- Not already have a computer in their home (or not know how to operate it)
- Not already have a job (unless it is a part-time and/or low paid job and the applicant cannot already operate a computer)
- Have school-age children, or are responsible for caring for a school-age child
- Live in Porirua City

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