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#SMEsGoDigital

P.R.2: Development of the #SMEsGoDigital tool

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Executive Summary

Recent research, supported by international institutions like OECD and EU, underscores the necessity of a Tech Hub for SMEs, especially micro and self-employed individuals, to facilitate their digital transformation journey. These entities are crucial for the competitiveness and growth of micro, small, and medium enterprises. The #SMEsGoDigital Tech Hub aims to provide access to resources, guidance, and orientation for digitalization. It caters to progressive SMEs, offering advanced solutions and support to leverage technologies effectively. The ongoing development process involves creating an online portal with functionalities from previous phases, including a digital readiness self-assessment questionnaire and micro-learning experiences. This micro-learning approach, tailored for SMEs, focuses on short, targeted learning units suited to their context and needs. The target groups encompass all micro, SMEs, self-employed individuals, and stakeholders impacted by the project's innovations. Key objectives include raising awareness, providing guidance on digital solutions, building digital capabilities, and aggregating resources in one accessible platform. The project's transferability potential lies in its tech-based solutions and innovative micro-learning approach, with applications extending to continuous professional development in various sectors.

IMEGSEVE leads this PR, divided into three tasks with assigned workplans for researchers and technical staff. Sub-contracting was necessary to supplement internal capacity with external expertise, ensuring the highest project quality. Tasks involve developing the #SMEsGoDigital tool, including:

Task 1: Developing the online portal, led by IME GSEVEE, with input from all partners. Based on PR1 findings, the platform integrates stakeholder functionalities within budget constraints, progressing to an operational portal for pilot testing.

Task 2: Creating a supportive orientation program, led by PIMEC, involves developing primary and secondary content aligned with sector-specific roadmaps outlined in PR1. This includes step-by-step guides for digital solutions adoption, integrating a self-assessment questionnaire into the platform for user guidance.

Task 3: ENAIP leads the development of a digital skills and awareness e-course, building upon micro-learning experiences designed in PR1. Content includes awareness on digital scaling opportunities, addressing both "know-what" and "know-why" aspects before delving into "know-how". Additionally, it incorporates partners' past projects and available training programs to enhance digital skills.

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PR2: Development of the #SMEsGoDigital Tool

The need for the development of a Tech hub for SMEs focusing on micro and self-employed to access the best resources, guidance and orientation through their journey towards digital transformation has been evidenced in recent research not only by the consortium social partners representing micro, SMEs and self-employed but by international institutions such as OECD and EU, the latter setting digital transformation as top & urgent priority for the new green & digital EU. This support is especially important for micro-ones which research show they are lagging behind larger companies to integrate digitalisation.

The project's target groups are the micro, small and medium companies' manpower, management and employees, and self-employed who need a dedicated hub with resources to build their awareness and capacity for the potential competitiveness and growth their digitalisation will serve. For progressive SMEs seeking to transform their business with sophisticated technologies, the developed #SMEsGoDigital Tech Hub will guide them on the advanced solutions and changes to help them take full advantage of the technologies and build their digital capabilities.

The process of the #SMEsGoDigital tool development involves the development of its components as identified during the design process of the tool in PR1.

IME GSEVEE as the PR2 leader facilitated the process with assignments of the tasks for the separate components to the task leaders' partners according to their expertise as described below in the task allocation description. During this PR the online portal was created which consists of the designed functionalities from PR1, the 3-level steps to go digital roadmaps with the digital readiness self-assessment questionnaire based on their designed benchmarks and criteria as mapped during the previous result. The micro-learning experiences for building skills' capacity and awareness e-course are incorporated together with relevant past projects delivered by the consortium as necessary resources for stakeholders. The micro-learning approach, a core innovation of this project, is based on a preliminary framework of micro-learning dimensions that fit perfectly the situational context of SMEs manpower.

Task 1:Development of the #SMEsGoDigital online portal based on the need analysis findings: *The Online Platform's Functionalities*

The #SMEsGoDigital Online Platform aims to assist small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in navigating their digital transformation journey. Leveraging the Drupal Content Management System (CMS) for backend development, the project incorporates a wide array of features and functionalities to cater to the diverse needs of SMEs seeking digitalization support.

In response to the evolving landscape of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and the imperative for digital adaptation, the #SMEsGoDigital online portal emerges as a beacon of support and guidance. This platform stands as a testament to the collaborative efforts under the Erasmus+ project, leveraging comprehensive need analysis findings to design a robust ecosystem tailored to SMEs embarking on their digital transformation journey. The functionalities encapsulated within this portal not only serve as a repository of knowledge but also as a dynamic space for interaction, empowerment, and continuous growth.

The target group to which this online platform is addressed, are micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, including the human resources (employees, executives, management, etc.), but also self-employed/freelancers, etc., who wish to digitally transform their businesses.

As it has emerged from the initial study, the specific target group needs a dedicated hub, through which all the necessary information, directions and support services will be made available to them, in order to build the appropriate background (awareness & capacity) for potential competitiveness and digital transformation opportunities. Among others, the online platform will:

• Enable the SMEs to identify their level of readiness for digital transformation, through an appropriate assessment tool.

• Offer information and directions for SMEs regarding the steps they should follow to carry out their digital transformation.

• Offer a collection of services (specialized, personalized, depending on the needs of each business), which the SMEs can either use through the platform or through third parties, where they will be directed automatically through the platform (recommendations).

• Connect with micro-learning experiences available either through an appropriate learning management system or through third parties (recommendations).

The design of the digital tool should follow the principles of Responsive Web Design, so that it is configured according to the user's screen, while it is also Mobile Friendly, accessible from any mobile device.

The basic aim of the online platform is to create an easy navigation through the content, an understandable depiction of the steps/levels of the digital transformation and a dynamic presentation of recommendations to the user/business, depending on their profile and readiness for digital transformation (based on the result obtained from the evaluation tool).

Finally, the integration between the online platform, the learning management system through which the micro-learning experiences are developed and the digital readiness assessment tool is clearly visible, directly available and accessible to the user/business.

Website Features:

- ✓ Information Hub: The #SMEsGoDigital website serves as a central repository of information, offering valuable insights and resources on digital transformation tailored to SMEs.
- ✓ Self-Assessment Test: Developed on the *LimeSurvey* platform, the assessment tool enables users to evaluate their digital competency across multiple domains, available in five languages (English, Italian, Spanish, Catalan, and Greek).
- ✓ Roadmap Generation: Personalized roadmaps are generated based on assessment results, guiding users through their digital transformation journey with recommendations tailored to their proficiency level.
- ✓ Training Modules: The website hosts 18 training modules categorized into Basic, Standard, and Advanced levels, delivering comprehensive knowledge and practical insights on digitalization topics. Training materials include articles, videos, podcasts, and other resources curated to enhance users' digital proficiency systematically
- ✓ Mentoring Sessions: This service provides mentoring sessions to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) aiming to facilitate their digital transformation. Experienced digital consultants offer personalized guidance tailored to each SME's specific needs and challenges. Mentors are selected based on expertise in digital technologies, professional registration, online presence, consulting experience, and willingness to offer free initial consultations. SMEs can schedule virtual sessions with mentors via an online platform (www.calendly.com) to receive actionable recommendations and kick-start their digital journey.

- ✓ RSS Feeds Integration: Drupal Backend: The Drupal CMS facilitates seamless integration of RSS feeds sourced from European Union websites, providing users with up-to-date information relevant to digital transformation initiatives.

Methodology of online's platform development:

The consortium of the #SMEsGoDigital project has completed the first phase for the design of the platform including: (a) the literature review, (b) the SMEs needs analysis (focus group with stakeholders) and (c) best practices recognition concerning relevant online platforms at an international level. The conclusions of this phase have led to the description of the basic features of the platform in terms of its functionalities, user interface and content.

Based on these guidelines and best practices, in collaboration with the project team, the design phase was completed with the preparation of mock-ups, which capture the platform's philosophy. Then, the implementation of the online platform followed in parts, for its smooth evolution and monitoring of the process, in accordance with the requests of the #SMEsGoDigital project consortium.

Initiation Phase:

In the initiation phase, we set clear project objectives, defining the scope and success criteria in alignment with the overarching goals of the #SMEsGoDigital initiative. Understanding the importance of stakeholder engagement, we conducted thorough feasibility studies and stakeholder analysis to ensure that our project is both viable and relevant to the needs of the SME community. By establishing a solid foundation at the outset, we laid the groundwork for a successful development journey.

Planning Phase:

With a solid understanding of our project's objectives and stakeholder expectations, we moved into the planning phase. Here, we developed a comprehensive project management plan that outlined the tasks, milestones, resource allocation, and budgeting requirements. Recognizing the significance of a user-friendly interface and robust backend infrastructure, we meticulously defined specifications for website features and backend development, opting for the flexibility and scalability offered by the Drupal CMS.

Execution Phase:

Execution marked the implementation stage of our development journey. Collaborating closely with development teams, we worked diligently to bring our vision to life, ensuring the seamless integration of

LimeSurvey and Moodle platforms to enhance the platform's functionality and usability. Emphasizing user-centric design principles, we conducted a pilot period to solicit feedback from stakeholders, engaging users in testing and validation processes to refine and optimize website features iteratively.

Monitoring & Control:

Monitoring and control were critical aspects of our development methodology, ensuring that the project remained on track and within budget. Implementing robust monitoring mechanisms, we tracked project progress, budget adherence, and quality assurance metrics closely. By identifying and addressing deviations promptly, we utilized change management processes to maintain project alignment, fostering agility and responsiveness throughout the development lifecycle.

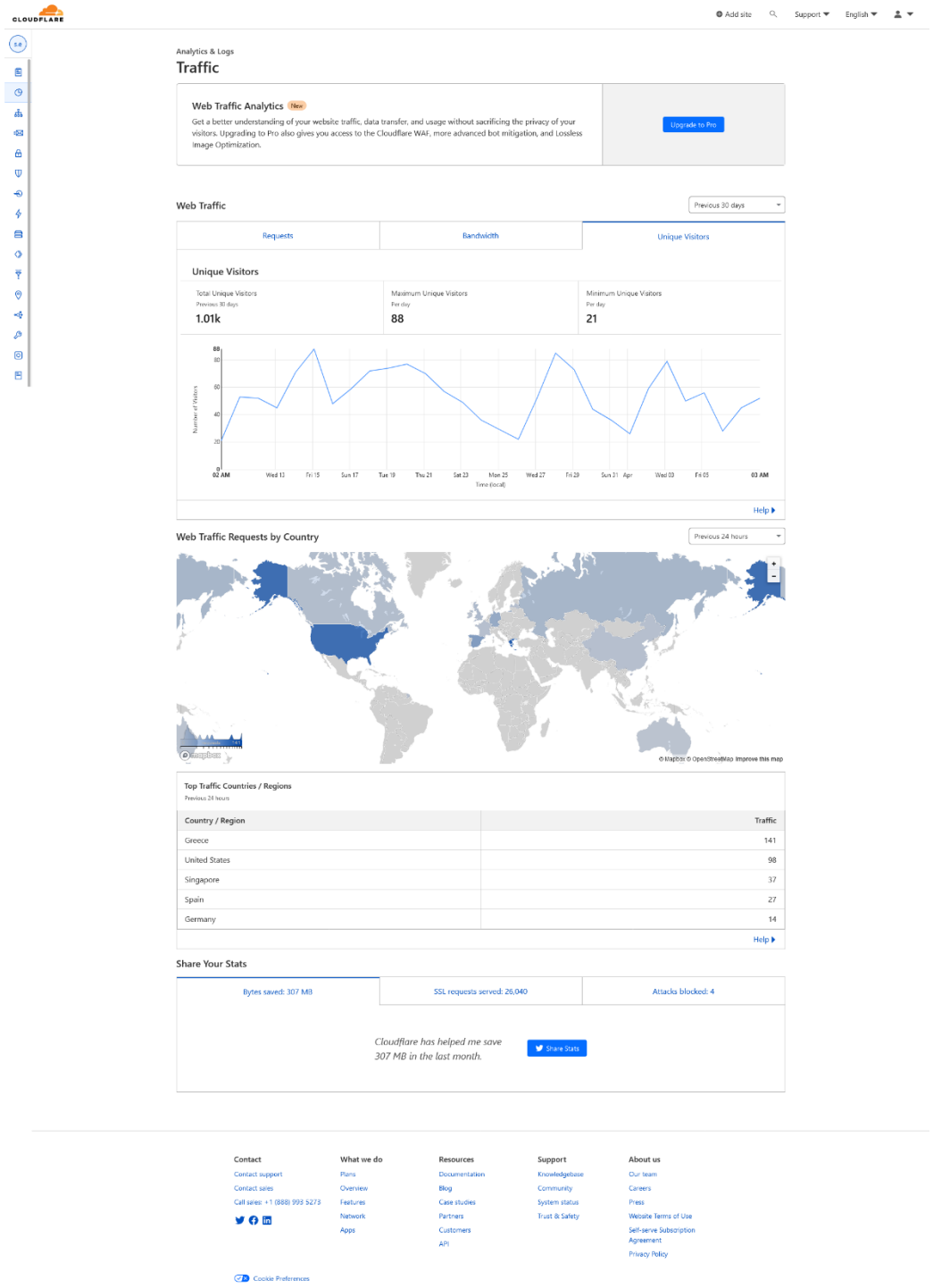
Closure Phase:

As we reached the culmination of our development journey, we conducted a comprehensive review of project outcomes to evaluate alignment with stakeholder expectations under the #SMEsGoDigital initiative. Documenting lessons learned and best practices gleaned from the pilot period, we aimed to inform future enhancements and initiatives, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and innovation in support of SME digital transformation efforts.

In summary, this methodology embodies a systematic and iterative approach to the development of an online platform for SME digital transformation under the #SMEsGoDigital initiative. By leveraging stakeholder engagement, robust planning, agile execution, diligent monitoring, and reflective closure practices, we strive to empower SMEs with the tools and resources they need to thrive in an increasingly digital world.

Online Platform's Analytics

With a total of 82 registered users, our platform continues to attract a growing community. Over the past thirty days, we've witnessed an impressive surge in traffic, with over 1,000 unique visitors engaging with our content. These analytics offer valuable insights into the reach and impact of our online presence, guiding our strategies for future growth and engagement.



Task 2: Development of the supportive orientation program

In accordance with our approved proposal, a supportive & orientation program was developed structured into three levels: Basic, Standard, and Advanced, recognizing the differing resource needs at each stage. Concurrently, three-level roadmaps were crafted from a cross-sectoral perspective, drawing insights from literature reviews and best-practice research. The methodology for this development followed a scaffolding strategy, utilizing desk research and focus groups with expert stakeholders both within and outside the consortium. Our project's collaborative virtual workspace, alongside cloud-based sharing documents on Google Drive, fostered consortium cooperation and facilitated the exchange of expertise. Through this iterative process, we constructed the Digital Transformation (DT) roadmaps systematically, building upon each step to ensure comprehensive guidance for SMEs.

More specific, PIMEC lead this task assigning to the consortium researchers and technical staff to develop the primary & secondary content of the supportive orientation program.

The supportive orientation program followed the segregation of the new emerging sector landscape as traced in PR1, Task 2, where digital technology can significantly improve productivity, developing the primary content of the cross-sectorial roadmaps, an easy-to-use, step-by-step guide on the digital solutions for stakeholders to adopt at each stage of growth so as to make going digital simple for micro & SMEs.

Furthermore, the self-assessment questionnaire, as designed in PR1, was developed and integrated into the e-platform to help target users detect which stage they are at on their digitalization journey, how digital-ready their business is & the steps to take further their digital technologies to use through the developed roadmaps. The support programme as well provides expert advice and mentoring opportunities in 1-to-1 sessions.

Thus, the development of the supportive orientation program was divided into two sub-tasks, in accordance with the respective outputs:

1) Development of the self-assessment questionnaire

2) Development of the roadmaps

Development of the self-assessment questionnaire

The final development of the questionnaire has been structured based on the agreed sections. Initially, an introductory section prompts businesses to provide information about their characteristics, such as the number of workers, operating sector, turnover, and years of existence. Following this, there is a segment focusing on digital culture, assessing the knowledge and implementation of new technologies within the business. Another section evaluates the level of digital competencies among workers. Subsequently, questions delve into the technology utilized in the selling of products or services, including online selling platforms. The questionnaire proceeds to inquire about digital marketing strategies, online presence, and social media utilization. Additionally, businesses are queried about the technologies employed for internal operations management, encompassing integrated solutions like Customer Relationship Management (CRM), teamwork tools such as Zoom or Teams, and cloud systems. Finally, the questionnaire concludes with inquiries regarding data orientation and analytics, covering advanced analysis tools and decision-making processes. Throughout the questionnaire, a concise explanation accompanies each section, elucidating the focus of the questions and their implications. Visual aids indicating the current section, the number of questions, and the subsequent sections with their respective question counts are included to enhance user experience. As the questionnaire was developed, minor adjustments to the number of sections may have been made, in accordance with the partnership's agreement to ensure alignment with the survey's objectives. Additionally, definitions of concepts such as Digitalization and Digital Transformation have been integrated into the questionnaire, providing clarity for respondents.

As a result, developed on the LimeSurvey platform, the assessment tool enables users to evaluate their digital competency across multiple domains, available in five languages (English, Italian, Spanish, Catalan, and Greek).

In the table bellow you can see the final questionnaire combined with the algorithm:

Introduction
Digital Culture
Individuals
Digital Implementation
Digital support
Product/Services
Data orientation
Assessment

Introduction

In this section you are going to be asked about your business.

Name of the company
(open question)

Email of the contact person
(open question)

Which of the following sectors does your company belong to? Please select the sector that best represents your company from the options below. If none of the options accurately describe your company's sector, please choose "Other" and provide a brief description in the next question.
a) Agriculture; plantations, other rural sectors b) Basic Metal Production c) Chemical industries d) Commerce e) Construction f) Education g) Financial services; professional services h) Food; drink, tobacco i) Forestry; wood, pulp, paper j) Health services

k) Hotels; tourism, catering
l) Mining (coal, others…)
m) Mechanical and electrical engineering
n) Media; culture, graphical
o) Oil and gas production, oil refining
p) Postal and telecommunications services
q) Public service
r) Shipping; ports, fisheries, inland waterways
s) Textiles; clothing, leather, footwear
t) Transport (including civil aviation; railways, and road transport)
u) Transport equipment manufacturing
v) Utilities (water, gas, electricity)
w) Other

How many years has your company been operating?

a) 1 year
b) Last 5 years
c) Between 5 and 10 years
d) More than 10 years

What is the size of your workforce/staff?

a) Self-employed
b) Less than 3 workers
c) Between 3 and 9 workers
d) Between 10 and 49 workers
e) Between 50 workers and 249 workers

Digital Culture

In this section, you are going to be asked about the implications and impact of digital media on your business.

Does the company's management believe in and support technology as a leverage for growth/competitiveness?

- Yes, they have invested significantly in establishing a robust online presence, with a well-designed website, active social media profiles, and e-commerce capabilities. (BASIC)

- Yes, the company's management fully embraces technology, leveraging digital strategies and user-focused experiences to turn their online presence into a profitable asset and their premises into a smart workplace. (STANDARD)

- Yes, the company's management actively adopts cutting-edge tech,

such as AI, machine learning, and/or blockchain, to enhance products and services, staying at the forefront of innovation. (ADVANCED)

Is there a clear leadership in digitalization in the company?

- The company has established an online presence, but there is still room for growth in leveraging technology to improve competitiveness. However, it may benefit from clearer leadership in digitalization to fully realise its potential. (BASIC)
- The company has experienced a rise in digital leadership and has seen considerable profits from its online presence. However, there is still room for improvement to strengthen their position in the digital landscape (STANDARD)
- Yes, the enterprise has fully embraced digitalization and has now shifted its focus towards enhancing the user experience through advanced technologies like artificial intelligence, machine learning, and blockchain for a more personalised and innovative approach. (ADVANCED)

What are the primary obstacles you encounter when implementing technology? (You may click more than one reply)

1. Overcoming technical difficulties
2. Addressing security vulnerabilities
3. Ensuring compliance with regulations
4. Dealing with limited knowledge and expertise
5. Managing budget constraints and resource limitations
6. Overcoming resistance to change and adoption of new technology
7. Improving network infrastructure
8. Obtaining sufficient data and understanding
9. Integrating existing systems effectively
10. None

Is there a budget allocation for digitization or digital transformation in the annual budget?

- We currently do not have a comprehensive annual budget plan that encompasses all expenses (BASIC)
- Currently, there is no specific allocation of our annual budget for any digital item.(BASIC)
- We have a specific budget allocation for investments in computer equipment and other tangible assets.(BASIC)
- We have a digital transformation budget focused mostly on enhancing professional processes such as e-marketing strategy. (STANDARD)
- We have a well-defined long-term digital transformation budget focused on advanced technologies for personalised and interactive user

experiences (ADVANCED)

Individuals

In this section, you will be inquired about the competencies of your enterprise's personnel for digital transformation.

What is the digital skills level of the employees in the company?
- Basic skills related to website management, social media, and online communication. (BASIC) - Deep understanding of digital marketing, data analytics, expertise in search engine optimization, and online advertising, along with the ability to create effective customer engagement strategies.(STANDARD) - Employees excel in emerging deep technologies such as AI, ML, AR/VR, and innovative user experience design. (ADVANCED)

Does the company's management encourage employee training in digital skills?
- No (BASIC) - Yes, training is provided on website and social media management (BASIC) - Yes, training is provided on e-marketing strategies (STANDARD) - Yes, digital training is provided on advanced technologies such as Augmented Reality, blockchain, etc (ADVANCED)

Is there anyone with digital marketing skills in the company?
- Yes, we have someone in charge of it, but it is not their primary task (STANDARD) - Yes, we have someone with extensive expertise fully dedicated to digital marketing (STANDARD & ADVANCED) - No (BASIC)

Digital Implementation

In this section, you are going to be asked about the usage and effect of digitalization in your business strategies.

Does the company have a plan to advance in digitization / digital transformation?
- Yes, the plan entails integrating deep tech into its products/services or processes to enhance user experiences and create a competitive edge (ADVANCED)

- Yes, the plan is focused on optimising digitalisation efforts to maximise profitability (STANDARD)
- Yes, the plan is centred on establishing a robust digital foundation with a primary emphasis on building a strong online presence at this stage. (BASIC)
- No, but we are thinking about it (BASIC)

Does your business use digital marketing strategies?

- No, we do not use digital marketing (BASIC)
- Yes, but only basic strategies such as email marketing (STANDARD)
- Yes, and we use advanced digital marketing strategies such as SEO and PPC (STANDARD)

What is the main objective you want to achieve with digitization and/or digital transformation?

- Start having a presence online through the development of digital channels (website, e-payments, etc.) (BASIC)
- Maximise digital channels and promote a digital culture to the whole organisation ensuring everyone understands the benefits and adapts to digital tools, thereby increasing efficiency, customer reach, and profit growth. (STANDARD)
- Add advanced technology to the user experience with some personalization and advanced features such as big data, AI, Virtual Reality, etc) (ADVANCED)

Digital support

Does your business have a dedicated IT team?
- No, we do not have a dedicated IT team (BASIC) - Yes, but it is a small team with limited resources (STANDARD) - Yes, and we have a large team with significant resources dedicated to digital transformation efforts (STANDARD & ADVANCED)

Do you work with collaborative tools? (Examples: Microsoft Office, Google sites, Zimbra collaboration, etc...)
- Yes, we have been using them for a while, but now we are focusing on more advanced automation processes. (ADVANCED) - Yes, we use them in a profitable way (STANDARD) - No, we do not use them in a collaborative way (BASIC) - We do not use them at all (BASIC)

Can people work with technological tools no matter where they are (mobility / remote work)?
- Yes (STANDARD AND ADVANCED) - No (BASIC)

Which of the following technologies/tools do you use in your business, or plan to adopt during this year?
- Basic collaboration tools (e.g., video conferencing, messaging, file sharing and editing) (BASIC) - Basic website (informational) (BASIC) - Mobile App (BASIC) - Social Media (BASIC) - Transactional website (E-commerce) (BASIC) - CRM (customer relationship management technology)(STANDARD) - ERP (enterprise resource planning software)(STANDARD) - Personnel management (STANDARD) - Accounting software(s) (STANDARD) - Manufacturing software (MRP) (STANDARD) - Project management software (STANDARD) - Email marketing (STANDARD) - Analytics tools to track your website or social media performance (STANDARD) - Data visualisation and analysis software (e.g., dashboard) (ADVANCED)

- Digital technologies such as artificial intelligence, virtual/augmented reality, 3D Printing (ADVANCED) - None of the above

Products/ Services

In this section, you are going to be asked about the digital impact on the products or services your business provides.

Is there any kind of technological component to the products or services that the company sells?
- Yes, there is a minimal technological component. The company is in the process of developing and integrating technology to enhance their offerings (BASIC) - Yes, there is a technological component that plays a significant role in their online success.(STANDARD) - Yes, the company is at the forefront of technological innovation, actively incorporating advanced technologies to provide cutting-edge solutions (ADVANCED) - No (BASIC)

Data orientation

In this section, you will be queried about the company's digital data utilization and its objectives.

"How does the company utilise data analysis, and what specific objectives or purposes does it serve?
- Yes, they use data analysis extensively to drive innovation and develop highly personalised solutions (ADVANCED) - Yes, to improve customer engagement, personalising marketing, and enhancing user satisfaction to boost retention and conversion rates (STANDARD) - The company does analyse their data to monitor the online presence and understand user behaviour (BASIC) - The company does not use data analytics (BASIC)

Assessment

Congratulations! You have completed the Digital Readiness Assessment. If you want to get more personalised advice from a qualified technology expert/ or digital transformation consultant, you can request a free consultation now. This is a great opportunity to learn more about the best solutions for your digital needs and goals. Are you interested?
- Yes - No

Figure 1: Final Version of the Self-Assesment Questionnaire

Development of the roadmaps

In accordance with our approved proposal, the orientation and support program have been developed, considering three levels: Basic, Standard, and Advanced, as each stage requires different resources. Simultaneously, the three-level roadmaps have been elaborated from a cross-sectoral perspective, based on literature reviews and best-practice research. The methodology for the development of these cross-sectoral roadmaps followed a scaffolding approach. Desk research and focus groups with expert stakeholders within and outside the consortium were utilized as methods and tools to construct this task deliverable, namely, the DT roadmaps. Our project's collaborative virtual workspace, along with cloud-based sharing documents on Google Drive, facilitated consortium cooperation and the exchange of complementary expertise in the step-by-step construction of the DT roadmaps.

Against this backdrop, each level of the roadmap integrates corresponding benchmarks with sufficient information for SMEs to clearly understand the key benefits incorporated by each benchmark and the necessary competencies and skills to acquire for the new emerging roles required to implement and use the corresponding resources needed for the tasks and responsibilities of the digital transformation stage they wish to achieve.

The Basic Level initiates with the basics of going digital, including the use of e-commerce, cloud accounting with e-invoicing, e-payment, and basic digital tools for professional processes regarding inventory, sales, workforce, production, customer experience, staff collaboration, and online training management. Additionally, this level covers an introductory level of data analytics complemented with the competencies necessary to implement and use data analysis. These benchmarks provide the guide for SMEs' digital existence needed to initiate and keep up with their transformation journey at the Basic level.

The Standard Level addresses professional processes such as the use of e-platforms and digital marketing, building upon the foundation laid at the Basic level. Benchmarks at this level consist of Digital Marketing, B2B trade platforms, e-procurement, crowdsourcing, and tools for an integrated smart workplace.

Lastly, the Advanced Level addresses the use of new generation technologies such as Big Data, Internet of Things, Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Cloud Computing, Blockchain, Augmented Reality, and Robotics, representing the pinnacle of digital transformation for SMEs.

In the table bellow you can see the roadmaps guidelines :

Roadmap Guidelines

The design of the supportive orientation programme will be based on the three-level roadmap:

1) **BASIC LEVEL (Digital existence)**

When an enterprise is in the Basic level of digitalization, means that they arelooking forward to incorporating some digital elements that allows thebusiness to exist, stablish their presence online. It doesn't bring any profit yet,or it is not focused on taking profit but on existing online.

The benchmarks, elements that a SMEs has when is situated in this first level,are:

- E-commerce
- Cloud accounting (e-invoice, e-payment)
- Basic digital tools to use for their professional processes (inventory, sales,workforce, production, customer experience, staff collaboration andtraining management online)
- Basic data analysis

2) **STANDARD LEVEL (Digital profit)**

When the enterprise is in the Standard level of digitalization means they are addressing professional processes focused on profiting from the digital existence. They have a presence online, but they need to work on tools that allows them to take profit of the digital existence.

The benchmarks of this level are:

- Digital marketing
- B2B trade platforms,
- e-procurement
- crowdsourcing
- integrated smart workplace.
- data analysis
- advanced sectoral management.

3) ADVANCED LEVEL (Deep integration of technology)

Businesses at this level are almost done with the digital transformation. They have stablished their presence online and are taking profit of it, but want to personalize more the user experience, so they start investing on new advanced generation technologies. The benchmarks of this level are:

- Big Data
- Internet of Things
- Artificial Intelligence
- Machine Learning
- Cloud Computing
- Blockchain
- Augmented Reality
- Robotics.

Figure 2: Roadmaps Guidelines

Moreover, the structure of each roadmap is:

1) (Introductory paragraph) A first section where SMEs can become aware of: why is the digital transformation important for a business.

2) A part where the enterprise can understand in which level is at (this would appear also at the end of the self-assessment questionnaire) and how can define its future vision.

3) A third section includes the elements needed in the correspondent level to achieve the next phase.

- The strategy to follow

- The digital solutions needed, with a description and an explanation of its benefits.

- The key activities for the digitalization process.

- Milestones

- Potential digital barriers and potential solutions

4) A last section linked to the e-courses developed, for the enterprise to acquire the competencies needed to proceed with the next level.

5) Catalogue of educational programs to provide personnel with the necessary technological competencies. This catalogue will lead to each module's learning objectives & competences that the user will acquire.

6) Additional information

In the tables bellow you can see the structure of the roadmaps:

TITLE (GRAPHIC DESIGN)
INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH A first section where SMEs can become aware of: why is the digital transformation is important for a business. Goals and objectives of the digital Transformation initiative.
LEVEL DESCRIPTION - Understanding the Current State and Defining a Future Vision A part where the enterprise can understand in which level is at (this would appear also at the end of the self-assessment questionnaire) and how can define its future vision.
NEXT STEPS - Elements Required for Progression A third section should include the elements needed in the correspondent level to achieve the next phase. This must include: - The strategy to follow. A detailed plan for integrating new technology, processes, and procedures into the existing business. - Digital solutions/skills needed, with a description and an explanation of its benefits. - Key activities for the digitalization process. - Milestones - Potential digital barriers. An evaluation of the potential risks and benefits associated with the digital transformation.
E-COURSES - Acquiring the Necessary Competencies for Success A last section linked to the e-courses developed, for the enterprise to acquire the competencies needed to proceed with the next level.

- Catalogue of educational programs to provide personnel with the necessary technological competencies.
Additional information

Figure 3: Structure of the roadmaps

After all partners received the guidelines roadmaps and the workshare prepared by PIMEC, the 1st draft version of the roadmaps was ready:

BASIC LEVEL

Digital Existence

Welcome to the initial stage of your digital transformation journey!

In today's rapidly evolving business landscape, the importance of digital transformation for small businesses is key to thriving in a dynamic and interconnected global economy.

This roadmap aims to empower small businesses in Europe with the tools, strategies, and educational programmes necessary to not only adapt but excel in the digital era.

LEVEL DESCRIPTION

Understanding the Current State and Defining a Future Vision

Preparing for the Digital Business Landscape

At the Basic Level, your enterprise is taking the essential first steps to establish a strong online presence.

This phase is a critical foundation for your digital transformation success. It is not only about integrating technology, but digitalization also goes beyond position your enterprise for success in the digital economy, where innovation, efficiency, and customer satisfaction thrive.

NEXT STEPS

Elements Required for Progression

In order to succeed in this first phase of the digitalisation process and be able to move on to the next one, there are a few steps your business must follow to build a strong online presence.

Let's start with the STRATEGY and some MILESTONES!

To begin, the initial step (1) involves a thorough analysis of the company's current digital capabilities and technology infrastructure. This will help you identify the specific requirements of customers, partners, and collaborators while also assessing the existing skills and technologies within the enterprise.

Continuing from this starting point, the next step (2) is to make a complete list of areas that need improvement in the company's day-to-day operations. This process allows you to identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for

improvement.

Before creating any plan (3), it's crucial to conduct market research. This will help gain insights into your target audience, their online habits, and their preferences.

Armed with this understanding, you will be able to move on to the next step and (4)define clear and measurable objectives for your online presence.

Lastly, the final step involves (Step 5) implementing digital solutions that will elevate your business's digital presence within the market."

DIGITAL SOLUTIONS

E-commerce	
Electronic commerce is the buying and selling of goods and services over the internet. It enables customers to buy over the internet either as business-to-business (B2B), business-to-consumer (B2C), consumer-to-consumer or consumer-to-business.	**Benefits** Global Reach: enables to reach customers beyond their geographical boundaries. Cost-Effective Operations: The absence of physical storefronts reduces expenses related to rent, utilities, and maintenance, enhancing cost-efficiency. 24/7 Availability: enabling customers to shop and make purchases at their convenience, leading to increased sales and an improved customer experience. Increased Sales and Revenue: An online presence attracts more customers, increases web traffic, and boosts conversion rates.

E-payment	
The term e-payment means any payment for a good or service made electronically. It includes all financial transactions involving the use of electronic devices.	**Benefits** Increasing customer satisfaction: It is easier and immediate and no time expensive. Global Payment Flexibility: offers the possibility of accepting payments in any type of currency.

	Effective Financial Management: It can be a valuable aid in managing payment advance and balance problems. Efficiency Boost: It accelerates and simplifies the management of the company's economic-financial flows.

Cloud Accounting	
Cloud accounting is web-based software that enables real-time financial management from anywhere with internet access. It offers features like invoicing, expense tracking, inventory, and reporting.	**Benefits** Accessibility: Available from anywhere with internet access. Cost-Effective: Eliminates the need for costly hardware or software installations. Security: Offers enhanced security for sensitive financial data. Scalability: Easily grows to meet evolving business demands.

Digital tools	
Digital tools are applications, online services, and technologies designed to support various aspects of business operations. For example, - Collaboration tools - Booking systems - Creative tools - Productivity tools	**Benefits** Efficiency & Savings: Automate tasks, reduce labor and travel expenses. Team Collaboration: Enhance communication and teamwork Boosting Customer Relationships: Tracking interactions and personalizing marketing for increased satisfaction, loyalty, and sales. Data Utilization: Access valuable data ans analytics for informed decisions.

Data analytics

Data analytics is the process of examining, cleaning, transforming, and interpreting large and complex datasets in order to extract valuable insights, patterns, and trends.	**Benefits**: Improved Decision-Making: possibility of implementing data-driven decisions, reducing reliance on intuition or guesswork. Increased Efficiency: identification of inefficiencies in processes and operations. Enhanced Customer Understanding: deeper understanding of their customers' preferences, behaviours, and needs. Targeted Marketing and Personalization: allows to segment customer base and create targeted marketing campaigns.

E-learning	
E-learning, short for electronic learning, refers to the use of digital technologies and the internet to deliver educational content and facilitate learning. Some examples can be: Online Courses, Video Lectures, and Interactive Content	**Benefits**: Flexible Learning: Offers flexibility for self-paced study, allowing students to access course materials and complete assignments at their convenience. Accessibility: Expands access to a diverse audience, including those constrained by geographical or physical limitations Cost-Effective: eliminates the need for physical facilities and can reach a wider audience. Personalisation: Uses algorithms and data analysis to craft personalised learning experiences, adapting content and recommendations to suit the needs and learning styles of each individual.

POTENTIAL DIGITAL BARRIERS

During this process, it's essential to anticipate and proactively address any potential obstacles that your business might encounter. This proactive approach ensures that you are well-prepared with effective solutions to overcome these

challenges.

Some and the most probably barriers are:

1. Lack of digital literacy: SMEs may face challenges if their employees lack the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively utilize digital tools and technologies.
2. Limited resources: Limited financial resources and budget constraints can hinder SMEs from investing in the necessary hardware, software, and training required for digital transformation.
3. Resistance to change: Employees and business owners may be resistant to adopting new digital technologies, leading to slow or incomplete implementation.
4. Cybersecurity concerns: SMEs may be more vulnerable to cyber threats due to limited resources for implementing robust security measures, which can pose a barrier to digital adoption.
5. Limited access to reliable internet: In some regions, SMEs may face challenges in accessing high-speed and reliable internet connections, which can hamper their ability to leverage digital tools and platforms effectively.

(*) It's important to note that these barriers can vary depending on the specific context, industry, and region in which SMEs operate.

Some possible solutions could be:

1. Offer regular training programs and workshops to employees to improve their digital skills
2. Identify critical areas for digital transformation and prioritise investments accordingly, as well as, explore government grants, subsidies, or funding programs
3. Develop a robust change management strategy that includes clear communication, involvement of employees in decision-making, and addressing concerns.
4. Educate employees about cybersecurity best practices to reduce the risk of breaches, as well as, implement regular data backup and recovery procedures to mitigate data loss.
5. Investigate alternative internet service providers or technologies like satellite, 4G/5G, or wireless connections, or consider using co-working spaces or business centers with reliable internet access

Acquiring the Necessary Competencies for Success

E-COURSES

At this point, you might be wondering how to acquire the knowledge and skills required to advance your digitization journey.

Fortunately, our web platform **SMEsGoDigital** offers for free a range of complimentary courses designed to equip you with the expertise needed to drive your digitalization process forward.

GOING DIGITAL
CONTENT
• WHY, HOW to turn your business Digital • HOW to use Gmail, Zoom and Google Documents • HOW to collaborate remotely • HOW to use safe passwords

E-COMMERCE
CONTENT
• HOW to use Online Payment • WHAT KIND of Digital Payment there are • HOW to Set-up an Online Payment • HOW to get paid from an Online Payment

CLOUD ACCOUNTING
CONTENT
• HOW to Digitise your Accounting • WHAT are In-Voicing and Cloud Accounting • HOW to set-up In-Voicing and Cloud Accounting • HOW to use a Payroll System • HOW to improve your Management Skills

DIGITAL TOOLS
CONTENT
• HOW to use Digital Tools (creative, collaboration,) • HOW to use CRM systems • HOW to boost the productivity of your company using Digital Tools

DATA ANALYTICS
CONTENT
• WHY is data so important for your company • HOW to use customer feedback • HOW to use data analytics in Sales • HOW to protect your Data • HOW business insights will help you grow.

E-LEARNING
CONTENT
• HOW it benefits your company to Upskill your staff • HOW to implement a learning culture in your company • HOW to implement e-learning • HOW you will profit from Digitalisation

Figure 4: First Version of the roadmaps (basic level)

STANDARD LEVEL

Digital Profit

Welcome to the next stage of your digital transformation journey!

In today's rapidly evolving business landscape, enterprises operating are actively seeking to harness the power of their digital presence for maximum profitability. These businesses recognize the immense potential that the digital realm offers and are keen to leverage professional processes to navigate and thrive in this digital economy.

This roadmap aims to empower small businesses in Europe with the tools, strategies, and educational programmes necessary to not only adapt but excel in the digital era.

LEVEL DESCRIPTION

Understanding the Current State and Defining a Future Vision

Thriving in the Digital Business Landscape

At the Standard Level, your enterprise is aiming to capitalise on its digital presence. To achieve this, it's essential to develop tools that effectively address these professional business processes.

With a strong emphasis on strategic digital initiatives, your business will be able to unlock new opportunities and optimise its online presence to drive growth and success.

NEXT STEPS

Elements Required for Progression

To excel in this stage of your digitalization journey and truly harness its economic benefits, your business must navigate through several crucial steps. These strategic actions will pave the way for your enterprise to maximise its online presence and capitalise on the digital landscape for long-term economic prosperity.

Let's start with the STRATEGY and some MILESTONES!

To begin, the initial step (1) involves a thorough analysis of the company's current digital capabilities and technology infrastructure. This will help you identify the specific requirements of customers, partners, and collaborators while also assessing the existing skills and technologies within the enterprise.

Continuing from this starting point, the next step (2) is to make a complete list of areas that need improvement in the company's day-to-day operations. This process allows you to identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement.

Before creating any plan (3), it's crucial to conduct market research. This will help gain insights into your target audience, their online habits, and their preferences.

Armed with this understanding, you will be able to move on to the next step and (4)define clear and measurable objectives for your digital profit.

Lastly, the final step involves (Step 5)adopting digital solutions to enhance your SME's online presence and leverage it for growth in the digital age.

DIGITAL SOLUTIONS

Digital marketing	
Digital marketing is a broad term that encompasses all marketing efforts that use electronic devices or the internet to promote products or services. It's a crucial component of modern business strategies, Some aspects and components of digital marketing are: website, Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Content Marketing, Social Media Marketing, Email Marketing, Pay-Per-Click (PPC) Advertising	**Benefits** Global Reach: Allows you to reach a wider and global audience. Cost-Effective: Enables to allocate the budget for different digital channels based on your goals and audience. Targeted Advertising: Permits precise audience targeting. Measurable Results: Provides real-time, detailed analytics. Immediate Feedback: Allows for instant feedback from your audience. Content Marketing: Valuable and informative content can attract and retain a loyal customer base.

B2B trade platforms	
B2B trade platforms are online marketplaces that connect businesses with other businesses to buy and sell goods or services. Some examples of B2B trade platforms include Alibaba, Amazon Business, and ThomasNet.	**Benefits** Enhanced Market Access: allows to reach new markets and customers. Efficient Procurement: facilitates organisations to streamline their sourcing processes and optimise resource allocation. Expanded Choices: provides business with a broader range of choices when it comes to suppliers and products Cost Savings: allows enterprises to compare prices and products, improving efficiency and cost savings Improved Collaboration: promoting transparency and fostering greater opportunities for partnerships.

Crowdsourcing	
Crowdsourcing is the practice of obtaining ideas, services, or content from a large group of people, typically through the internet on an open call or competition. Examples of crowdsourcing include online surveys, crowdfunding, open innovation challenges, and user-generated content.	**Benefits** Networking Diversity: opens access to a diverse network of individuals or communities. Innovation Synergy: it reaches into collective intelligence and creativity amplifying the generation of innovative ideas and solutions Cost-effective solutions: allows organisations to access a diverse talent and ideas facilitating efficient and economical problem-solving Enhanced stakeholder engagement: promotes active involvement from a broad spectrum of participants, thus creating collaborative opportunities while simultaneously unveiling potential new talents and expertise.

Integrated smart workplace	
An integrated smart workplace is a modern work environment that leverages digital technologies to improve productivity, collaboration, and communication among employees. It typically includes cloud-based applications, mobile devices, automation tools, and other technologies that enable employees to work more efficiently and effectively.	**Benefits** Efficiency: Improves productivity through the use of digital tools and systems Team Collaboration: Enhance communication and teamwork regardless of location Agile decision making: By providing real-time data and insights, it facilitates faster informed decision making. Modernization and Scalability: Digital transformation reduces costs and streamlines processes through automation and digitization. Improved customer service through personalised and responsive interactions

POTENTIAL DIGITAL BARRIERS

1. Competing for online visibility: SMEs may find it challenging to stand out among competitors in the digital marketplace, especially in crowded industries or competitive markets.

2. Scalability issues: Scaling up digital marketing efforts and managing increased customer interactions can be a barrier for SMEs without the necessary infrastructure and systems in place.

3. Integration challenges: Integrating different digital platforms, tools, and systems can be complex and time-consuming, particularly if SMEs have a fragmented technology infrastructure.

4. Limited knowledge of advanced digital marketing strategies: SMEs at this level may struggle to leverage more sophisticated digital marketing techniques, such as personalised targeting, automation, or conversion rate optimization.

5. Data privacy and compliance: As SMEs collect and process more customer data, they need to comply with data protection regulations, which can pose challenges if they lack knowledge and resources to implement adequate privacy measures.

(*) It's important to note that these barriers can vary depending on the specific context, industry, and region in which SMEs operate.

Some possible solutions could be:

1. Focus on a niche market or unique selling proposition (USP) to differentiate your SME from competitors.

2. Implement marketing automation tools to streamline customer interactions and manage increased workloads.

3. Establish a centralised data management strategy to ensure consistency and efficiency in data integration.

4. Invest in advanced digital marketing training for your team to build expertise, as well as encourage employees to participate in online courses and webinars on advanced digital marketing topics.

5.

Appoint a Data Protection Officer or designate a responsible individual for ensuring compliance with data protection regulations.

E-COURSES - Acquiring the Necessary Competencies for Success

At this point, you might be wondering how to acquire the knowledge and skills required to advance your digitization journey.

Fortunately, our web platform **SMEsGoDigital** offers for free a range of complimentary courses designed to equip you with the expertise needed to drive your digitalization process forward.

Digital Marketing
Content
• WHAT is the role of digital marketing in promoting SMEs • HOW to use Digital Marketing Platforms & Channels • HOW to develop a social media strategy • What is SEO • WHICH are the best free online tools for smart marketing • HOW to build your social media channel • HOW to launch your digital campaign

B2B trade platforms
Content
• WHAT are the easiest network & trade • WHICH are the 6 criteria to look for in a B2B eCommerce marketplace platform. • HOW does an e-procurement system work? • HOW to capitalise the power of the crowd in procurement?"

Crowdsourcing

Content
• HOW to raise capital for your SME • WHAT is Crowdsourcing • HOW to use Crowdfunding for Business • WHAT is Crowdfunding Planning • WHICH are the new business models for a changing world

Integrated smart workplace
Content
• HOW can I manage my business virtually • WHAT goes into a Successful Wearable Solution for Business • HOW to plan your smart business • HOW 3D printing can help small businesses • HOW Internet of Things (IoT) can make your work easier • HOW to save time with smart collaboration tools • WHAT is Advanced Data Analytics • HOW to use Cloud Services

Figure 5: First Version of the roadmaps (Standard Level)

ADVANCED LEVEL

Deep integration of technology

Welcome to the next phase of your advanced digital transformation journey!

In the ever-evolving landscape of digitalization, enterprises are harnessing the power of technology to stay at the forefront of innovation, recognising their transformative potential for elevate their operations and deliver unique value to their customers.

This roadmap aims to empower small business in Europe with the tools, strategies, and educational programmes necessary to not only adapt but excel in the digital era.

LEVEL DESCRIPTION

Understanding the Current State and Defining a Future Vision

Sprinting forward in the Digital Business Landscape

At the advanced level, your enterprise has firmly established its online presence and is already reaping the benefits. However, to further enhance the user experience, your organisation is looking forward to strategically investing in cutting-edge technologies of the next generation.

With an unwavering commitment to staying at the forefront of innovation, your business is actively exploring new technologies to elevate their products and services.

- **Establish an ethics committee or designate a responsible individual to oversee ethical considerations related to technology adoption.**

NEXT STEPS
Elements Required for Progression

To exceed on this phase of the digitalization journey and truly harness its economic benefits, your business must navigate several critical steps. These strategic actions will pave the way for your enterprise to elevate the user experience through strategic investments.

Let's start with the STRATEGY and some MILESTONES!

To begin, the initial step (1) involves a thorough analysis of the company's current digital capabilities and technology infrastructure. This will help you identify the specific requirements of customers, partners, and collaborators while also assessing the existing skills and technologies within the enterprise.

Continuing from this starting point, the next step (2) is to make a complete list of areas that need improvement in the company's day-to-day operations. This process allows you to identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement.

Before creating any plan (3), it's crucial to conduct market research. This will help gain insights into your target audience, their online habits, and their preferences. Armed with this understanding, you will be able to move on to the next step and (4)define clear and measurable objectives for your deep integration of technology.

Lastly, the final step involves (Step 5) exploring cutting-edge deep technologies to elevate your products and services, crafting a uniquely personalised user experience.

DIGITAL SOLUTIONS

Machine learning	
Machine learning (ML) is a subfield of artificial intelligence (AI) that focuses on the development of algorithms and statistical models that enable computer systems to improve their performance on a specific task. They use data to generalise patterns, make predictions, or take actions without being explicitly programmed for each specific input.	**Benefits** Automation of Repetitive Tasks: Many tasks can be automated, increasing efficiency and minimising errors. Cost Reduction: can lead to significant cost savings due to the optimization of resource allocation. Predictive Maintenance: can predict when equipment is likely to fail, reducing downtime and repair costs. Fraud Detection: can detect fraudulent

	activities in real-time.

Big Data	
Big Data refers to extremely large and complex datasets that often require advanced computational and analytical tools, such as machine learning and artificial intelligence, to extract valuable insights, make informed decisions, and discover patterns or trends that might otherwise remain hidden in the data. These datasets typically exhibit the "3Vs": ● high Volume (massive amounts of data), ● great Variety (different data types and sources), and ● high Velocity (data is generated rapidly).	**Benefits** Informed Decision-Making: It empowers with valuable insights, enabling data-driven decision-making. Operational Efficiency: can help SMEs identify inefficiencies in their processes, leading to cost savings and optimised resource allocation. Personalised Customer Experiences: Enables to understand their customers better, allowing for personalised products and services, enhancing customer loyalty and satisfaction. Competitive Advantage: Gives a competitive edge, adapting quickly to market changes, and making informed decisions. Improved Marketing ROI: It can refine advertising strategies, target audiences more precisely, and improve the return on investment (ROI) for marketing efforts.

Artificial Intelligence	
Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to the simulation of human intelligence processes by machines, particularly computer systems. AI systems can perform tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as problem-solving, decision-making, language understanding, and perception.	**Benefits** Automated Operations: AI can automate routine tasks and processes, reducing manual workloads, minimising errors, and improving operational efficiency. Enhanced Customer Service: Chatbots and virtual assistants can provide 24/7 customer support, improving customer satisfaction. Data-Driven Insights: They can analyse large datasets quickly, helping derive valuable insights for informed decision-

	making and gaining a competitive edge. Personalization: AI algorithms can analyse customer data to personalise marketing campaigns, increasing customer engagement and loyalty. Cost Savings: By automating tasks, predicting maintenance needs, and optimising resource allocation, AI can lead to significant cost savings allowing them to operate more efficiently.

Blockchain	
Blockchain is a decentralised and distributed digital ledger technology that securely records transactions across multiple computers, forming a continuous chain. It is known for its transparency, security, and immutability of data.	**Benefits** Enhanced Security: Blockchain's cryptographic features make it highly secure against data tampering and unauthorised access. Reduced Fraud: Its transparency and immutability reduce the risk of fraud, making it a valuable tool for tracking and verifying transactions. Streamlined Processes: Smart contracts, powered by blockchain, automate and enforce contract terms, reducing paperwork, administrative costs and streamlining processes. Improved Trust: Its transparency and trust-building capabilities can help build trust with customers, suppliers, and partners Access to Finance: It can provide SMEs with improved access to financing through methods like Initial Coin Offerings (ICOs) or Security Token Offerings (STOs), bypassing traditional financial intermediaries.

Internet of Things	
The Internet of Things (IoT) refers to the network of interconnected physical devices and objects that can collect,	**Benefits** Data-Driven Insights: IoT sensors gather and transmit crucial

exchange, and transmit data over the internet. These devices enable real-time data monitoring and control.	data on operations, products, and environments, allowing data-driven decisions for enhanced efficiency and cost-efficiency. Remote Monitoring: SMEs can remotely monitor equipment, assets, and processes in real-time, reducing downtime, preventing breakdowns, and optimising maintenance schedules. Enhanced Customer Experiences: It can be used to create connected products and services, improving customer experiences. Efficient Resource Management: Helps optimise resource utilisation, leading to reduced waste and lower operating costs. Competitive Advantage: It can provide SMEs with a competitive edge by enabling faster response to market changes, increased agility, and the ability to offer innovative, connected solutions to customers.

Augmented Reality	
Augmented Reality (AR) is a technology that overlays digital information, such as images, videos, or 3D models, onto the real world, typically through a smartphone, tablet, or AR glasses. It enhances the user's perception of reality by blending digital and physical elements.	**Benefits** Enhanced Customer Engagement: Enables the creation of interactive and immersive experiences, increasing customer engagement and brand recognition. Product Visualization: Allows customers to visualise products in their real environment before making a purchase, reducing uncertainty and potentially increasing sales. Training and Education: It can be used for employee training and skill development, making learning more interactive and effective. Efficient Maintenance: Can provide technicians with real-time, hands-free access to manuals, instructions, and remote expert assistance, improving maintenance and repair processes. Marketing Innovation: They differentiate business in the market, providing unique

	and memorable customer interactions for effective product or service promotion.

Automation and Robot	
They play a significant role in improving efficiency and productivity within a company: - AUTOMATION refers to the use of technology, systems, and processes to perform tasks, operations, or workflows with minimal human intervention. - ROBOTS are physical or virtual machines that are designed to perform tasks autonomously or semi-autonomously.	**Benefits:** Cost Savings: Reduce labour costs by replacing manual workers in repetitive or labour-intensive tasks. Accuracy and Precision: High accuracy performing tasks with precision, reducing the likelihood of errors. Improved Quality: Improve product quality and consistency by minimising variations in production processes. Enhanced Safety: Employed in hazardous environments or tasks that are dangerous for humans, reducing the risk of workplace accidents and injuries. Flexibility: Robots can be reprogrammed or reconfigured to perform different tasks or adapt to changing production needs. Scalability: Automation can easily scale to handle increased production volumes without the need for significant changes in infrastructure or workforce.

POTENTIAL DIGITAL BARRIERS

1. Scarce expertise in emerging technologies: SMEs may face difficulties in finding skilled professionals who can effectively work with advanced technologies like big data, machine learning, or artificial intelligence.
2. High implementation costs: Implementing advanced technologies can be expensive, requiring significant upfront investments in hardware, software, and specialized training.
3. Complexity of advanced technologies: Technologies like blockchain, augmented reality, and automation/robotics may have a steeper learning curve, making it challenging for SMEs to understand, implement, and maintain them.
4. Ethical considerations: Advanced technologies often raise ethical concerns, such as data privacy, bias in AI algorithms, or automation's impact on the workforce. SMEs need to navigate these complexities responsibly.

5. Integration with legacy systems: Integrating advanced technologies with existing legacy systems can be complex and require extensive modifications or upgrades, posing a barrier to implementation.

(*) It's important to note that these barriers can vary depending on the specific context, industry, and region in which SMEs operate.

Some possible solutions could be:

1. Partner with universities, research institutions, or technology companies to access expertise or collaborate on projects.
2. Implement advanced technologies gradually, starting with pilot projects to assess ROI before full-scale deployment, as well as explore government grants or subsidies aimed at supporting the adoption of advanced technologies.
3. Begin with small-scale proof of concept projects to better understand the technology's applicability and challenges.
4. Establish an ethics committee or designate a responsible individual to oversee ethical considerations related to technology adoption while staying informed about relevant regulations.
5. Plan a gradual transition by identifying critical areas for integration and tackling them one at a time.

E-COURSES - Acquiring the Necessary Competencies for Success

At this point, you might be wondering how to acquire the knowledge and skills required to advance your digitization journey.

Fortunately, our web platform **SMEsGoDigital** offers for free a range of complimentary courses designed to equip you with the expertise needed to drive your digitalization process forward.

Big Data
Content
• WHAT value can Big Data bring? • HOW to use Big Data? • HOW do you know your business is ready for Big Data benefits? • HOW to maximise Big Data value

Machine learning
Content
• WHAT it is and WHY it matters • HOW to streamline your business • WHAT processes can be supported by machine learning techniques in your business? • What's the difference between Machine learning and AI ?

Artificial Intelligence
Content
• WHAT does Microsoft Bing's new AI assistant mean for your business? • WHAT are the best AI applications for SMEs • HOW can AI leverage your business? • HOW AI and Blockchain are Changing Businesses

Blockchain
Content
• WHY do you need blockchain? • WHY is the next revolution is written with blockchain • HOW to implement Blockchain Technology in your business • WHAT are the Blockchain and IoT opportunities for the SMEs

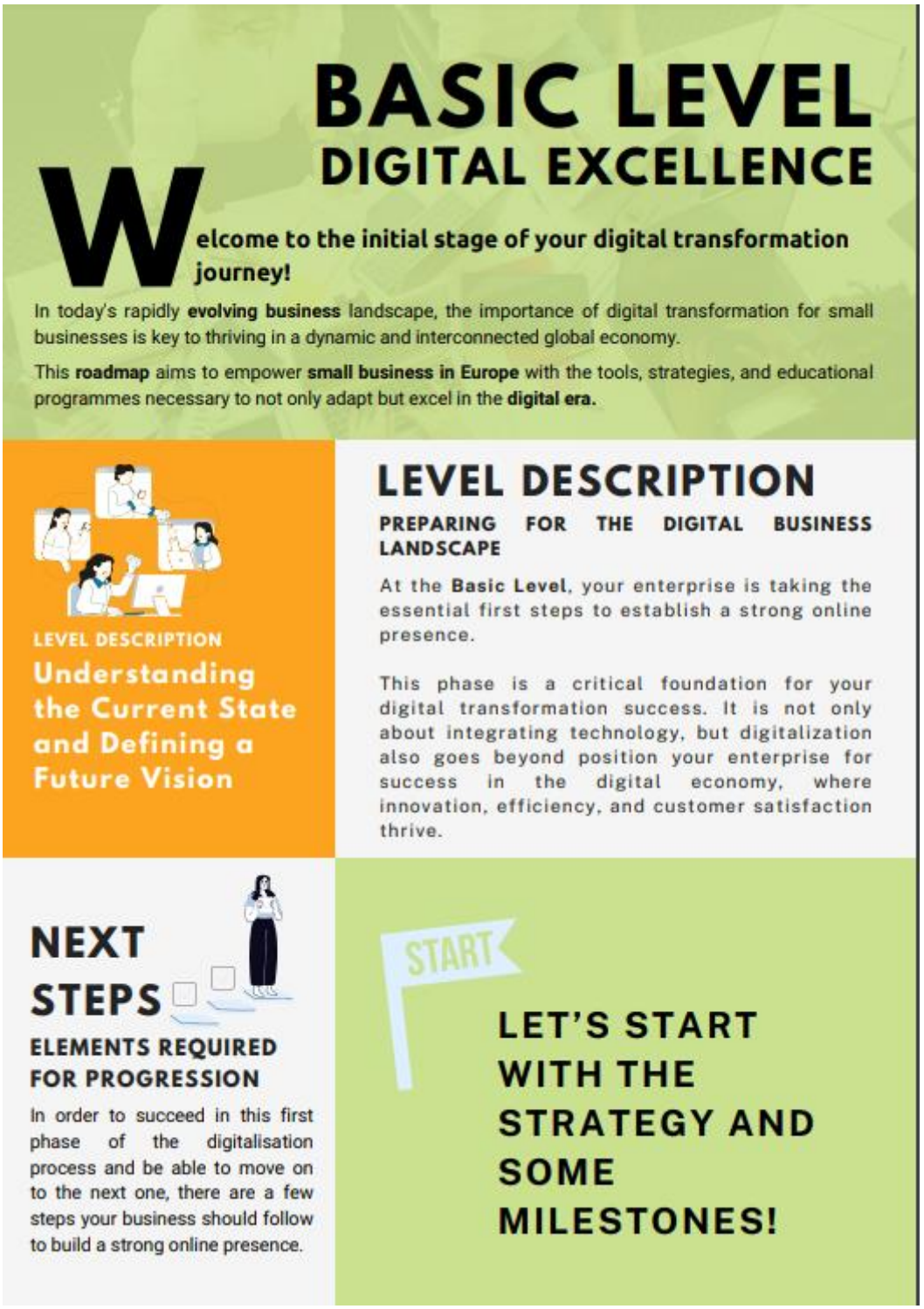
Internet of Things
Content
• WHY every Single Small Business Needs the Internet of Things • WHAt are the 5 Benefits of the Internet of Things (IoT) for SMEs • WHAT are the Top 8 IoT applications and examples in business • HOW can IoT transform your supply chain? • HOW AR and VR technology can enhance IoT applications

Augmented Reality (AR) – Virtual Reality (VR)
Content
• WHY is Augmented Reality for Everyone? • HOW AR and VR are Transforming the Future of Businesses • HOW can your Business use Augmented Reality? • HOW AR/VR Is Driving Automation and Robotics

Automation and Robotics
Content
• Is Robotisation an Opportunity or threat to SMEs? • HOW can SMEs Automate with Robots • WHAT is the process automation for small businesses • HOW Industry 4.0 is Becoming Affordable for SMEs

Figure 6: First Version of the roadmaps (Advanced Level)

After some amendments agreed by the consortium, EVTA proceeded to the adaptation of the content to info graphics. The last version of the roadmaps was ready:



SMEs Grow Digital

ΙΔΡΥΜΑ ΚΡΑΤΙΚΩΝ ΥΠΟΤΡΟΦΙΩΝ IKY

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

Est. 2006
IME GSEVEE
Small Enterprises Institute of GSEVEE

1 STEP

To begin, the initial step involves a thorough **analysis of the company's current digital capabilities and technology infrastructure.** This will help you identify the specific requirements of customers, partners, and collaborators while also assess the existing skills and technologies within the enterprise.

2 STEP

Continuing from this starting point, the next step is to make a **complete list of areas that need improvement** in the company's day-to-day operations. This process allows you to identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement.

3 STEP

Before creating any plan, it's crucial to **conduct market research.** This will help gain insights into your target audience, their online habits, and their preferences.

4 STEP

Armed with this understanding, you will be able to move on to the next step and **define clear and measurable objectives for your online presence.**

5 STEP

Lastly, the final step involves **implementing digital solutions** that will elevate your business's digital presence within the market.

SMEs Grow Digital

ΙΔΡΥΜΑ ΚΡΑΤΙΚΩΝ ΥΠΟΤΡΟΦΙΩΝ IKY

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

Est. 2006 IME GSEVEE Small Enterprises Institute of GSEVEE

DIGITAL SOLUTIONS

E-COMMERCE

Electronic commerce is the buying and selling of goods and services over the internet.

It enables customers to **buy over the internet** either as business-to-business (B2B), business-to-consumer (B2C), consumer-to-consumer or consumer-to-business.

BENEFITS

Global Reach: enables to reach customers beyond their geographical boundaries.

Cost-Effective Operations: The absence of physical storefronts reduces expenses related to rent, utilities, and maintenance, enhancing cost-efficiency.

24/7 Availability: enabling customers to shop and make purchases at their convenience, leading to increased sales and an improved customer experience.

Increased Sales and Revenue: An online presence attracts more customers, increases web traffic, and boosts conversion rates.

BENEFITS

Increasing customer satisfaction: It is easier and immediate and no time expensive.

Global Payment Flexibility: Offers the possibility of accepting payments in any type of currency.

Effective Financial Management: It can be a valuable aid in managing payment advance and balance problems.

Efficiency Boost: It accelerates and simplifies the management of the company's economic-financial flows.

E-PAYMENT

The term e-payment means any payment for a good or service made electronically.

It includes all financial transactions involving the use of electronic devices.

CLOUD ACCOUNTING

Cloud accounting is web-based software that enables real-time financial management from anywhere with internet access.

It offers features like invoicing, expense tracking, inventory, and reporting.

BENEFITS

Accessibility: Available from anywhere with internet access.

Cost-Effective: Eliminates the need for costly hardware or software installations.

Security: Offers enhanced security for sensitive financial data.

Scalability: Easily grows to meet evolving business demands.

SMEs Grow Digital

ΙΔΡΥΜΑ ΚΡΑΤΙΚΩΝ ΥΠΟΤΡΟΦΙΩΝ IKY

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BENEFITS

Efficiency & Savings: Automate tasks, reduce labor and travel expenses.

Team Collaboration: Enhance communication and teamwork.

Boosting Customer Relationships: Tracking interactions and personalizing marketing for increased satisfaction, loyalty, and sales.

Data Utilization: Access valuable data and analytics for informed decisions.

DIGITAL TOOLS

Digital tools are applications, online services, and technologies designed to support various aspects of business operations. For example:

- Collaboration tools
- Booking systems
- Creative tools
- Productivity tools

DATA ANALYTICS

Data analytics is the process of examining, cleaning, transforming, and interpreting large and complex datasets in order to extract valuable insights, patterns, and trends.

BENEFITS

Improved Decision-Making: possibility of implementing data-driven decisions, reducing reliance on intuition or guesswork.

Increased Efficiency: identification of inefficiencies in processes and operations.

Enhanced Customer Understanding: deeper understanding of their customers' preferences, behaviours, and needs.

Targeted Marketing and Personalization: allows to segment customer base and create targeted marketing campaigns.

E-LEARNING

E-learning, short for electronic learning, refers to the use of digital technologies and the internet to deliver educational content and facilitate learning.

Some examples can be: Online Courses, Video Lectures, and Interactive Content.

BENEFITS

Flexible Learning: Offers flexibility for self-paced study, allowing learners to access course materials and complete assignments at their convenience.

Accessibility: Expands access to a diverse audience, including those constrained by geographical or physical limitations

Cost-Effective: eliminates the need for physical facilities and can reach a wider audience.

Personalisation: Uses algorithms and data analysis to craft personalised learning experiences, adapting content and recommendations to suit the needs and learning styles of each individual.

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POTENTIAL DIGITAL BARRIERS

During this process, it's essential to anticipate and proactively address any potential obstacles that your business might encounter. This proactive approach ensures that you are well-prepared with effective solutions to overcome these challenges.

MOST PROBABLE DIGITAL BARRIERS

It's important to note that these barriers can vary depending on the specific context, industry, and region in which SMEs operate.

LACK OF DIGITAL LITERACY

SMEs may face challenges if their employees lack the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively utilize digital tools and technologies.

LIMITED RESOURCES

Limited financial resources and budget constraints can hinder SMEs from investing in the necessary hardware, software, and training required for digital transformation.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS COULD BE...

OFFER REGULAR TRAINING PROGRAMS

and workshops to employees to improve their digital skills.

IDENTIFY CRITICAL AREAS FOR DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

and prioritise investments accordingly, as well as, explore government grants, subsidies, or funding programs.

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RESISTANCE TO CHANGE

Employees and business owners may be resistant to adopting new digital technologies, leading to slow or incomplete implementation.

DEVELOP A ROBUST CHANGE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

that includes clear communication, involvement of employees in decision-making, and addressing concerns.

CYBERSECURITY CONCERNS

SMEs may be more vulnerable to cyber threats due to limited resources for implementing robust security measures, which can pose a barrier to digital adoption.

EDUCATE EMPLOYEES ABOUT CYBERSECURITY

best practices to reduce the risk of breaches, as well as, implement regular data backup and recovery procedures to mitigate data loss.

LIMITED ACCESS TO RELIABLE INTERNET

In some regions, SMEs may face challenges in accessing high-speed and reliable internet connections, which can hamper their ability to leverage digital tools and platforms effectively.

INVESTIGATE ALTERNATIVE INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS

or technologies like satellite, 4G/5G, or wireless connections, or consider using co-working spaces or business centers with reliable internet access.

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ACQUIRING THE NECESSARY COMPETENCIES FOR SUCCESS

At this point, you might be wondering
How to acquire the knowledge and skills required to advance your digitalization journey.

E-COURSES

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COMPLIMENTARY COURSES

DESIGNED TO EQUIP YOU WITH THE EXPERTISE NEEDED TO DRIVE YOUR

DIGITALIZATION PROCESS

One important addition, was the possibility for the users to click on each title of the available e-courses and be linked to the main objectives of each course, a short description of its content and the skills that they will acquire by attending it:

o

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Module:

GOING DIGITAL

BASIC LEVEL

OBJECTIVES

AFTER MODULE COMPLETION LEARNERS WILL BE ABLE TO:

Understand & list the benefits of embracing **digitalisation for your company**

Give examples of **safeguarding digitally** their personal devices & information

Explain the uses and potential of basic **digital solutions**

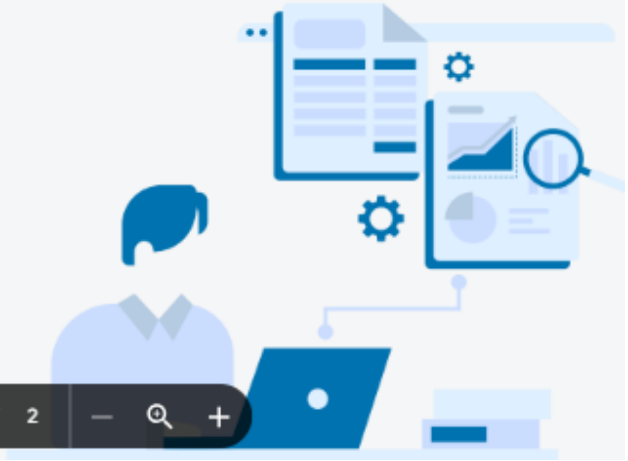
Take responsibility for their own **professional digitalisation**

Apply basic **digital tools** for professional goals

Get excited about starting their **digital journey**

CONTENT

- WHY SHOULD MY BUSINESS GO DIGITAL?
- CREATE YOUR E-MAIL
- E-INVOICING
- WHAT IS A GOOGLE DOCUMENT?
- WHAT IS ZOOM?
- ARE MY PASSWORDS SAFE?
- HOW DO I COLLABORATE REMOTELY?
- READY TO TURN YOUR BUSINESS DIGITAL?



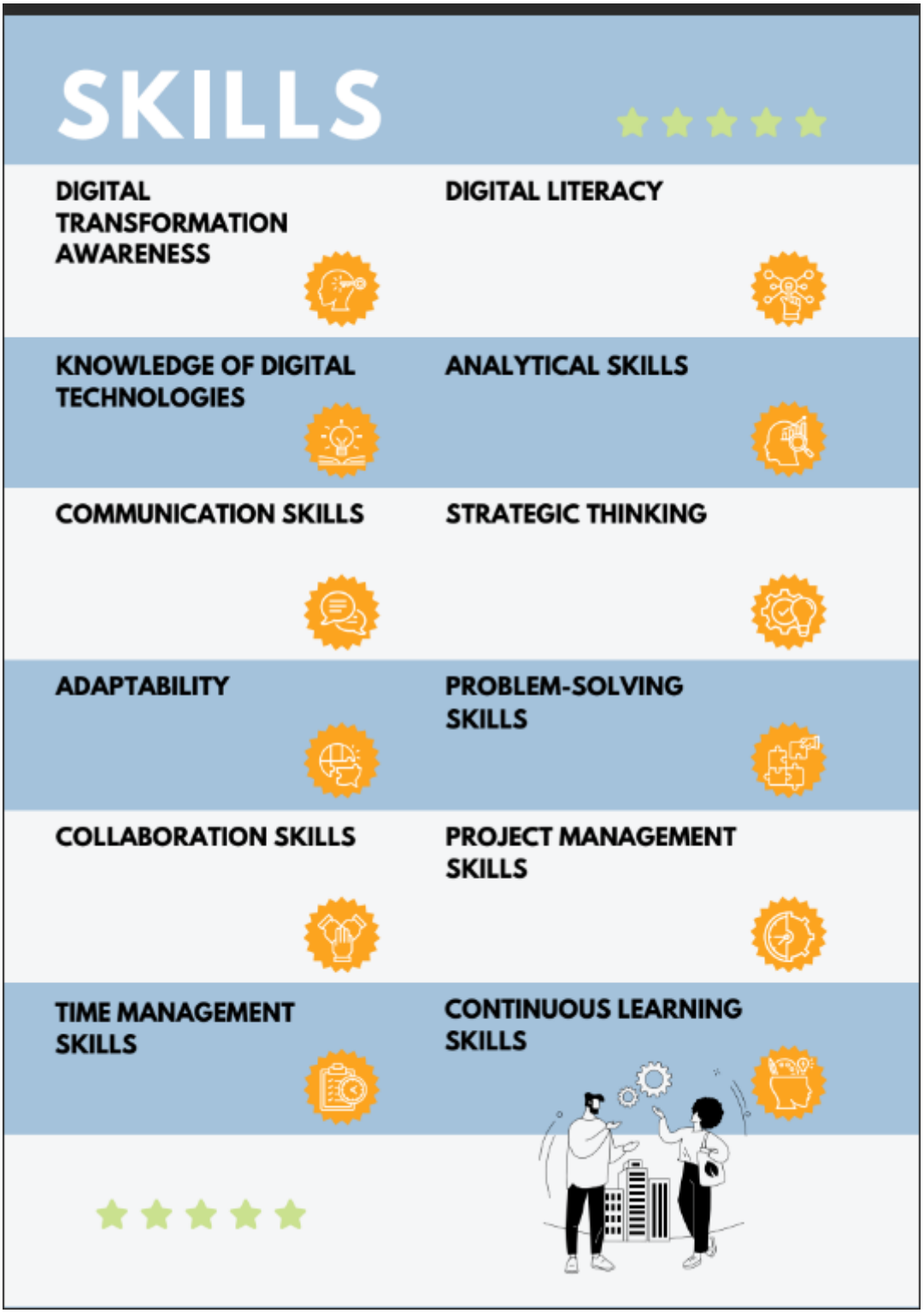


Figure 7: Final Version of the roadmaps (Basic Level)

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STANDARD LEVEL DIGITAL PROFIT

Welcome to the next stage of your digital transformation journey!

In today's rapidly evolving business landscape, enterprises operating are actively seeking to harness the power of their digital presence for maximum profitability. These businesses recognize the immense potential that the digital realm offers and are keen to leverage professional processes to navigate and thrive in this digital economy.

This roadmap aims to empower small businesses in Europe with the tools, strategies, and educational programmes necessary to not only adapt but excel in the digital era.

Understanding the Current State and Defining a Future Vision

LEVEL DESCRIPTION

THRIVING IN THE DIGITAL BUSINESS LANDSCAPE

At the **Standard Level**, your enterprise is aiming to capitalise on its digital presence. To achieve this, it's essential to develop tools that effectively address these professional business processes.

With a strong emphasis on strategic digital initiatives, your business will be able to unlock new opportunities and optimise its online presence to drive growth and success.

LET'S START WITH THE STRATEGY AND SOME MILESTONE!

NEXT STEPS

ELEMENTS REQUIRED FOR PROGRESSION

To excel in this stage of your digitalization journey and truly harness its economic benefits, your business must navigate through several crucial steps. These strategic actions will pave the way for your enterprise to maximise its online presence and capitalise on the digital landscape for long-term economic prosperity..

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1 STEP

To begin, the initial step involves a thorough **analysis of the company's current digital capabilities and technology infrastructure.** This will help you identify the specific requirements of customers, partners, and collaborators while also assess the existing skills and technologies within the enterprise.

2 STEP

Continuing from this starting point, the next step is to make a **complete list of areas that need improvement** in the company's day-to-day operations. This process allows you to identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement.

3 STEP

Before creating any plan, it's crucial to **conduct market research.** This will help gain insights into your target audience, their online habits, and their preferences.

4 STEP

Armed with this understanding, you will be able to move on to the next step and **define clear and measurable objectives for your online presence.**

5 STEP

Lastly, the final step involves **implementing digital** solutions that will elevate your business's digital presence within the market.

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DIGITAL SOLUTIONS

DIGITAL MARKETING

Digital marketing is a broad term that encompasses **all marketing efforts that use electronic devices** or the internet to promote products or services.

It's a crucial component of modern business strategies,

Some aspects and components of **digital marketing** are: website, Search Engine Optimization (**SEO**), Content Marketing, **Social Media** Marketing, **Email** Marketing, Pay-Per-Click (**PPC**) Advertising

BENEFITS

Global Reach: Allows you to reach a wider and global audience.

Cost-Effective: Enables to allocate the budget for different digital channels based on your goals and audience.

Targeted Advertising: Permits precise audience targeting.

Measurable Results: Provides real-time, detailed analytics.

Immediate Feedback: Allows for instant feedback from your audience.

Content Marketing: Valuable and informative content can attract and retain a loyal customer base.

BENEFITS

Enhanced Market Access: allows to reach new markets and customers.

Efficient Procurement: facilitates organisations to streamline their sourcing processes and optimise resource allocation.

Expanded Choices: provides business with a broader range of choices when it comes to suppliers and products.

Cost Savings: allows enterprises to compare prices and products, improving efficiency and cost savings .

Improved Collaboration: promoting transparency and fostering greater opportunities for partnerships.

B2B TRADE PLATFORMS

B2B trade platforms are online marketplaces that connect businesses with other businesses to buy and sell goods or services.

Some examples of B2B trade platforms include Alibaba, Amazon Business, and ThomasNet.

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DATA ANALYTICS

Crowdsourcing is the practice of **obtaining ideas, services, or content from a large group of people,** typically through the internet on an open call or competition.

Examples of crowdsourcing include online **surveys**, **crowdfunding,** open innovation **challenges**, and **user-generated content**.

BENEFITS

Networking Diversity: opens access to a diverse network of individuals or communities.

Innovation Synergy: it reaches into collective intelligence and creativity amplifying the generation of innovative ideas and solutions.

Cost-effective solutions: allows organisations to access a diverse talent and ideas facilitating efficient and economical problem-solving.

Enhanced stakeholder engagement: promotes active involvement from a broad spectrum of participants, thus creating collaborative opportunities while simultaneously unveiling potential new talents and expertise.

BENEFITS

Efficiency: Improves productivity through the use of digital tools and systems.

Team Collaboration: Enhance communication and teamwork regardless of location.

Agile decision making: By providing real-time data and insights, it facilitates faster informed decision making.

Modernization and Scalability: Digital transformation reduces costs and streamlines processes through automation and digitization.

Improved customer service through personalised and responsive interactions.

INTEGRATED SMART WORKPLACE

An integrated smart workplace is a modern work environment that leverages digital technologies to improve productivity, collaboration, and communication among employees.

It typically includes cloud-based applications, mobile devices, automation tools, and other technologies that enable employees to work more efficiently and effectively.

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POTENTIAL DIGITAL BARRIERS

During this process, it's essential to anticipate and proactively address any potential obstacles that your business might encounter. This proactive approach ensures that you are well-prepared with effective solutions to overcome these challenges.

MOST PROBABLE DIGITAL BARRIERS

It's important to note that these barriers can vary depending on the specific context, industry, and region in which SMEs operate.

COMPETING FOR ONLINE VISIBILITY

SMEs may find it challenging to stand out among competitors in the digital marketplace, especially in crowded industries or competitive markets.

SCALABILITY ISSUES

Scaling up digital marketing efforts and managing increased customer interactions can be a barrier for SMEs without the necessary infrastructure and systems in place.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS COULD BE...

FOCUS

on a niche market or unique selling proposition (USP) to differentiate your SME from competitors.

IMPLEMENT MARKETING AUTOMATION TOOLS

to streamline customer interactions and manage increased workloads.

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INTEGRATION CHALLENGES

Integrating different digital platforms, tools, and systems can be complex and time-consuming, particularly if SMEs have a fragmented technology infrastructure.

DEVELOP A ROBUST CHANGE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

that includes clear communication, involvement of employees in decision-making, and addressing concerns.

LIMITED KNOWLEDGE OF ADVANCED DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGIES

SMEs at this level may struggle to leverage more sophisticated digital marketing techniques, such as personalised targeting, automation, or conversion rate optimization.

EDUCATE EMPLOYEES ABOUT CYBERSECURITY

best practices to reduce the risk of breaches, as well as, implement regular data backup and recovery procedures to mitigate data loss.

DATA PRIVACY AND COMPLIANCE

as SMEs collect and process more customer data, they need to comply with data protection regulations, which can pose challenges if they lack knowledge and resources to implement adequate privacy measures.

INVESTIGATE ALTERNATIVE INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS

or technologies like satellite, 4G/5G, or wireless connections, or consider using co-working spaces or business centers with reliable internet access

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ACQUIRING THE NECESSARY COMPETENCIES FOR SUCCESS

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COURSES IN OUR PLATFORM

DIGITAL MARKETING

CROWD-SOURCING

B2B TRADE PLATFORMS

INTEGRATED SMART WORKPLACE

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Module:

DIGITAL MARKETING

CONTENT

- ROLE OF DIGITAL MARKETING IN PROMOTING SMES
- DIGITAL MARKETING PLATFORMS & CHANNELS
- HOW TO DEVELOP A SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY
- DIGITAL MARKETING INSIGHTS
- BEST FREE ONLINE TOOLS FOR SMART MARKETING
- WHAT IS SEO
- LOOK FOR SUBSIDIES FOR YOUR DIGITAL TOOLS
- BUILD YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNEL
- LAUNCH YOUR DIGITAL CAMPAIGN
- MOVING YOUR DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION FORWARD

OBJECTIVES

AFTER MODULE COMPLETION LEARNERS WILL BE ABLE TO:

Understand Digital Marketing Fundamentals: Define what Digital Marketing is and its key components. Describe the advantages of Digital Marketing

Digital Marketing Platforms & Channels: Access and use the main digital marketing platforms & and channels

Engage with Digital Content: Access digital marketing materials such as text, videos, audio, and interactive elements. Interact effectively with multimedia content

Participate in Online Discussions: learn how to build a conversation around a Brand

Build and launch a digital campaign

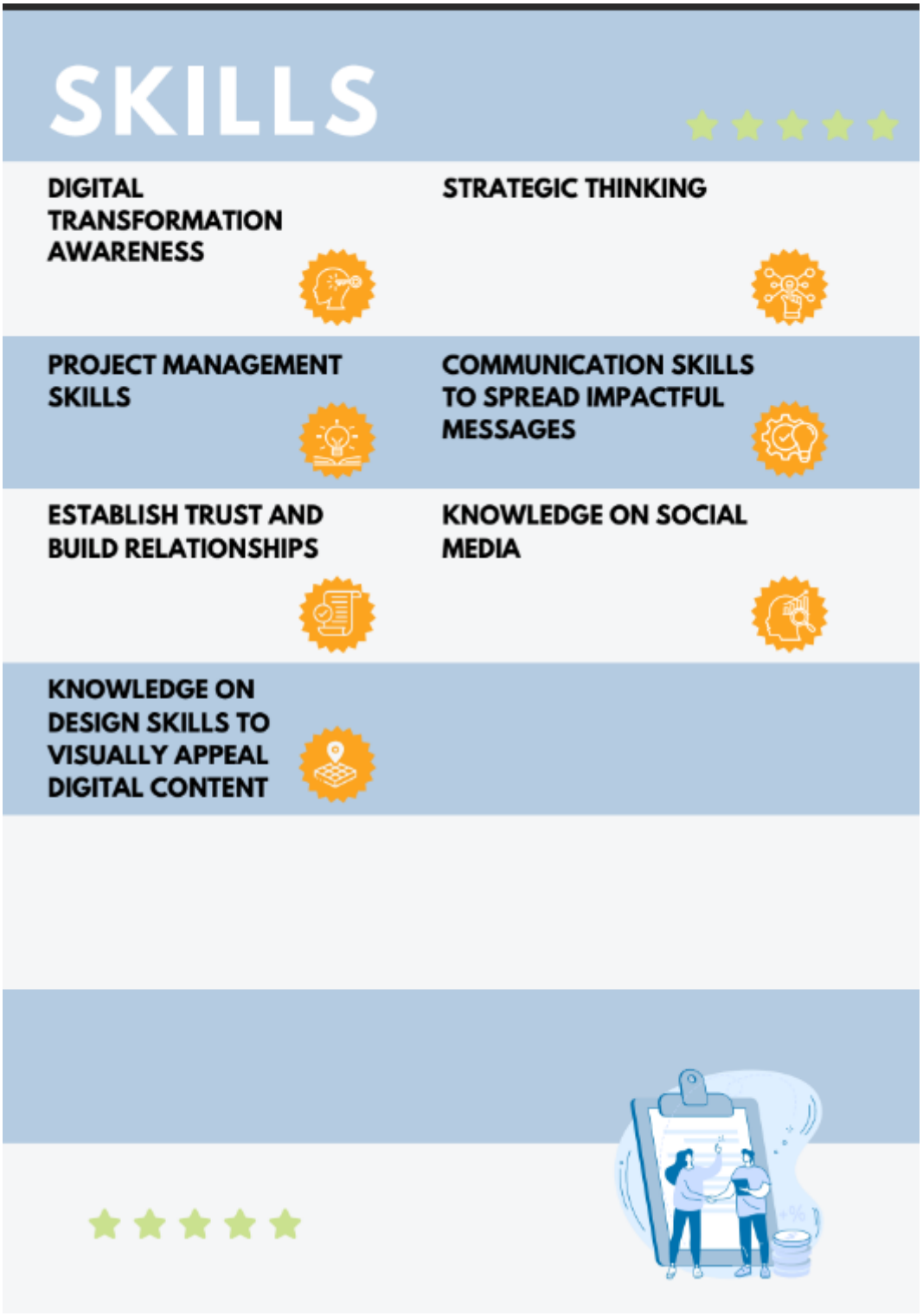

Figure 8: Final Version of the roadmaps (Standard Level)

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ADVANCED LEVEL

DEEP INTEGRATION OF TECHNOLOGY

Welcome to the next phase of your advanced digital transformation journey!

In the ever-evolving landscape of digitalization, enterprises are harnessing the power of technology to stay at the forefront of innovation, recognising their transformative potential for elevate their operations and deliver unique value to their customers.

This **roadmap** aims to empower **small business in Europe** with the tools, strategies, and educational programmes necessary to not only adapt but excel in the **digital era.**

LEVEL DESCRIPTION

Understanding the Current State and Defining a Future Vision

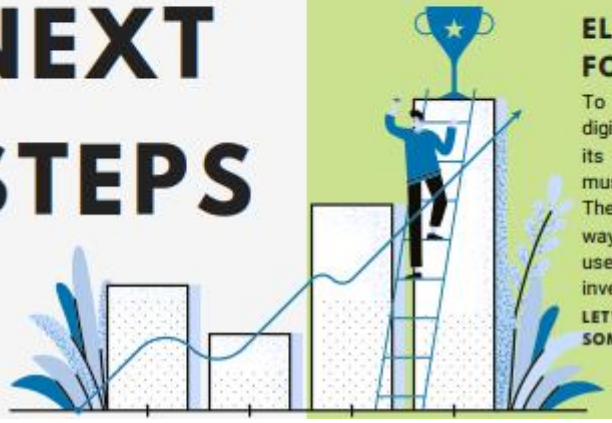
LEVEL DESCRIPTION

SPRINTING FORWARD IN THE DIGITAL BUSINESS LANDSCAPE

At the **advanced level**, your enterprise has firmly established its online presence and is already reaping the benefits. However, to further enhance the user experience, your organisation is looking forward to strategically investing in cutting-edge technologies of the next generation.

With an unwavering commitment to staying at the forefront of innovation, your business is actively exploring new technologies to elevate their products and services.

NEXT STEPS



ELEMENTS REQUIRED FOR PROGRESSION

To exceed on this phase of the digitalization journey and truly harness its economic benefits, your business must navigate several critical steps. These strategic actions will pave the way for your enterprise to elevate the user experience through strategic investments.

LET'S START WITH THE STRATEGY AND SOME MILESTONES!

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1 STEP

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Continuing from this starting point, the next step is to make a **complete list of areas that need improvement** in the company's day-to-day operations. This process allows you to identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement.

3 STEP

Before creating any plan, it's crucial to **conduct market research.** This will help gain insights into your target audience, their online habits, and their preferences.

4 STEP

Armed with this understanding, you will be able to move on to the next step and **define clear and measurable objectives for your online presence.**

5 STEP

Lastly, the final step involves **implementing digital** solutions that will elevate your business's digital presence within the market.

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DIGITAL SOLUTIONS

MACHINE LEARNING

Machine learning (ML) is a subfield of artificial intelligence (AI) that focuses on the development of algorithms and statistical models that enable computer systems to improve their performance on a specific task.

They use data to generalise patterns, make predictions, or take actions without being explicitly programmed for each specific input.

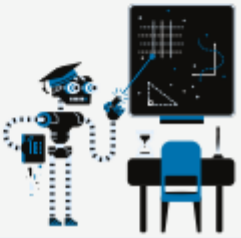
BENEFITS

Automation of Repetitive Tasks: Many tasks can be automated, increasing efficiency and minimising errors.

Cost Reduction: can lead to significant cost savings due to the optimization of resource allocation.

Predictive Maintenance: can predict when equipment is likely to fail, reducing downtime and repair costs.

Fraud Detection: can detect fraudulent activities in real-time.



BENEFITS

Informed Decision-Making: It empowers with valuable insights, enabling data-driven decision-making.

Operational Efficiency: can help SMEs identify inefficiencies in their processes, leading to cost savings and optimised resource allocation.

Personalised Customer Experiences: Enables to understand their customers better, allowing for personalised products and services, enhancing customer loyalty and satisfaction.

Competitive Advantage: Gives a competitive edge, adapting quickly to market changes, and making informed decisions.

Improved Marketing ROI: It can refine advertising strategies, target audiences more precisely, and improve the return on investment (ROI) for marketing efforts.

BIG DATA

Big Data refers to extremely large and complex datasets that often require advanced computational and analytical tools, such as machine learning and artificial intelligence, to extract valuable insights, make informed decisions, and discover patterns or trends that might otherwise remain hidden in the data.

These datasets typically exhibit the "**3Vs**":

- high **V**olume (massive amounts of data),
- great **V**ariety (different data types and sources), and
- high **V**elocity (data is generated rapidly).

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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to the simulation of human intelligence processes by machines, particularly computer systems. AI systems can perform tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as problem-solving, decision-making, language understanding, and perception.

BENEFITS

Automated Operations: AI can automate routine tasks and processes, reducing manual workloads, minimising errors, and improving operational efficiency.

Enhanced Customer Service: Chatbots and virtual assistants can provide 24/7 customer support, improving customer satisfaction.

Data-Driven Insights: They can analyse large datasets quickly, helping derive valuable insights for informed decision-making and gaining a competitive edge.

Personalization: AI algorithms can analyse customer data to personalise marketing campaigns, increasing customer engagement and loyalty.

Cost Savings: By automating tasks, predicting maintenance needs, and optimising resource allocation, AI can lead to significant cost savings allowing them to operate more efficiently.

BLOCKCHAIN

Blockchain is a decentralised and distributed digital ledger technology that securely records transactions across multiple computers, forming a continuous chain.

It is known for its transparency, security, and immutability of data.

BENEFITS

Enhanced Security: Blockchain's cryptographic features make it highly secure against data tampering and unauthorised access.

Reduced Fraud: Transparency and immutability reduce the risk of fraud, making it a valuable tool for tracking and verifying transactions.

Streamlined Processes: Smart contracts, powered by blockchain, automate and enforce contract terms, reducing paperwork, administrative costs and streamlining processes.

Improved Trust: Its transparency and trust-building capabilities can help build trust with customers, suppliers, and partners.

Access to Finance: It can provide SMEs with improved access to financing through methods like Initial Coin Offerings (**ICOs**) or Security Token Offerings (**STOs**), bypassing traditional financial intermediaries.

AUGMENTED REALITY

Augmented Reality (AR) is a technology that overlays digital information, such as images, videos, or 3D models, onto the real world, typically through a smartphone, tablet, or AR glasses.

It enhances the user's perception of reality by blending digital and physical elements.

BENEFITS

Enhanced Customer Engagement: Enables the creation of interactive and immersive experiences, increasing customer engagement and brand recognition.

Product Visualization: Allows customers to visualise products in their real environment before making a purchase, reducing uncertainty and potentially increasing sales.

Training and Education: It can be used for employee training and skill development, making learning more interactive and effective.

Efficient Maintenance: Can provide technicians with real-time, hands-free access to manuals, instructions, and remote expert assistance, improving maintenance and repair processes.

Marketing Innovation: They differentiate business in the market, providing unique and memorable customer interactions for effective product or service promotion.

BENEFITS

Cost Savings: Reduce labour costs by replacing manual workers in repetitive or labour-intensive tasks.

Accuracy and Precision: High accuracy performing tasks with precision, reducing the likelihood of errors.

Improved Quality: Improve product quality and consistency by minimising variations in production processes.

Enhanced Safety: Employed in hazardous environments or tasks that are dangerous for humans, reducing the risk of workplace accidents and injuries.

Flexibility: Robots can be reprogrammed or reconfigured to perform different tasks or adapt to changing production needs.

Scalability: Automation can easily scale to handle increased production volumes without the need for significant changes in infrastructure or workforce.

AUTOMATION AND ROBOTICS

They play a significant role in improving efficiency and productivity within a company:

- **AUTOMATION** refers to the use of technology, systems, and processes to perform tasks, operations, or workflows with minimal human intervention.
- **ROBOTS** are physical or virtual machines that are designed to perform tasks autonomously or semi-autonomously.

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POTENTIAL DIGITAL BARRIERS

During this process, it's essential to anticipate and proactively address any potential obstacles that your business might encounter. This proactive approach ensures that you are well-prepared with effective solutions to overcome these challenges.

MOST PROBABLE DIGITAL BARRIERS

It's important to note that these barriers can vary depending on the specific context, industry, and region in which SMEs operate.

SCARCE EXPERTISE IN EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

SMEs may face difficulties in finding skilled professionals who can effectively work with advanced technologies like big data, machine learning, or artificial intelligence.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS COULD BE...

PARTNER WITH UNIVERSITIES

research institutions, or technology companies to access expertise or collaborate on projects.

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HIGH IMPLEMENTATION COSTS

Implementing advanced technologies can be expensive, requiring significant upfront investments in hardware, software, and specialized training.

IMPLEMENT ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES GRADUALLY

starting with pilot projects to assess ROI before full-scale deployment, as well as explore government grants or subsidies aimed at supporting the adoption of advanced technologies.

COMPLEXITY OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES

Technologies like blockchain, augmented reality, and automation/robotics may have a steeper learning curve, making it challenging for SMEs to understand, implement, and maintain them.

BEGIN WITH SMALL-SCALE PROOF OF CONCEPT PROJECTS

to better understand the technology's applicability and challenges.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Advanced technologies often raise ethical concerns, such as data privacy, bias in AI algorithms, or automation's impact on the workforce. SMEs need to navigate these complexities responsibly.

ESTABLISH AN ETHICS COMMITTEE

or designate a responsible individual to oversee ethical considerations related to technology adoption while staying informed about relevant regulations.

INTEGRATION WITH LEGACY SYSTEMS:

Integrating advanced technologies with existing legacy systems can be complex and require extensive modifications or upgrades, posing a barrier to implementation.

PLAN A GRADUAL TRANSITION BY IDENTIFYING CRITICAL AREAS

for integration and tackling them one at a time.

SMEs Grow Digital

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ACQUIRING THE NECESSARY COMPETENCIES FOR SUCCESS

At this point, you might be wondering
How to acquire the knowledge and skills required to advance your digitalization journey.

E-COURSES

FORTUNATELY, OUR

WEB PLATFORM SMEsGoDigital

OFFERS FOR FREE A WIDE RANGE OF

COMPLIMENTARY COURSES

DESIGNED TO EQUIP YOU WITH THE EXPERTISE NEEDED TO DRIVE YOUR

DIGITALIZATION PROCESS

SMEs Grow Digital

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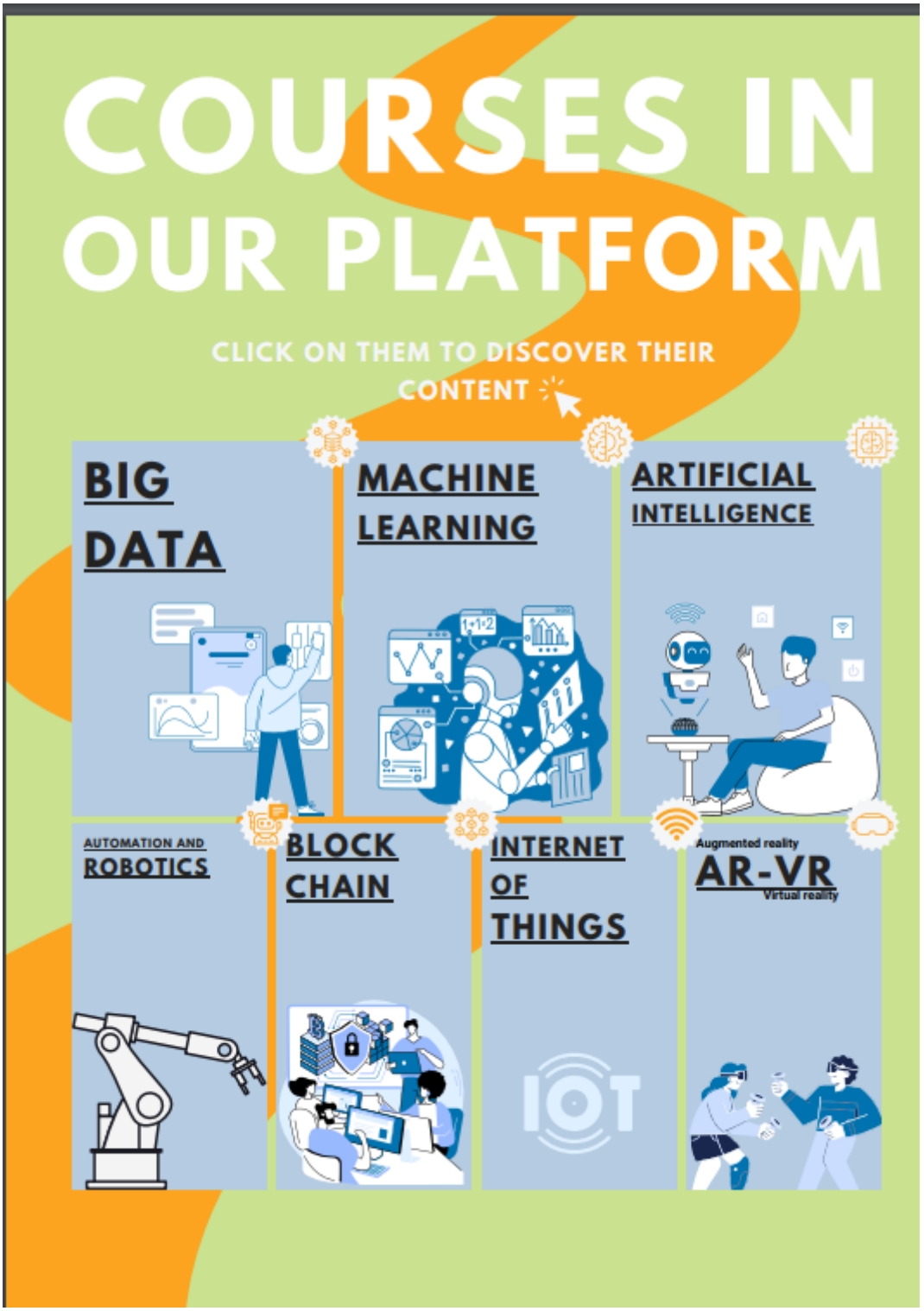

SMEs Grow Digital

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Module:
BIG DATA

ADVANCED LEVEL

OBJECTIVES

AFTER MODULE COMPLETION LEARNERS WILL BE ABLE TO:

- Indicate the value of Big Data
- Recognize the added value of Big Data for their SME
- Determine if their SME is ready for the Big Data benefits
- Explore the ways they could maximize the Big Data value

CONTENT

- BIG DATA VALUE
- BIG DATA FOR SMES GROWTH
- IS YOUR BUSINESS READY FOR BIG DATA BENEFITS?
- MAXIMISING BIG DATA VALUE

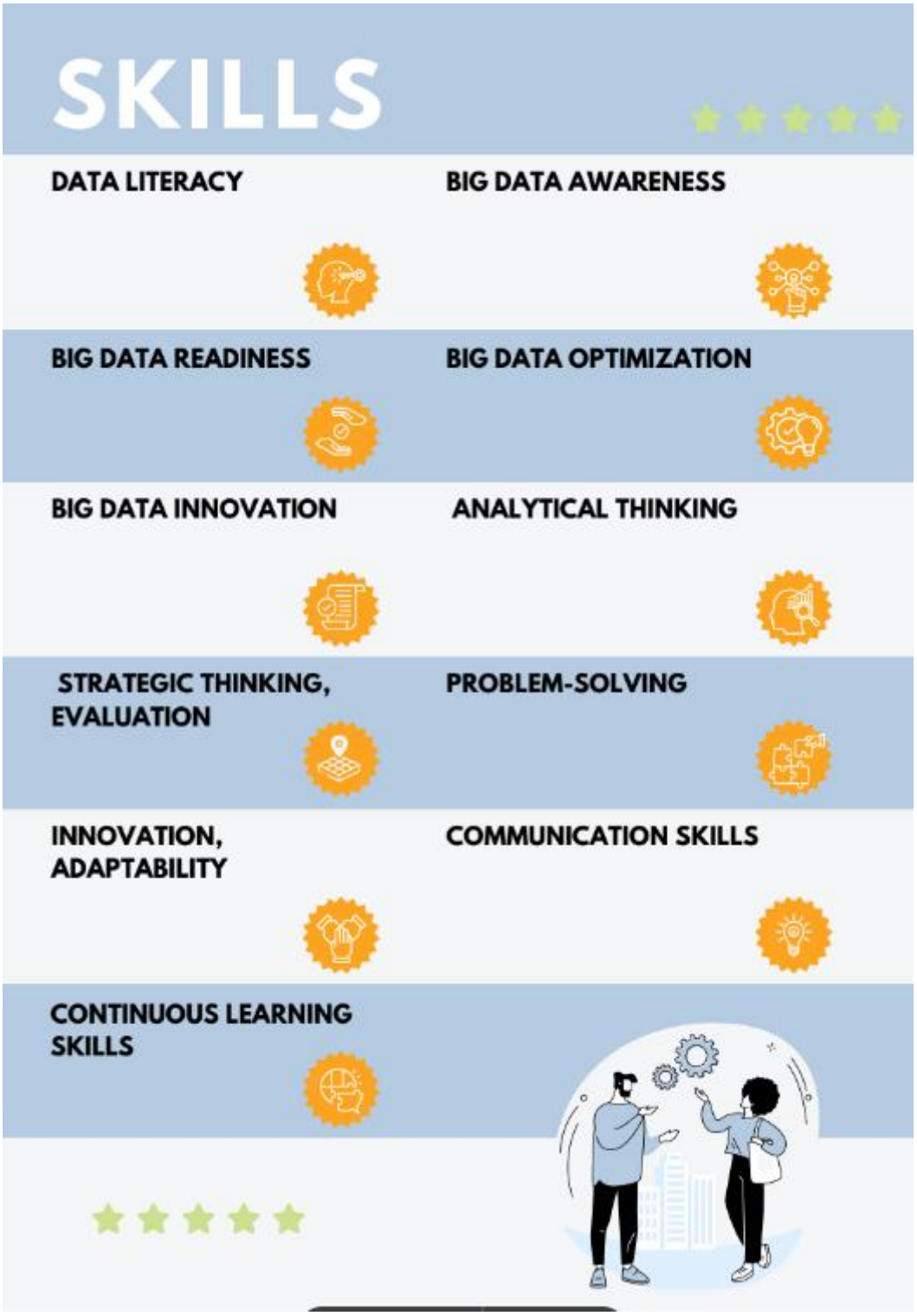


Figure 9: Final Version of the roadmaps (Advanced Level)

Support by Mentoring sessions

As part of the #SMEsGoDigital Online platform, we support mentoring sessions aimed at empowering small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) through digital transformation. These sessions offer a unique opportunity for SMEs to receive personalized guidance and support from experienced digital consultants. By participating in these sessions, SMEs can gain valuable insights, strategies, and advice tailored to their specific needs and challenges in embracing digitalization. The consortium set some criteria for selecting digital experts as mentors, in order to conduct 20-minute virtual consultations with SMEs, providing them with actionable recommendations and initial guidance to kick start their digital journey. Through these mentoring sessions, SMEs can not only enhance their digital capabilities but also establish lasting connections within the business community.

When selecting mentors in the field of digital technologies, we considered several criteria to ensure that they possess the knowledge, experience, and professionalism necessary to provide valuable guidance to SMEs:

Expertise and Experience: Mentors should have a deep understanding and practical experience in various aspects of digital technologies such as digital marketing, software implementation, cyber security, data analytics, and other relevant areas. They should demonstrate proficiency through their work history, projects undertaken, and any certifications or qualifications they possess in these domains.

Professional Registration and Accreditation: While not mandatory, mentors who are registered professionals in their respective fields can provide an added assurance of their expertise and commitment to ethical standards. Documentation of professional registration or accreditation may be requested as part of the selection process.

Online Presence: A professional and engaging online presence, such as a website, portfolio, blog, or active social media accounts related to their expertise, can showcase the mentor's knowledge and credibility. This online presence should reflect their expertise, past projects, testimonials, and insights shared within the digital community.

Client References: Mentors should be able to provide references from previous clients or partners who can attest to their competence, professionalism, and the impact of their guidance. These references help verify the mentor's track record and the quality of their services.

Consulting Experience: Mentors should have a proven track record of consulting with SMEs or other organizations on digital transformation initiatives. They should be able to demonstrate their ability to understand business challenges, provide strategic advice, and implement effective digital solutions.

Willingness to Offer Free Consultation: Mentors should be open to offering a complimentary initial consultation session of around 20 minutes to SMEs, during which they can assess the SME's needs, provide some preliminary guidance, and discuss potential further collaboration if mutually beneficial.

By considering these criteria, we aimed to select mentors who can effectively support SMEs in navigating the complexities of digital transformation and achieving their business objectives. The mentors selected will create a profile at www.calendly.com setting their timeslots for mentoring sessions. Then they will send it to our developer in order to insert it in our platform.

In the table bellow you can see how the consortium set the criteria mentioned above:

	ICT software/solutions vendors	DT services providers Natural persons	DT services providers companies
2	Pre-Approved@SMEsGoDigital targets ICM vendors that develop and/or sell digital solutions to the enterprise market. ICM vendors must meet the following criteria in order to apply for Pre-Approved@SMEsGoDigital Vendor appointment: a. The ICM vendor must be registered in Singapore with substantial level of local support in Singapore; b. The ICM vendor must be financially stable with a positive net equity based on the latest financial statement; c. The solution must be ready for deployment, and identified as contributing at least 15% increase in productivity per year in the relevant business processes. d. The solution must meet the Pre-Approval criteria published on IMDA website at https://www.imda.gov.sg/SMEsGoDigital ("SGD Website") based on the latest version, at the point of submitting the completed Vendor Self-Assessment Checklist ("Checklist") to IMDA; e. The ICM vendor must have at least 5 SME1 that have used the solution for the last 6 months, and are still using the solution (Note: Enterprises must not be subsidiaries nor affiliated companies); f. The ICM vendor must have adequate resources to manage, administer and implement the solution for mass deployment.	https://experts.fundingbox.com/?utm_campaign=experts&utm_medium=email&utm_source=intheblox	OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDUSTRY PARTNERS Partners play a crucial role in helping us to support SMEs in their digitalisation journey. IMDA seeks industry partners who can play an influential role in helping to digitalise their SME-clients, by simplifying SMEs' adoption of impactful digital solutions and building of their digital capabilities. Partners can participate by: □ Providing SMEs with one-stop solution packages such as integrated and interoperable solutions with support services, and harnessing value from data analytics □ Driving consumer transactions in the use of digital solutions □ Providing SMEs with guidance on suitable pre-approved solutions that best meet their business needs □ Helping SMEs to defray costs of digital technology adoption □ Helping SMEs in business ecosystems to digitalise To explore such partnership opportunities, please contact us at info@imda.gov.sg.
3	ICM Vendors may proceed to submit the completed Vendor Self-Assessment Checklist and supporting documents through the SMEs Go Digital Pre-Approval System	ReSTART SMEs digital transformation services https://restartsmes.eu/digital-assessment/	
4	Pre-Approval System User Manual	- They have relevant qualifications and experience in digital transformation, such as certifications, degrees, publications, projects or testimonials. - They have a clear and compelling value proposition for SMEs, such as how they can help them achieve their digital goals, overcome their challenges and improve their performance. - They have a professional and engaging online presence, such as a website, a portfolio, a blog or a social media account. - They have positive reviews and ratings from previous clients or partners, or they can provide references or case studies to demonstrate their quality and impact. - They are willing to offer 20 minutes of free consultation to SMEs and follow up with them if they are interested in further collaboration.	
5	Vendor Self-Assessment Checklist_Generic_Version23-2.0		
6	Annex I - Satisfaction Survey Form_Version21-2.0.docx		
7	Who can apply Any business entity that meets the following requirements will be eligible: - Registered and operating in Singapore; - Minimum of 30% local shareholding; and - Group sales turnover not more than S$100 million per		

Figure 10: Setting criteria for mentors

An example of a mentoring session, implemented during the piloting phase is described bellow:

Mentor: Pavlos Papadimitriou, Project Manager at DOTSOFT

Mentee: Manolis Manos

Enterprise: E.N. MANOS Ltd

Level: Standard

Courses attended: Digital Marketing - B2B Trade Platforms - Crowdsourcing - Integrated Smart Workplace

Indicated goals: a) Increase automations: The goal is to streamline and enhance operational efficiency by implementing automated processes across various business functions. This involves identifying repetitive and time-consuming tasks that can be automated using technologies such as machine learning algorithms. This could include automating data entry, routine customer interactions, or internal workflows. Increased speed and accuracy in task execution, reduced manual errors, cost savings, and the ability to reallocate human resources to more strategic and creative tasks.

b) Accelerate business acquisition: To leverage digital tools and technologies to facilitate and expedite the process of acquiring new business, partnerships, or technologies. This might involve utilizing data analytics to identify potential acquisition targets, employing virtual data rooms for due diligence, and implementing collaboration tools to streamline communication during the acquisition process. Faster decision-making, improved due diligence processes, enhanced communication and collaboration among teams involved in the acquisition, and the ability to adapt quickly to market opportunities.

c) Educate staff on new technologies: To ensure that the entire workforce is equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to leverage and adapt to new technologies introduced during the digital transformation. This could involve providing training programs, workshops, or online courses covering the latest technologies relevant to the organization. It's important to tailor the educational initiatives to different departments and roles within the company. Increased employee proficiency, reduced resistance to change, improved innovation and problem-solving capabilities, and a more technologically literate workforce that can contribute to the success of digital initiatives.

Task 3: Development of the digital awareness e-course

The #SMEsGoDigital course has been developed to simplify the digitalization process for SMEs, with a particular focus on micro-enterprises (1-10 employees) and self-employed individuals, who are the primary beneficiaries of our project. Targeting the self-employed and the workforce of micro and small enterprises, including both management and employees, our course aims to address their evolving needs in the changing landscape of business operations and equip them with the necessary skills and competencies for the new digital, green, and distance economy. Extensive literature review indicates that our target groups lack access to light, user-friendly, and practical digital tools, as well as the capacity to leverage digital competences effectively. Therefore, our course provides practical guidance and orientation through simple roadmaps, guiding them through incremental steps to bridge their digital capacity gaps.

Furthermore, our course adopts a step-by-step approach to implement feasible and sequential objectives, considering the time constraints faced by our target groups. Recognizing the need for flexible learning solutions, especially for micro-enterprises and the self-employed, our course offers small, chunk-size learning units that are tailored to their working processes. Leveraging the concept of micro-learning, an innovative e-learning technology introduced by our project, our course provides learners with easily digestible content and signposts to navigate through the plethora of available information.

In designing the course, we have taken into account the learners' level of familiarity with autonomous learning, considering their previous experiences in traditional classroom settings. Addressing potential resistance towards digital transformation, which emerged as a significant challenge during our needs analysis, our course design incorporates strategies to mitigate fear and negativity towards digital technologies.

As a result, our course is:

- Online (e-learning and mobile-learning)
- Aligned with benchmarks outlined in our 3-level roadmaps
- Autonomous, allowing learners to construct their self-tailored learning paths
- Focused on core professional processes
- Less than 5 minutes per learning unit
- Easily searchable
- Consisting of single professional performance-based learning units

- Enriched with motivational content and resources

Our course content is directly connected with the #SMEsGoDigital three-level roadmaps with its stepwise benchmarks delivered in PR1 Task 2.1. This is the reason why the content sequencing follows its three levels - Basic, Standard and Advanced - focusing on the core competencies derived from the defined benchmarks so as to best facilitate learners to autonomously proceed constructing their learning path grounded on their self-evaluation of where they are now and where they wish to be.

At the Basic level, participants can enroll in courses covering essential topics such as "Going Digital," e-commerce fundamentals, e-payment systems, cloud accounting practices, utilization of digital tools, introduction to data analytics, and e-learning techniques. Progressing to the Standard level, courses delve into more specialized areas including digital marketing strategies, utilization of B2B trade platforms, crowdsourcing methodologies, and implementation of integrated smart workplace solutions. Finally, at the Advanced level, participants have the opportunity to explore advanced technologies through courses on big data analytics, machine learning algorithms, artificial intelligence applications, blockchain technology, Internet of Things (IoT) implementations, augmented reality-virtual reality (AR-VR) experiences, and automation and robotics advancements. Each course is designed to equip participants with the requisite knowledge and skills to navigate and excel in the digital landscape.

In this vein, our course content integrates lessons, tools and resources classified by the given levels to maximise the course learners' capacity.

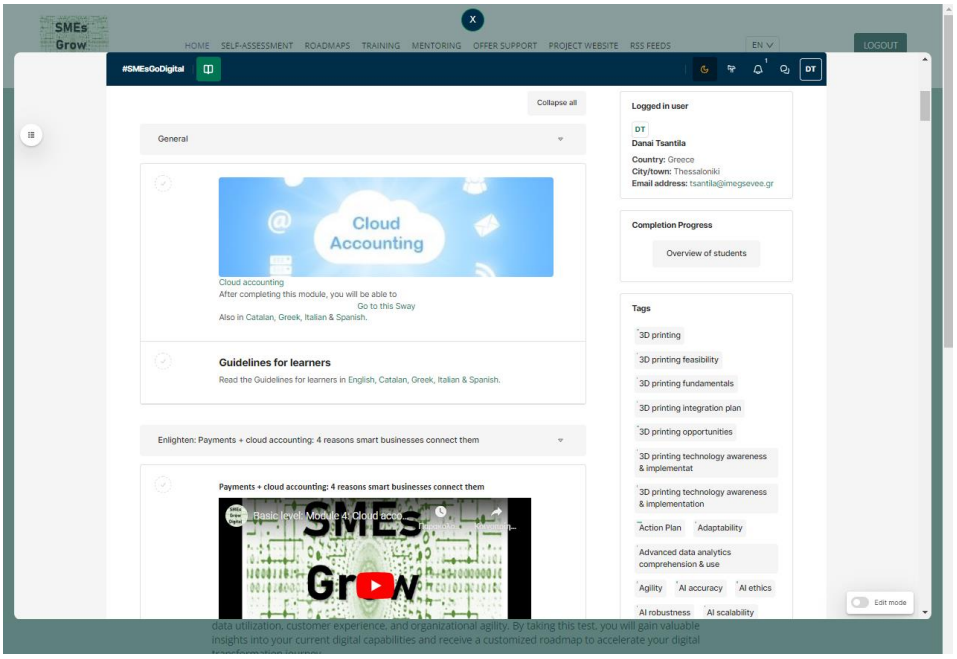
Course: Modules based on the three-level roadmaps benchmarks

Tools: Live Events, Webinars, Success Stories

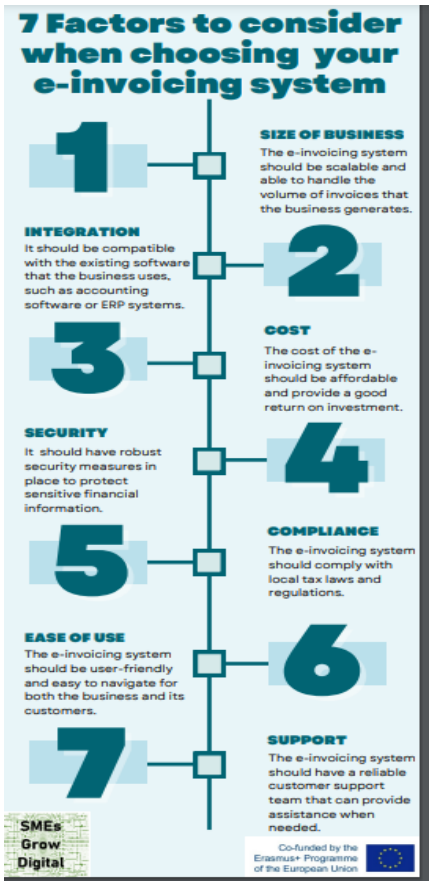
Resources: Open and Free Educational & Training Resources

Following the distribution of courses by ENAIP as the task leader, developers created all necessary material, which was then uploaded to the project's Google Drive. Subsequently, a peer review took place, involving the entire consortium, following another distribution by ENAIP. After the peer review, final corrections were made, and the lessons were uploaded to Moodle.

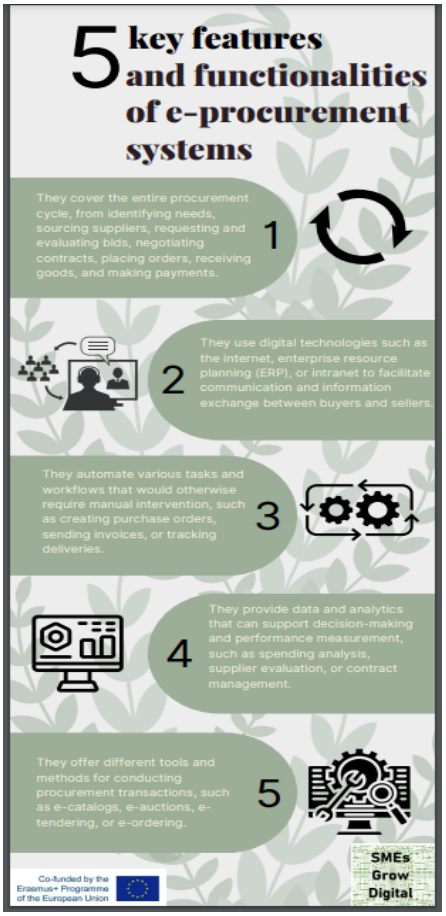
Bellow you can see some of the Online Platform's content. You can also see all the lesson plans developed for each module and unit in the Annex.



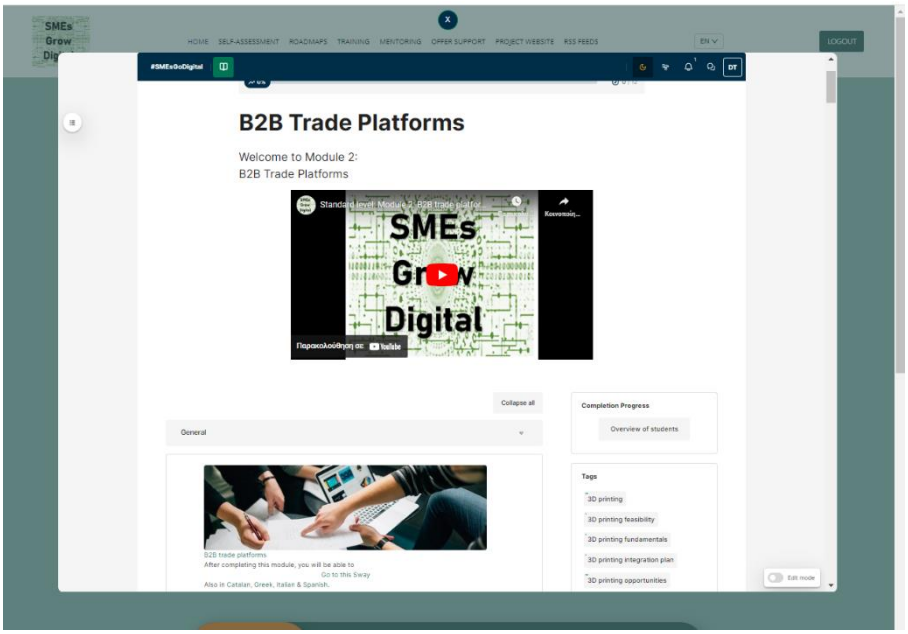
Εικόνα 1 Module 4: Cloud Accounting (Basic Level)



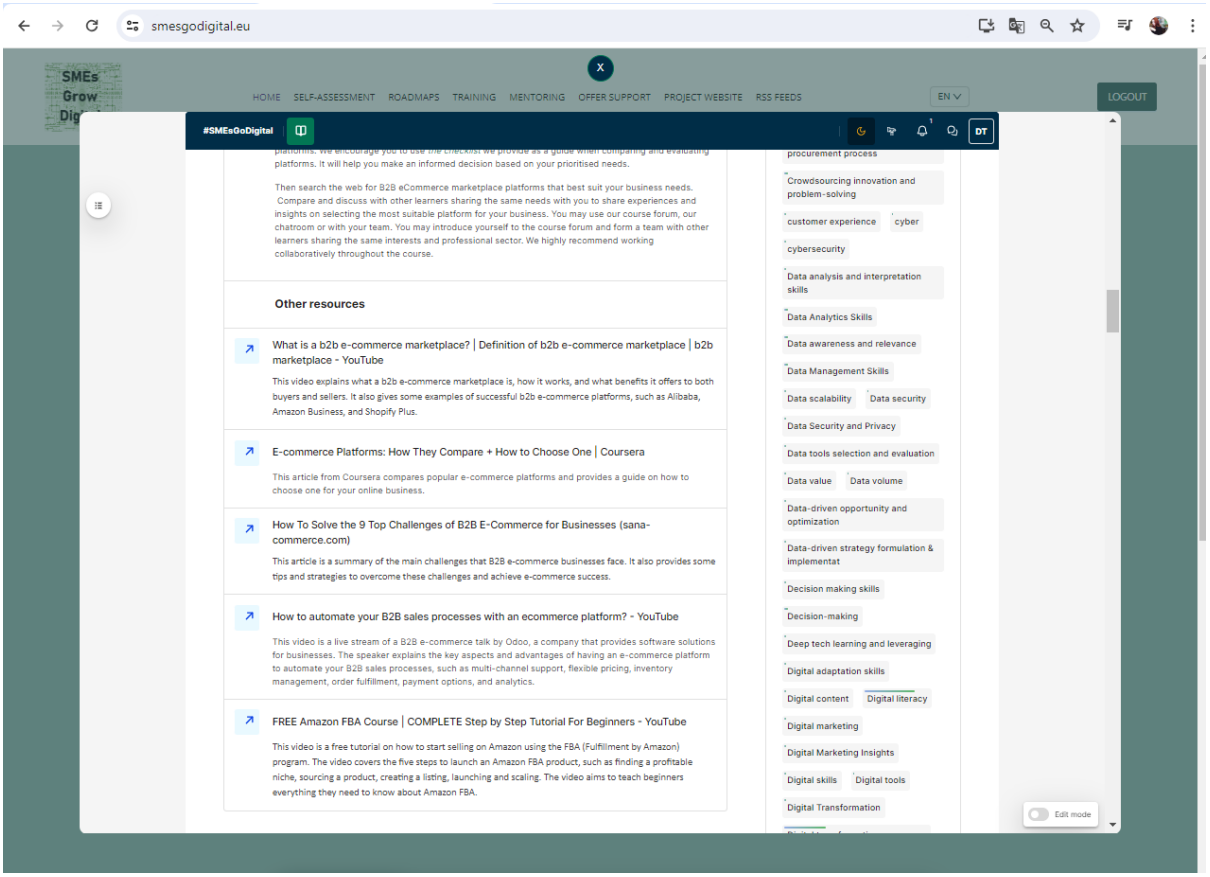
Εικόνα 2 Module 4: Cloud Accounting (Basic Level)



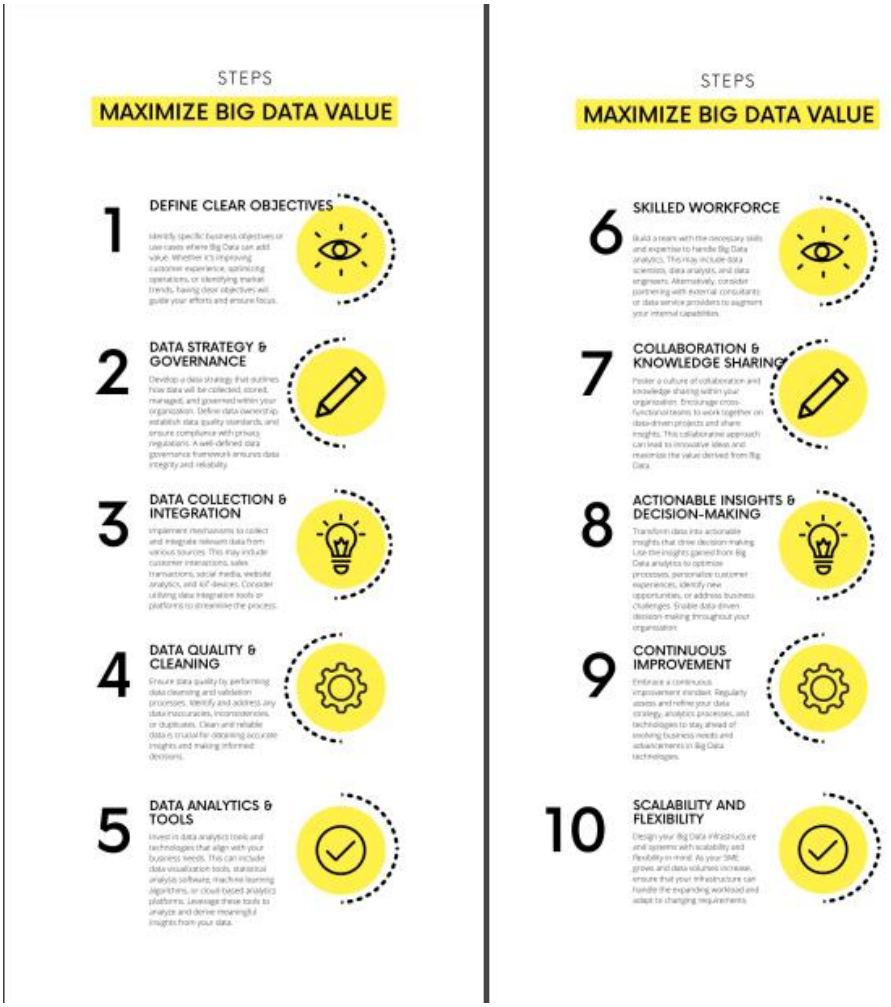
Εικόνα 3 Module 2: B2B Trade Platforms (Standard Level)



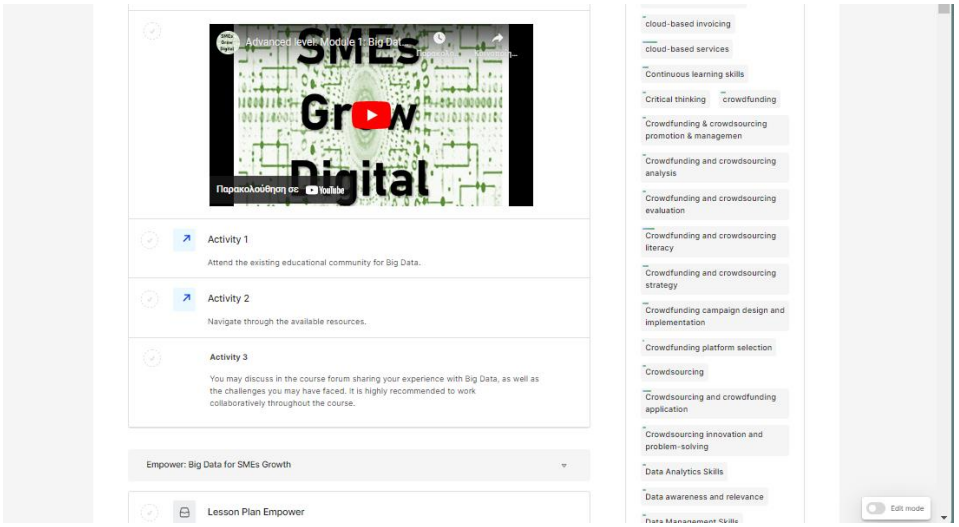
Εικόνα 4 Module2: B2B Trade Platforms (Standard Level)



Εικόνα 5 Module 2: B2B Trade Platforms (Standard Level)



Εικόνα 6 Module 1: Big Data (Advanced Level)

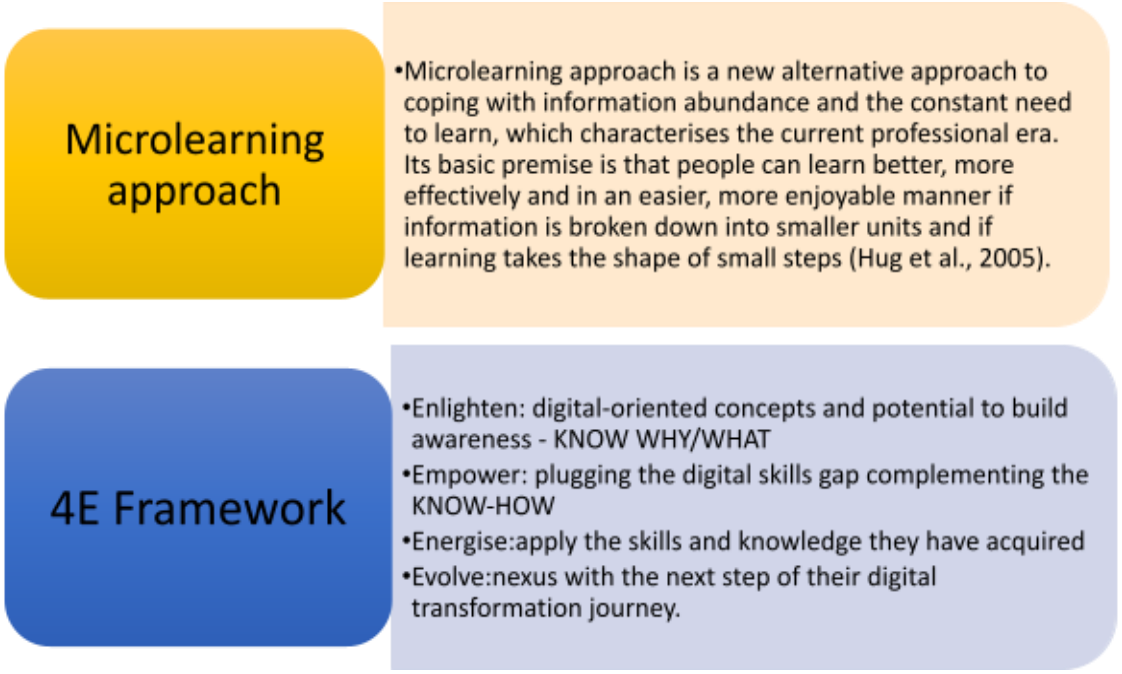


Εικόνα 7 Module 1: Big Data (Advanced Level)

Overview of the course and structure

The structure of the #SMEsGoDigital competence based course, has been designed in the Task 3 of Project Result 1, following a specific methodology based on the micro learning units on one side, and the 4 E framework on the other.

Some more context from the deliverable “Course Design” (PR3-Task3):



Structure of the online course

The overall course is organized into 18 modules. Each module is articulated in several units (from 4 to 10), which belongs to one of the **E** of the above mentioned Framework. Furthermore, the 18 modules are divided in 3 levels (Basic, Standard, Advanced) which refers to the 3 Roadmaps designed and developed in the previous Task. (Task 2 PR1 – Design of the supportive orientation programme; Task 2 PR2 – Development of the supportive orientation programme).

Each module should last maximum 20 minutes and each units should have an approximate length of 2-3 minutes each.

Overview on the course structure

Level	N°	Module	Micro-Learning Units			
			Enlighten	**Empower**	**Energise**	**Evolve**
	1	Going digital	Why should my business go digital?	Create your e-mail	How do I collaborate remotely?	Ready to turn your business digital?
				What is a Google document?		
				What is Zoom?		
				Are my passwords safe?		
	2	e-commerce	The rise of e-commerce	How to build your website	Take your business online	Earning money from your online business
				E-commerce with Shopify		
				Your Facebook shop		
				How do I sell my services online?		
	3	e-payments	Payments in the digital era	What kinds of digital payments are there?	How do I set up an online payment?	How cloud technology can future-proof digital payments?
				Are online payments safe?		
				How do I get paid from my online business?		
	4	Cloud accounting	Payments + cloud accounting: 4 reasons smart businesses connect them	How to choose cloud accounting or invoicing software	Digitising Small Business Accounting	Digital tools to boost your business
				e-Invoicing - Getting set up to send e-Invoices		
				Staff management made simple		
				Choosing a Payroll System		

	5	Digital tools	Why do small business embrace digital tolls?	5 Must-have Free Digital Tools to Help Boost SME Productivity	Look for subsidies for your digital tools	Get more benefits from your digital tools
				Collaboration Tools		
				Booking systems		
				Creative Tools		
				Productivity Tools		
				CRM Systems		
	6	Data analytics	What is data and why does it matter?	Sales & Channels	How business insights can help you grow	Upskilling your staff
				Customer feedback		
				Data & Analytics		
				Security & Data Protection		
	7	e-learning	6 Benefits of Upskilling your workforce	A strategist's guide to upskilling	Foster a culture of learning in your business	Profiting from yourdigitalisation
STANDARD	8	Digital marketing	Role of digital marketing in promoting SMEs	Digital Marketing Platforms & Channels	Build your social media channel	Moving your digital transformation forward
				How to develop a social media strategy	Launch your digital campaign	
				Digital Marketing Insights		
				Best free online tools for smart marketing		
				What is SEO		
	9	B2B trade platforms	Easy network & trade	Six criteria to look for in a B2B eCommerce marketplace platform	How to make the change to e-procurement	Procurement: Capitalising on the power of crowd
				How does an e-procurement system work?		
	10	Crowdsourcing	Raising capital for your SME	What is Crowdsourcing?	Crowdfunding Planning	New business models for a changing world
				Crowdfunding for Business		

	11	Integrated smart workplace	Can I manage my business virtually?	What Goes into a Successful Wearable Solution for Business?	Plan your smart business	All aboard to future Tech
				Making Cloud your new friend		
				Save time with smart collaboration tools		
				Virtual staff management		
				Advanced Data Analytics		
				How 3D printing can help small businesses?		
				How Internet of Things (IoT) can make your work easier		
	12	Big Data	Big Data value	Big Data for SMEs growth	Is your business ready for Big Data benefits?	Maximising Big Data value
	13	Machine learning	Machine Learning What it is and why it matters	Streamline your business with machine learning	What processes can be supported by machine learning techniques in your business?	Machine learning versus AI: what's the difference?
	14	Artificial Intelligence	What does Microsoft Bing's new AI assistant mean for your business?	AI applications for SMEs	Can AI leverage your business?	How AI and Blockchain are Changing Businesses
ADVANCED	15	Blockchain	Do you need blockchain?	The next revolution is written with blockchain	Implementing Blockchain Technology in your business	Blockchain and IoT opportunities for the SMEs
	16	Internet of Things	Why Every Single Small Business Needs the Internet of Things	5 Benefits of the Internet of Things (IoT) for SMEs	How can IoT transform your supply chain?	How AR and VR technology can enhance IoT applications
				Top 8 IoT applications and examples in business		
	17	Augmented Reality (AR) – Virtual Reality (VR)	Augmented Reality for Everyone	How AR and VR are Transforming the Future of Businesses	Augmented Reality and Business: Can your business join in?	How AR/VR Is Driving Automation and Robotics
	18	Automation and Robotics	Robotisation: Opportunity or threat to SMEs?	Helping Small and Medium Enterprises to Automate with Robots	Can SMErobotics take your business to Automation?	How Industry 4.0 is Becoming Affordable for SMEs
				Process automation for small businesses		

Drafting phase- Tasks & Activities

Each Partner was responsible for the development of a certain number of modules (or part of them), according to the partner's expertise, to their sector of activity and to the allocated amount of working days foreseen in the application form.

Preliminary Remarks

Each E of the 4E Framework takes along specific features and objectives, which need a different approach in the developing of training materials:

ENLIGHTEN: the concepts can be explained through a power point presentation of similar tools

EMPOWER: the units in this section provide the main contents of the module. Hence different tools and methodologies can be used: dynamic slides, infographics, Open educational resources…

ENERGISE: in this section a boost is required. The section needs an authentic professional task as assessment

EVOLVE: is a consolidation/assessment part and a link to the next module. It connects the two modules as it shows how what the learner knows now can evolve with one more bit of learning: the next one. Like the next piece of a puzzle that will take the learner to see a broader picture of the phenomenon.

Combining the expertise and competence of each partner with the activities and contents to be developed, we propose the following allocation of tasks, according to the amount of man days foreseen for each partner in the Application Form.

Task & Activities Allocation

PARTNER	N° of MODULES/ACTIVITIES	Proposed TRAINING MATERIALS	Estimated LENGTH
IME GSEVEE	5 **modules** (21 units)	? PPT presentation (ENLIGHTENs) ? Dynamic presentations (EMPOWER) ? Infographics (EMPOWER) ? Short videos ? Link to external resources/videos) (EMPOWER) ? Webinars (?) (EMPOWER) ? Assessment (EVOLVE)	Each module max 20 mins; Each unit approx. 2-3 mins; From 4 to 8 slides
ENAIP	5 **modules** (33 units)		
Mathesis 4C	5 **modules** (34 units)		
ECIPA	3 **modules** (19 units)		
PIMEC	Research of external OER, podcasts, live events, success stories		Each video should last at maximum 2 to 3 minutes
EVTA	Dissemination role in all modules	Support in respecting the quality and dissemination criteria for each module Graphic review of the modules and layout	

Module Allocation Schedule

level	N	NAME OF THE MODULE	UNITS	RESPONSIBLE PARTNER
BASIC	1	Going Digital	7	MATHESIS 4C
	2	e- commerce	7	ENAIP VENETO
	3	e-Payments	6	ECIPA
	4	Cloud Accounting	7	MATHESIS 4C
	5	Digital tools	9	ENAIP VENETO
	6	Data Analytics	7	ENAIP VENETO
	7	e-learning	4	ECIPA
STANDARD	8	Digital marketing	9	ECIPA
	9	B2B trade platform	5	MATHESIS 4C
	10	Crowdsourcing	5	MATHESIS 4C
	11	Integrated smart workplace	10	MATHESIS 4C
ADVANCED	12	Big Data	4	IME GSEVEE
	13	Machine Learning	5	ENAIP VENETO
	14	Artificial Intelligence	4	IME GSEVEE
	15	Blockchain	4	IME GSEVEE
	16	Internet of things	5	IME GSEVEE
	17	Augmented Reality	4	IME GSEVEE
	18	Automation and Robot	5	ENAIP VENETO

Peer Review- Tasks & Activities

At the end of the drafting phase, a peer review took place among partners, for evaluating and implementing feedbacks and suggestions: Each Partner gave feedbacks on modules created by other Partners.

The Peer Review phase ended with the fine tuning of each module by the original author, following peer's comments and suggestion.

For the Peer review phase a dedicated folder has been created to host all partners' Lesson Plans.

Final Revision

ENAIP VENETO as Task Leader, together with the Project Result Leader IME GSEVEE, proceeded with the last revision of the modules, before giving the green light to the upload on the online platform.

At the completion of the task, the result is the creation of the "#SMEsGoDigital online competence based course", structured in 18 modules with a micro-credential approach and structured on a 3 level basis (basic, standard and advanced).

Quality Requirements

- All the media tools (Audio, video, podcasts) are recorded in English and are supported by subtitles in English and partners' national languages. In the finalisation stage, translations in the project partners' national languages were added for the supporting primary and secondary content material (info graphic, presentations, activities).
- Primary learning content developed by the consortium partners (videos, podcasts, info graphics, presentations) clearly display the project's and Erasmus+ logos.
- External sources and references used as primary learning content (including images) are clearly indicated as external links for each unit of the modules.
- The micro learning approach foresees the immediate start of the learning content in each 2 to 3 mins units, with a possibly very short intro (1 mins video i.e.)
- Each lesson plan with its supportive primary learning material (images, video, external links) is catalogued in a dedicated drive folder with common access, for facilitating the online uploading by the responsible partner

Conclusion:

The #SMEsGoDigital project marks a significant milestone in empowering SMEs to embrace digital transformation effectively. By leveraging the Drupal CMS for backend development and incorporating a diverse range of features and functionalities, like *Moodle LMS* and *LimeSurvey*, the website serves as a valuable resource for SMEs seeking guidance and support in their digital journey. The pilot period played a pivotal role in refining website features and gathering user feedback, ensuring the platform's efficacy and relevance. Moving forward, continuous monitoring and improvement efforts will be essential to sustaining the website's impact and fostering SMEs' digital success.

Annexes

Module: E-COMMERCE

Unit: Introduction

Desired Core professional goal	**Benchmark**
After completing this module, learners will be able to: - understand and list the benefits of using e-commerce in their business - create an e-commerce space with shopify and will be able to use properly Facebook shop - identify which are the most suitable techniques for selling services online - get their business online with all the necessary security measures - understand how to earn money from their online business	e-platform
Level Basic	**Framework** Enlighten Empower Energise Evolve

Micro-learning activities

Learners will:

1. read what is the module about

CLICK HERE

2. watch the video on YouTube E-commerce - introduction
3. read the Learners Guideline *link to add*

Module: e-commerce

Learning Unit: Enlighten – the rise of E-commerce

Desired Core professional goal	**Benchmark**
Overview on the elements facilitating the growth of e-commerce Main concept and characteristics of e-commerce	**e-commerce**
Level	**Framework**
Basic	**Enlighten**

Professional micro-learning outcomes

Foundational Knowledge

Learners will:

- Recognise the growth of e-commerce worldwide
- Explore the opportunity to develop an e-commerce for their own company
- Understand the complexity of the e-commerce sector

Micro-learning activities

Foundational Knowledge

Have a look at the PPT presentation

Have the opportunity to look at the video:

Digital Transformation and Consumer Behaviour https://youtu.be/UeEBzHT992w

Further Readings: the Digital 2022 Global Overview Report

Module: e-commerce

Learning Unit: E- commerce with Shopify

Desired Core **professional goal**	**Benchmark**
Learners will be able to - Get some basic knowledge on the shopify platform - Start using the platform to enrich their business	e-commerce
Level	**Framework**
Basic	Empower

Professional micro-learning outcomes

Learners will

- Increase interest in the use and features of one e-commerce platform
- Develop a plan for creating managing and customising their e-commerce platform through Shopify

Micro-learning activities

Learners will:

- Watch the video *E-commerce with Shopify*
- Watch the Shopify overview https://www.shopify.com/uk#/video/hilyyrqf0m
- Perform a free trial of the platform at the following link www.shopify.com/uk

Module: e-commerce

Learning Unit: Your Facebook shop

Desired Core professional goal	**Benchmark**
Learners will be able to - Use the social tool Facebook to support and improve the business - Increase their ability to use the e-commerce functionality of Facebook	e-commerce
Level	**Framework**
Basic	Empower

Professional micro-learning outcomes

Learners will

- Develop new expertise in the branch of social network and in particular e-commerce
- Acquire skills in managing business social account (credentials, permissions…)
- Analyse their own business and products, to understand the right catalogue to be put on the on line selling
- Reflect on the more appropriate features and look to be added to the on line Facebook Shop

Micro-learning activities

Learners will:

- Watch the video: *Your facebook shop*
- Go through the webpage guide to get some more info

  Influencer marketing hub

Module: E-payment Learning Unit: Payments in the digital era

Desired Core professional goal	**Benchmark**
Learners will be able to: - Understand the Concept of E-Payments: what e-payments (electronic payments) are and how they differ from traditional payment methods.	e-payment
Level Basic	**Framework** Enlighten
Professional micro-learning outcomes: Learners will develop a clear knowledge of what e-payments are	
Micro-learning activities Learners will: 1. watch the video on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TUqaVqHtOr0&t=7s 2. read this article to have a clear overview of the benefits: https://sbecouncil.org/the-value-of-electronic-payments-for-small-businesses/	

Module: E-payment Learning Unit: Are online payments safe?

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: - Comprehend E-Payment Security	**Benchmark** e-payment
Level Basic	**Framework** Empower

Professional micro-learning outcomes:

Learners will:

- Understand the importance of security in e-payment transactions and be familiar with security measures and protocols like SSL (Secure Socket Layer) and two-factor authentication.

Micro-learning activities

Learners will:

1. watch the video on YouTube: https://youtu.be/12rlZza4Gl4?si=kTuqLgiSsj-lIfhH

2. read this article to have a clear overview of the various types of e-payments and of the security systems: https://www.entrust.com/resources/faq/guide-to-digital-payments

Module: E-payment Learning Unit: What Kind of digital payment are there?

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: - Identify Types of E-Payment Systems	**Benchmark** e-payment
Level Basic	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes: Learners will - Recognize and differentiate between various types of e-payment systems, such as credit cards, mobile wallets, digital currencies (e.g., cryptocurrencies), and online bank transfers.	
Micro-learning activities Learners will: 1. watch the video on YouTube: https://youtu.be/X60yIZOUgn0?si=lG9zykUnpiE7Rkw0 2. read this article to have a clear overview of the various types of e-payments: https://www.entrust.com/resources/faq/guide-to-digital-payments	

Module: E-payment Learning Unit: How do I get paid from my online business?

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: - **Navigate E-Payment Platforms**	**Benchmark** e-payment
Level Basic	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro learning outcomes: Learners will Be capable of using different e-payment platforms, apps, or websites to make or receive payments and understand their user interfaces.	
Micro-learning activities Learners will: 1. watch the video on YouTube: https://youtu.be/xVD82jJ6P5o 2. read this article to have a clear overview of the various types of e-payments: https://paysimple.com/blog/all-the-ways-you-can-accept-online-payments-in-2022/	

Module: E-payment Learning Unit: How do I set up an online payment?

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: - Manage E-Payment Accounts	**Benchmark** e-payment
Level Basic	**Framework** Energize
Professional micro learning outcomes: Learners will - Learn how to set up and manage e-payment accounts, including linking bank accounts, adding credit/debit cards, and maintaining account information.	
Micro-learning activities Learners will: 1. watch the video on YouTube: https://youtu.be/E9gX2uznhYY?si=GVCEfd8kVDGmLVce 2. read this article to have a clear and detailed overview of how to manage e-payments most efficiently, plus other additional info on security issues and e-commerce uses and benefits: https://www.bancaditalia.it/pubblicazioni/guide-bi/guida-pagamenti-comm-elettronico/guide-BI-i-pagamenti-nel-commercio-elettronico_ING.pdf	

Module: E-payment Learning Unit: How cloud technology can future-proof digital payments?

Desired Core professional goal	**Benchmark**
Learners will be able to: - Consolidate what they have learned in Module 3 - Transfer new knowledge and skills to their business operation - Deepen the connection with module 4 topic, cloud technology	e-payment
Level Basic	**Framework** Evolve

Professional micro learning outcomes:

Learners will

- Consolidate what they have learned in Module 3
- Create a culture of continuous learning and improvment with their business
- Deepen the connection with module 4 topic: cloud technology

Micro-learning activities

Learners will:

1. watch the video on YouTube: https://youtu.be/UlWWFKjq11M

2. read these documents in order to have a synthetic overview of e-payment benefit for SMEs: https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/tourism/eu-funding-and-businesses/business-portal/financing-your-business/electronic-payment_en

and do the following activity: Check out in any search engine “Benefits of e-payment for your business and make a checklist with the benefits either individually or collaboratively with other learners.

3. read this document to have a clear and detailed overview of the impact of cloud technologies on e-payments
https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1TWRVIqMWqu-ftsEmQA8sAMkuJop72XGy

Lesson Plan

Module: Cloud accounting

Learning Unit: Payments + cloud accounting: 4 reasons smart businesses connect them

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to – decide to implement e-invoicing and cloud accounting in their business to streamline payment processes and financial management, improve efficiency, and reduce costs, – nurture being more open-minded towards using digital tools to streamline their business operations and embrace the digital transformation, – feel more confident and less fearful of using technology to improve their business.	**Benchmark** e-invoicing
Level Basic	**Framework** Enlighten
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will – understand the benefits of using e-invoicing for payments and cloud accounting for financial management in their business, – identify the challenges and risks associated with not using e-invoicing and cloud accounting.	
Micro-learning activities Learners will 1. watch the video Module 4: Cloud accounting - Enlighten: Payments + cloud accounting: 4 reasons smart businesses connect them: https://youtu.be/4sPtrQba_wk (2:38) 2. have an option to see more resources: a. What Is Cloud Accounting – All You Need to Know. The article explains what cloud	

accounting is, why it is beneficial for businesses, what challenges it faces, and what examples of cloud accounting software are available. It also highlights the reasons why small businesses need cloud accounting and how secure it is compared to traditional accounting software.

b. How cloud-based invoicing takes the hassle out of accounting. This article promotes the benefits of cloud-based invoicing for small businesses. It explains how cloud-based invoicing can help businesses save time, money, and hassle by automating the billing process, providing professional templates, storing data securely, and integrating with payment platforms.

c. 15 Benefits of Cloud Accounting. This article provides a comprehensive overview of the benefits of cloud accounting solutions over desktop-based accounting products and manual spreadsheet-based processes. It covers aspects such as scalability, security, mobility, compliance, integration, automation and more.

Lesson Plan

Module: Cloud accounting

Learning Unit: How to choose cloud accounting or invoicing software

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to – decide to implement e-invoicing and cloud accounting in their business to streamline payment processes and financial management, improve efficiency, and reduce costs, – nurture being more open-minded towards using digital tools to streamline their business operations and embrace the digital transformation, – feel more confident and less fearful of using technology to improve their business.	**Benchmark** e-invoicing
Level Basic	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will – define cloud accounting and invoicing software – identify the benefits of cloud accounting and invoicing software – explain the different types of cloud accounting and invoicing software available – evaluate the features of different cloud accounting and invoicing software – choose the most suitable cloud accounting or invoicing software for their business	
Micro-learning activities Learners will 1. watch the video Module 4: Cloud accounting - Empower: How to choose cloud accounting or invoicing software: https://youtu.be/fclCv5yiXVs (2:18) 2. have an option to do the following activity: Check out in any search engine "What cloud accounting and invoicing software are	

available in the market of my country?" and make a checklist with their features either individually or collaboratively with other learners. You may introduce yourself to the course forum and make a team with other learners sharing the same interests and professional sector. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course.

3. have an option to see more resources:

    a. SME Software 2023 | Best Accounting Software For SMEs – SelectHub. This article covers the lowdown on SMEs, software selection tips and critical questions to mull over, standard SME accounting software benefits and features, the difference between cloud and on-premise deployments and the best accounting software for SME companies.
    b. Best Cloud Accounting Software (May 2023) – Forbes Advisor. This article provides a list of the best cloud accounting software platforms based on pricing, features, support and more. It also explains why cloud-based systems are more secure and convenient than on-premise solutions.
    c. Best Accounting Software For Small Business 2023 – Forbes. This article describes the different types of accounting software, such as cloud-based, desktop, hybrid and open source, and how to choose the best one for your small business needs.

SMEs Grow Digital

Erasmus+

Est. 2006 IME GSEVEE Small Enterprises Institute of GSEVEE

Lesson Plan

Module: Cloud accounting **Learning Unit: E invoicing: Getting set up to send e-invoices**

Desired Learne **Core professional goal** rs – will be able to – set up a system for receiving and processing – einvoices from their suppliers and customers, train their staff on how to use the system – effectively, explore additional features and benefits of einvoicing, fully transition their – invoicing process to einvoicing, streamline the invoicing process and improve cash flow management for the business.	**Benchmark** e-invoicing
Level Basic	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will – understand the concept and benefits of e-invoicing – learn how to set up an e-invoicing system – gain practical experience in choosing an e-invoicing system for their business – understand the importance of e-invoicing in streamlining business operations	

Micro-learning activities

Learners will

1. watch the video Basic level: Module 4: Cloud accounting - E invoicing: Getting set up to send e-invoices: https://youtu.be/8MGBMvCpO7k (2:41)
2. read the 5 success stories of e-invoicing
3. have an option to do the following activity:
   Read the Factors to choose your e-invoicing system Infographic and make the first step to setting up an e-invoicing system by identifying your business needs through the following

questions:

1. How many invoices does your business generate per month?
2. What software do you currently use for accounting and managing your finances?
3. What is your budget for an e-invoicing system?
4. How important is security and compliance for your business?
5. What features are essential for your business in an e-invoicing system?
6. How important is ease of use for you and your customers?
7. Have you considered the level of customer support that you would require from an e-invoicing system?
8. How would you like to receive payments from your customers?
9. Do you require multi-currency support for your invoicing system?
10. Would you like to have the ability to track and manage your invoices and payments in real-time?

Research and compare different e-invoicing systems available in the market, their pricing plans, and their customer reviews and ratings. Make a list with a few options that meet your requirements to make an informed decision on which e-invoicing system to choose. Test the chosen e-invoicing system before fully implementing it in your business to ensure that the system works smoothly and efficiently, and that it meets your expectations and requirements. Ask for feedback from other learners or your group and discuss which e-invoicing system suits best your business needs. You may introduce yourself to the course forum and make a team with other learners sharing the same interests and professional sector. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course.

3. have an option to see more resources:

a. Case studies | eInvoicing. This website provides several case studies of New Zealand businesses that have implemented e-invoicing and realised the benefits of cost savings, faster payments, improved cash flow and reduced admin time.
b. Checklist to Prepare for e-Invoicing in Your Company. A list of 20 questions that a company needs to know the answers for in order to determine and to cost its einvoicing strategy. The questions cover topics such as the number and location of invoices, the business regions and customers, the regulatory compliance and tax issues, the organisational structure and functions, the IT infrastructure and support, and the financial exposure and benefits of e-invoicing.
c. European E-Invoicing Guide for SMEs. This guide provides an overview of the benefits, challenges and best practices of e-invoicing for SMEs in Europe. It also explains the legal and technical aspects of e-invoicing and provides case studies and practical tips for SMEs.
d. E-invoicing: bringing the payment process fully into the digital age (europa.eu): The article discusses the benefits of e-invoicing, such as cost savings and improved cash flow management, and highlights the growing adoption of e-invoicing in Europe due to EU standards and regulations.

Lesson Plan

Module: Cloud accounting **Learning Unit: Staff Management Made Simple**

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to – manage their staff effectively and efficiently using cloud accounting tools	**Benchmark** e-invoicing
Level Basic	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will – understand the basics of cloud accounting tools for staff management – and their benefits – identify the key staff management processes that can be streamlined using cloud accounting tools – decide to use cloud accounting tools to manage staff more effectively and efficiently – identify sources and resources for staff management using cloud accounting tools	

Micro-learning activities

Learners will

1. watch the video Module 4: Cloud accounting - Empower: Staff Management Made Simple: https://youtu.be/N6i4j-d9D9A (2:34)
2. have an option to do the following activity: Read the presentation demonstrating the most popular cloud accounting tools for staff management Efficient Staff Management with Cloud Accounting Tools (also in GR). Then conduct your own search in the web with any search engine for "cloud accounting tools for staff management". Make a checklist with the staff management processes they offer that match your business needs. Shortlist the ones that meet your needs. Compare and discuss with other learners sharing the same needs with you using our course forum our chatroom or with your team. You may introduce yourself to the course forum and make a team with other learners sharing the same interests and professional sector. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course.
3. have an option to see more resources:

    a. Best Workforce Management Software July 2023. The article from Forbes about workforce management software is a guide to help businesses find the best workforce management software for their needs and budget. It explains what workforce management software is, what features and benefits it offers, and reviews some of the top options available in the market.
    b. 10 Best Workforce Management Software for Your Small Business 2023. This article is a guide to help businesses find the best workforce management software for their needs and budget. It explains what workforce management software is, what features and benefits it offers, and reviews some of the top options available in the market.
    c. Top 12 Employee Management Software Solutions in 2023. This article is a guide to help businesses find the best workforce management software for their needs and budget. It explains what workforce management software is, what features and benefits it offers, and reviews some of the top options available in the market.

Lesson Plan

Module: Cloud accounting Learning Unit: Choosing a Payroll System

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to – select and implement the most suitable digital payroll system based on their business needs, – ensure compliance with local regulations, – effectively manage the system for accurate and efficient payroll processing. – streamline their payroll processes, save time and resources, and improve overall business operations.	**Benchmark** e-invoicing
Level Basic	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will – understand the importance of implementing a digital payroll system in micro and SME businesses. – identify the key factors to consider when choosing a payroll system. – evaluate different payroll system options based on their specific business needs. – gain confidence in implementing and managing a digital payroll system. – feel confident to choose the right digital payroll system for their needs – identify what you need to know before deciding on a digital solution	
Micro-learning activities Learners will 1. watch the video Module 4: Cloud accounting - Empower: Choosing a Payroll System: https://youtu.be/z5Q0HVjgvlc (3:00) 2. have an option to do the following activity:	

Evaluating Payroll System Options:

Read the Infographic with some real-life examples and case studies to illustrate the importance of each factor to consider when selecting a payroll system for your business, which is described in the video you viewed. to illustrate the importance of each factor to consider when selecting a payroll system for your business, which is described in the video you viewed.

Next, let's explore the different payroll system options available in the market. There are various options to choose from, such as cloud-based systems, on-premise software, or outsourcing to a payroll service provider. Each option has its pros and cons, and it's important to evaluate them based on the factors we discussed earlier. Then conduct your own search in the web with any search engine for "digital payroll systems".

The checklist below will help you compare and evaluate different options. This will help you make an informed decision based on your specific business needs and requirements.

Checklist for Evaluating Payroll System Options:

- **Cost:**
  - What is the initial setup cost?
  - Are there any ongoing subscription fees or maintenance costs?
  - Does the system offer different pricing plans based on the size of your business?
  - Are there any additional charges for extra features or support?
- **Features and Functionality:**
  - Does the system offer all the necessary payroll processing features, such as calculating and managing employee wages, deductions, and taxes?
  - Can it handle different types of employee compensation, such as hourly, salaried, or commission-based?
  - Does it have the ability to handle complex payroll scenarios, such as multiple pay rates, overtime, or shift differentials?
  - Can it handle payroll for different employee types, such as full-time, part-time, or contractors?
  - Does it have the capability to generate payroll reports and provide compliance with tax regulations?
- **User-Friendliness:**
  - Is the system easy to navigate and use?
  - Does it have a user-friendly interface with clear instructions and intuitive design?
  - Does it offer self-service options for employees, such as accessing pay stubs or updating personal information?
- **Integration and Compatibility:**
  - Can the payroll system integrate with other software or systems you currently use, such as accounting or time and attendance systems?
  - Does it have the capability to import and export data to and from other systems?

- Is it compatible with different operating systems and devices?

- **Security and Compliance:**
  - Does the payroll system have strong security measures in place to protect sensitive employee data?
  - Does it comply with data protection regulations, such as GDPR or CCPA?
  - Does it offer backup and disaster recovery options to ensure data integrity?

- **Customer Support and Training:**
  - What level of customer support does the payroll system provider offer?
  - Is there a dedicated support team available for assistance?
  - Does the provider offer training resources, such as user guides or video tutorials?

- **Scalability:**
  - Can the payroll system accommodate the growth of your business, such as adding more employees or expanding to multiple locations?
  - Does it offer additional features or modules that can be added as your business needs evolve?

- **Reputation and Reviews:**
  - Research and read reviews from other businesses that have used the payroll system.
  - Check the provider's reputation and reliability in the industry.

By evaluating different payroll system options based on this checklist, you will be able to make a well-informed decision that aligns with your business needs and requirements. Compare and discuss with other learners sharing the same needs with you using our course forum our chatroom or with your team. You may introduce yourself to the course forum and make a team with other learners sharing the same interests and professional sector. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course.

3. have an option to listen to the podcast: Implementation and Management of your payroll system: https://youtu.be/C-romvisb_s
4. have an option to see more resources:

   a. 9 Best Payroll Services For Small Business (2023) by Forbes: This article rounds up the best payroll services for small businesses to help you compare and choose he platform that's best for your needs.
   b. How to choose a payroll software: A complete guide for businesses by Everee: This guide covers what to look for in a payroll platform that will reduce costs, save time and boost both employee and management satisfaction. You'll learn how to evaluate payroll software features, review payroll costs and ease-of-use, assess outsourcing and compare payroll software to HRIS and HCM solutions.
   c. Payroll Management for Beginners: A Guide to the Process and Systems by Deel: This guide teaches you the basics of setting up and processing accurate, efficient payroll and how a payroll management system can benefit you.
   d. Automated Payroll System Development Guide and Case Study by Relevant

Software: This article covers the benefits of in-house developed payroll system to your company, which features a custom payroll solution can include, how Relevant streamlined payroll operations at a US-based fintech company with a custom solution, and how much it takes in terms of time and budget to develop a payroll automation system.

e. 3 Successful ERP Implementation Case Studies bu Oracle Netsuite: This article presents three successful ERP implementation case studies. These companies are Fulton & Roark, N&N Moving Supplies, and Green Rabbit, all of which experienced significant improvements in their operations after implementing an enterprise resource planning (ERP) system.

Lesson Plan

Module: Cloud accounting **Learning Unit: Digitising Small Business Accounting**

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to – be energized and motivated to digitize their small business accounting using cloud accounting tools they have learned in previous lessons, such as e-invoicing, staff management tools, and payroll systems, – overcome tech fear and barriers in adopting cloud accounting tools for e-invoicing and staff management through a transformative learning activity.	**Benchmark** e-invoicing
Level Basic	**Framework** Energise
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will – understand the benefits of digitizing small business accounting, including increased efficiency, accuracy, and cost savings. – explore various cloud accounting tools and their features, such as e-invoicing, staff management tools, and payroll systems. – recognize the potential challenges and barriers to digitizing small business accounting and develop strategies to overcome them. – develop a plan for implementing cloud accounting tools in their small business, including setting goals, identifying resources, and creating a timeline. – feel energized and motivated to take action and digitize their small business accounting, knowing the potential positive impact it can have on their business success.	
Micro-learning activities Learners will	

1. watch the video Module 4: Cloud accounting - Energise: Digitising Small Business Accounting: https://youtu.be/mEQ48LPmj60 (3:07)

2. do the following activities:

In today's fast-paced business landscape, digital transformation is becoming increasingly important. Specifically, cloud accounting tools for e-invoicing and staff management can greatly benefit micro and SME owners.

Why digitizing small business accounting is so crucial?

Understanding the Need for Digitizing Small Business Accounting:

Firstly, manual accounting methods can be time-consuming and error-prone. By embracing digital tools, you can automate repetitive tasks, saving valuable time and reducing the risk of mistakes.

Secondly, digital transformation opens up growth opportunities for your business. With accurate and up-to-date financial data, you can make better-informed decisions and identify areas for improvement.

Lastly, digitizing small business accounting can lead to cost savings and increased efficiency. By automating processes, you can reduce the need for manual labor and minimize the risk of costly errors.

Cloud accounting tools offer a range of features that can help you streamline your accounting processes and improve your business operations.

For example, tools like QuickBooks and Xero offer intuitive interfaces and easy-to-use features, making it simple for small business owners to manage their finances. These tools also integrate with other systems, such as e-commerce platforms and payment gateways, allowing for seamless data flow.

Let's start by looking at a case study scenario of an imaginary micro or SME that is struggling with traditional accounting methods. By adopting cloud accounting tools, they have the potential to streamline their processes, increase efficiency, and improve their overall business performance.

Case Study: Cloud Accounting for Staff Management

You will be given a case study to work on, where you will be required to use cloud accounting tools to manage staff.

Background:

ABC Company is a small to medium-sized enterprise (SME) that provides consulting services to various clients. The company has a team of 10 employees who work on different projects and are paid on an hourly basis. The company has been using traditional accounting methods to manage staff, such as spreadsheets and manual timesheets. However, the company is experiencing difficulties in managing staff efficiently, which is impacting its profitability.

Challenges:

The following challenges are faced by the company in managing staff:

- Difficulty in tracking employee hours and calculating their pay accurately.
- Time-consuming manual processes for managing staff records, such as leave and attendance.
- Lack of real-time visibility into staff performance and productivity.
- Difficulty in generating reports on staff performance and profitability.

Your objective:

- Choose any search engine and explore various cloud accounting tools and their features, such as e-invoicing, staff management tools, and payroll systems. List which cloud accounting tools should be implemented to manage staff more efficiently and help the company to improve its profitability. Then make a list with the benefits which can be achieved by their implementation.

Feedback (to be displayed to learners after completion of task)

The following feedback should be given to the learner after completing this activity:

Suggested solution:

The company can implement cloud accounting tools to manage staff more efficiently. The following tools can be used:

- ✓ Time Tracking Tool: A cloud-based time tracking tool can be used to track employee hours accurately. The tool can be integrated with the company's accounting software to calculate employee pay automatically.
- ✓ HR Management Tool: A cloud-based HR management tool can be used to manage staff records efficiently. The tool can be used to manage leave, attendance, and other HR-related tasks.
- ✓ Productivity Tracking Tool: A cloud-based productivity tracking tool can be used to monitor staff performance in real-time. The tool can be used to track project progress, identify bottlenecks, and improve productivity.

- ✓ Reporting Tool: A cloud-based reporting tool can be used to generate reports on staff performance and profitability. The tool can be used to generate reports on billable hours, project profitability, and other key performance indicators.

Benefits:

The following benefits can be achieved by implementing cloud accounting tools:

- Improved accuracy in calculating employee pay.
- Time savings in managing staff records.
- Real-time visibility into staff performance and productivity.
- Improved profitability through better staff management.

Embracing Digital Transformation: Overcoming Tech Fear and Barriers in Cloud Accounting

However, one of the biggest challenges in embracing digital transformation is overcoming tech fear and barriers. Many business owners may feel overwhelmed or intimidated by new technology. Today, we will explore how we can overcome these fears and barriers through a transformative learning activity.

Self-Assessment

Now, take a few minutes to assess your current level of tech fear and identify any potential barriers you may face in adopting cloud accounting tools. Please take a moment to reflect on your own experiences and feelings towards technology. Check out the following self-assessment criteria to facilitate your reflection or discuss them with your team or other learners sharing the same needs with you using our course forum our chatroom. You may introduce yourself to the course forum and make a team with other learners sharing the same interests and professional sector. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course. Then you may share your self-assessment results and insights and we encourage you to reflect on your fears and barriers and discuss any common themes or challenges you may be facing.

Self-Assessment Criteria

Instructions: Please take a moment to reflect on your own experiences and feelings towards technology and assess your current level of tech fear and identify any potential barriers you may face in adopting cloud accounting tools for e-invoicing and staff management. Circle the appropriate response for each statement.

1. I am comfortable using technology in my business operations.

Not at all comfortable Somewhat comfortable Very comfortable

2. I have a good understanding of cloud computing and its benefits.

No understanding Some understanding Good understanding

3. I am confident in my ability to learn and adapt to new software and tools.

Not at all confident Somewhat confident Very confident

4. I have concerns about the security and privacy of cloud accounting tools.

Extremely concerned Somewhat concerned Not concerned at all

5. I have the necessary resources (e.g., budget, time, staff) to implement cloud accounting tools.

Not enough resources Adequate resources More than enough resources

6. I have access to reliable internet connectivity for using cloud accounting tools.

Poor internet connectivity Average internet connectivity Excellent internet connectivity

7. I have concerns about the reliability and support of cloud accounting service providers.

Extremely concerned Somewhat concerned Not concerned at all

8. I am open to learning and seeking assistance to overcome tech fear and barriers.

Not open at all Somewhat open Very open

9. I believe that adopting cloud accounting tools will bring significant benefits to my business.

Strongly disagree Somewhat agree Strongly agree

10. I am willing to invest time and effort in training and upskilling myself and my staff.

Not willing at all Somewhat willing Very willing

Barrier Transformation

Once you have completed the self-assessment, please reflect on your responses and identify any potential barriers you may face in adopting cloud accounting tools. Write them down and brainstorm potential solutions and strategies for overcoming the identified tech fears and barriers. Think creatively and consider both individual and collective actions.

We encourage you to discuss your self-assessment results and share your tech fears and identified barriers such as experiences and challenges you may face or already have faced in adopting and/or implementing cloud accounting tools in your business. This is an opportunity for open and honest discussions, so please feel free to share your thoughts and concerns. Remember, this is a supportive and non-judgmental environment. By learning from each other, we can collectively overcome hurdles and achieve success. Discuss with your team or other learners how to transform these barriers into positive statements or actionable steps suggesting strategies and solutions for each transformed barrier. Together, we can find ways to overcome these obstacles and embrace digital transformation.

Action Planning

Now that you have transformed our barriers into positive statements and actionable steps, it is time for you to create your personalized action plans for adopting cloud accounting tools.

Please use the transformed barriers and strategies you reflected and/or discussed with other learners or your team to set specific goals, allocate resources, and establish a timeline for implementation. Remember that it's important to revisit and revise your action plan as needed.

Task: Developing an Action Plan for SME Owners

Instructions:

1. Start by clearly defining your goal: Determine the specific objective you want to achieve by adopting cloud accounting tools. For example, it could be to streamline your accounting processes, improve data accuracy, or enhance financial reporting.
2. Identify the resources needed: Make a list of the resources you will require to implement your goal. This may include financial resources, staff training, IT support, and any other necessary tools or equipment.
3. Set a timeline: Break down your action plan into smaller steps and assign a timeline to each step. This will help you stay organized and ensure that you make progress towards your goal.
4. List the action steps: Create a list of specific actions you need to take to achieve your goal. Use the provided action plan template as a reference and customize it based on your unique needs and circumstances.

5. Prioritize actions: Determine the order in which you need to complete each action step. Consider dependencies and any prerequisites for certain actions.
6. Allocate resources: Assess your budget and allocate funds for implementing the chosen cloud accounting tool. Identify any additional resources or training needed for yourself and your staff. Explore options for financial assistance or grants if necessary.
7. Provide training and support: Identify the key staff members who will be involved in using the cloud accounting tool. Schedule training sessions or workshops to familiarize them with the tool. Offer ongoing support and guidance to ensure their comfort and proficiency.
8. Address data security concerns: Research the security measures and protocols of the chosen cloud accounting tool. Implement strong passwords and two-factor authentication for added security. Regularly backup data and ensure data encryption is in place.
9. Test and integrate the tool: Create a testing environment to ensure compatibility and functionality. Coordinate with IT professionals or the cloud accounting tool provider for seamless integration. Conduct thorough testing and troubleshooting to address any issues.
10. Gradually transition to the cloud accounting tool: Start by using the tool for specific tasks or departments. Monitor and evaluate its effectiveness and efficiency. Gradually expand its usage to other areas of the business.
11. Regularly review and evaluate: Set up regular check-ins or meetings to assess the tool's performance. Seek feedback from employees and customers on their experience. Make necessary adjustments or improvements based on the feedback received.
12. Stay updated on new features and updates: Subscribe to newsletters or follow the cloud accounting tool provider's blog for updates. Attend webinars or training sessions offered by the provider. Continuously explore and learn about new features that can further streamline accounting processes.
13. Celebrate milestones and successes: Acknowledge and celebrate achievements along the way, no matter how small. Share success stories with employees and other business owners to inspire and motivate.
14. Continuously seek opportunities for improvement and growth: Stay informed about emerging trends and technologies in cloud accounting. Attend conferences or workshops related to digital transformation in accounting. Network with other business owners or professionals in the field to exchange ideas and insights.
15. Remember to regularly review and update your action plan as needed. Stay committed to your goals and embrace digital transformation as a continuous learning and growing process for your business.

Feedback (to be displayed to learners after completion of task)

The following feedback should be given to the learner after completing this activity:

Here is a suggested Action Plan Template to help you develop your personalised Action Plan following the instructions above.

3. have an option to see more resources:

   a. Cloud Accounting Basics | Xero: This video explains what cloud accounting is, how it works and what are the benefits of it for small businesses, using Xero as an example
   b. Cloud Accounting Basics: What It Is & Reasons to Use | NetSuite: The article explains what cloud accounting is, how it works and what are the benefits of using it for businesses of all sizes and industries. It also introduces NetSuite as a leading provider of cloud-based accounting and ERP solutions that offer automation, accessibility, security, scalability and integration.
   c. 8 Cloud-Based Accounting Tools 2021: This article compares seven different tools for small businesses and e-commerce, such as FreshBooks, QuickBooks Online, Zoho Books, Xero, Sage 50Cloud, NetSuite, and Wave Accounting.
   d. Manage Your Finances Like a Pro With this Complete List of Accounting Tools & Software: The article presents a list of 40+ accounting and financial management tools and software for various types and sizes of businesses, mainly in the e-commerce sector.
   e. 17 Biggest Accounting Challenges and Solutions in 2023: The article discusses the main accounting challenges and solutions for 2023, such as cash flow, hiring, tax changes, automation, cybersecurity, remote work, and cloud-based software. It also introduces NetSuite as a leading provider of cloud-based accounting solutions for businesses.

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Lesson Plan

Module: Cloud accounting Learning Unit: Digital tools to boost your business

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to – implement cloud accounting tools and other digital tools in their business operations to streamline processes, improve efficiency, and enhance overall productivity – leverage technology to gain a competitive edge, increase profitability, and adapt to the rapidly changing business landscape – create a culture of continuous learning and improvement within their business	**Benchmark** e-invoicing
Level Basic	**Framework** Evolve
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will – develop a digital transformation strategy for their business, outlining key goals, objectives, and action steps. – assess their own small business accounting needs and determine which cloud accounting tools would be most beneficial for their specific business. – implement cloud accounting tools and other digital tools in their business operations, ensuring proper training and support for employees. – monitor and evaluate the impact of digital transformation on business performance, including improvements in efficiency, cost savings, and customer satisfaction. – adapt and refine digital transformation strategies based on feedback and emerging technologies. – stay updated on new developments and trends in digital transformation to continue leveraging technology for business growth and success.	
Authentic assessment performance task	

Learners will

1. watch the video Basic level: Module 4: Cloud accounting: Evolve - Digital tools to boost your business https://youtu.be/vASIZQw_RMU (2:27)
2. See the Infographic 8 Digital tools to boost your business
   In Module 4 we have learned about Cloud accounting tools that can help you with the invoicing processes of your business and your staff management such as the payroll processes. Apart from these there are various digital tools that can benefit SMEs in various aspects of their business operations. Check out the Infographic 8 Digital tools to boost your business to get a glimpse of these tools and then go to Module 5 to learn most of them.
3. do the following authentic assessment performance task:
   Use the Action Plan you developed in the previous lesson or the suggested Action Plan Template provided to you to start implementing the steps for your business. Discuss your experiences and challenges with your team or other learners sharing the same needs with you using our course forum our chatroom. You may introduce yourself to the course forum and make a team with other learners sharing the same interests and professional sector. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course.
   After completing this task do the Self-Assessment for Implementing Cloud Accounting Tools for SMEs and see your score on your effectiveness. Discuss your score with other learners and exchange feedback for collaborative and mutual improvement in low scores.
4. have the option to check out more resources:
   a. Customer Success Stories | Sage UK: The webpage is about Sage, a company that provides software solutions for accounting, payroll, HR, and more. It showcases customer success stories, product features, company information, and support options. It also has links to Sage's blog, marketplace, events, and social media.
   b. The 4 Pillars of Successful Digital Transformations (hbr.org): This is an article from Harvard Business Review that explains the four pillars of digital transformation: IT uplift, digitizing operations, digital marketing, and digital businesses. It provides examples of how different companies have pursued each pillar and offers a framework to help leaders plan and execute their digital transformation journey.
   c. What is Cloud Accounting? | Certinia: This article is a guide on what is cloud accounting and how it differs from traditional accounting software. It explains the benefits of cloud accounting, such as flexibility, security, cost-effectiveness, and integration with Salesforce platform. It also introduces Certinia, a company that provides cloud accounting solutions for businesses.
   d. SME Digitalisation Sustainability The Twin Transition - May 2021 - Key Highlights.pdf (oecd.org): The D4SME webinar on SME Digitalisation & Sustainability: The Twin Transition was held virtually on 11 May 2021. It gathered over 128 participants from 34 countries to discuss the connection between SME digitalisation, sustainability and resilience to "build back better" our economies and societies. The webinar focused on how digitalisation can enable SMEs, including 'traditional' ones, to be more sustainable and achieve environmental goals and what policy solutions can governments deploy in order to help SMEs

Lesson Plan

Module: Digital tools

Learning Unit: Why do small businesses embrace digital tools?

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: – explain the importance and contribution of Digital Tools for their companies – value the impact of Digital Tools on their business	**Benchmark** e-platform
Level Basic	**Framework** Enlighten
Professional micro-learning outcomes Integration Learners will **link** the use of digital tools with professional benefits.	
Micro-learning activities Integration Learners have to: - watch the video What now for the digitalisation of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)? - watch the video D4SME 2nd Roundtable on SMEs Responses to COVID-19 - do the Professional assignment: for each type of digital tool, list those already used in your organisation, indicating their potential and limitations.]	

Lesson Plan

Module: Digital tools

Learning Unit: 5 Must-have Free Digital Tools to Help Boost SME Productivity

Desired Core professional goal - learners will Construct knowledge about the 5 Must-have Free Digital Tools to Help Boost SME Productivity	**Benchmark** e-platform
Level Basic	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learning how to learn **Reflect about the needs…** The learners will: - Construct knowledge about the 5 Must-have Free Digital Tools to Help Boost SME Productivity	
Micro-learning activities Learning how to learn Learners have to: - Watch the video *5 Must-have Free Digital Tools*	

Lesson Plan

Module: Digital tools

Learning Unit: Collaboration Tools

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to - analyse the needs of their organisation in terms of the digital collaboration tools to be implemented; - identify the best digital collaboration tools according to the needs.	**Benchmark** e-platform
Level Basic	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learning how to learn **Reflect about the needs...** The learners will: - analyse the needs of their organisation in terms of the digital collaboration tools to be implemented; - identify the best digital collaboration tools according to the needs.	
Micro-learning activities Learning how to learn Learners have to: - watch the video: *Collaboration tools*	

Lesson Plan

Module: Digital tools systems

Learning Unit: Booking

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to - analyse the needs of their organisation in terms of the digital booking system to be implemented; - identify the digital best booking system according to the needs.	**Benchmark** e-platform
Level Basic	**Framework** Empower

Professional micro-learning outcomes

Learning how to learn

Reflect about the needs...

The learners will:
- analyse the needs of their organisation in terms of the digital booking system to be implemented;
- identify the digital best booking system according to the needs.

Micro-learning activities

Learning how to learn

Learners have to:
- watch the video on YouTube Booking systems

Lesson Plan

Module: Digital tools

Learning Unit: Creative Tools

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to - analyse the needs of their organisation in terms of the digital creative tools to be implemented; - identify the best digital creative tools according to the needs.	**Benchmark** e-platform
Level Basic	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learning how to learn **Reflect about the needs...** The learners will: - analyse the needs of their organisation in terms of the digital creating tools to be implemented; - identify the best digital creating tools according to the needs.	
Micro-learning activities Learning how to learn Learners have to: - watch the video *Creative Tools* -	

Lesson Plan

Module: Digital tools

Learning Unit: Productivity Tools

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to - analyse the needs of their organisation in terms of the digital productivity tools to be implemented; - identify the best digital productivity tools according to the needs.	**Benchmark** e-platform
Level Basic	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learning how to learn **Reflect about the needs...** The learners will be able to: - analyse the needs of their organisation in terms of the digital productivity tools to be implemented; - identify the best digital productivity tools according to the needs.	
Micro-learning activities Learning how to learn Learners have to: - watch the presentation 5.6 Empower_Productivity Tools	

Lesson Plan

Module: Digital tools Systems

Learning Unit: CRM

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to - analyse the needs of their organisation in terms of the CRM Systems to be implemented; - identify the best CRM Systems according to the needs.	**Benchmark** e-platform
Level Basic	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learning how to learn **Reflect about the needs…** The learners will: - analyse the needs of their organisation in terms of the CRM Systems to be implemented; - identify the best CRM Systems according to the needs.	
Micro-learning activities Learning how to learn Learners have to: - watch the video CRM systems	

Lesson Plan

Module: Digital tools

Learning Unit: Look for subsidies for your digital tools

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to - Find the appropriate channels to identify potential sources of funding at EU level for the implementation of digital tools	**Benchmark** e-platform
Level Basic	**Framework** Energise

Professional micro-learning outcomes

Learning how to learn

- Learners will be able to **identify resources** to fund at EU level for the implementation of digital tools

Micro-learning activities

Learning how to learn

The learners will carry out their **own web research**, starting from the following suggested web sources:

https://digital-skills-jobs.europa.eu/en/sme-owner
Funding for Digital in the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework
Funding & tender opportunities
European DIGITAL SME Alliance

Title: SMEs Subsidies Self-Assessment for Digital Tools Funding
Duration: 10 minutes
Introduction: This self-assessment activity is designed to help SMEs evaluate their eligibility and readiness to apply for subsidies or funding opportunities for digital tools. After visiting the web pages related to funding and tender opportunities, as well as the European DIGITAL SME Alliance, this activity will guide you through a series of questions to assess your current situation and determine the next

steps towards securing funding. Let's get started!

1. Which digital tools are you looking to acquire or upgrade through subsidies? (Select all that apply)
- Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software
- Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software
- Website development and maintenance tools
- E-commerce platforms
- Data analytics and business intelligence tools
- Cybersecurity solutions
- Other (please specify)

2. Have you identified the specific funding programs or tenders that match your SME's digital tools requirements?
- Yes
- No

3. Are you aware of the eligibility criteria and requirements for the identified funding programs?
- Yes, I am fully aware.
- I have a general understanding but need to research more.
- No, I am not aware.

4. Have you assessed your SME's financial capacity to co-finance the digital tools acquisition if required by the funding program?
- Yes, we can meet the co-financing requirements.
- We might need additional financial support for co-financing.
- No, we cannot meet the co-financing requirements.

5. Have you considered the potential impact of the digital tools on your SME's operations and competitiveness?
- Yes, we have a clear understanding of the benefits.
- We have some idea but need further analysis.
- No, we need to evaluate the potential impact.

6. Have you identified the key challenges or barriers that your SME might face during the application process?
- Yes, we have identified potential challenges and have plans to address them.
- We have identified some challenges but need assistance in addressing them.
- No, we have not identified potential challenges yet.

7. How well-prepared do you feel to proceed with the application for subsidies for digital tools funding?
- Very well-prepared, and we are ready to start the application process.
- Moderately prepared, but we need some more information and support.
- Not prepared, and we require significant assistance to proceed.

Conclusion: Based on your responses, it is time to reflect on your eligibility, readiness, and potential challenges in securing subsidies or funding for digital tools. If you answered "Yes" to most questions, it indicates that you are well-prepared to proceed with the application process. However, if you answered "No" or "Not sure" to several questions, further research and preparation may be necessary before pursuing funding opportunities. Remember to consult the relevant webpages and resources for detailed information on the application process and specific requirements. Good luck with your digital tools funding journey!
Note: This self-assessment activity is intended for guidance purposes only and does not guarantee eligibility or success in securing subsidies or funding.

Lesson Plan

Module: Digital tools

Learning Unit: Get more benefits from your digital tools

Desired Core professional goal Learners will construct knowledge about the possibility to gaining competitive advantage with digital tools	**Benchmark** e-platform
Level Basic	**Framework** Evolve

Professional micro-learning outcomes

Caring

- Learners will construct knowledge about the possibility to gaining competitive advantage with digital tools

Micro-learning activities

Caring

Learners have to:

- Watch the video *Get more benefits from your digital tools*
- Read the article and watch the video Unlocking The Benefits Of Digitalization: Simple Strategies For Rapid Success

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Lesson Plan

Module: DATA ANALYTICS **Unit: Introduction**

Desired Core professional goal	Benchmark
Learners will learn: - what data is and why it is important to their business - the potential of data analytics for sales channel understanding - the potential of data analytics for customer feedback understanding - the importance of and how to ensure the security and privacy of data - how business insights can be used for growth - the importance to improve staff's skills in managing data	big data
Level Basic	**Framework** Enlighten Empower Energise Evolve
Micro-learning activities Learners will: 1. read what is the module about 	

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CLICK HERE
2. watch the video on YouTube Basic level: Module 6 - Introduction
3. read the Learners Guideline Learners_ Guidelines.pdf

Lesson Plan

Module: DATA ANALYTICS **Learning Unit: What is data and why does it matter?**

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to - explain what business data are - value the importance and contribution of data collection and analysis to their business	**Benchmark** big data
Level Basic	**Framework** Enlighten
Professional micro-learning outcomes - Learners will link data collection and analysis with professional benefits	
Micro-learning activities Learners will 1. watch the video https://youtu.be/TaPwncbYh0M 2. have the option to check out more resources: read the article 7 Big Data Benefits That Can Help Improve Decision Making (arizona.edu) watch the video What is Data Loss Prevention (DLP)?	

Lesson Plan

Module: DATA ANALYTICS **Learning Unit: Sales and Channels**

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to - understand the importance and contribution of the monitoring and measurement of sales data to maximise the effectiveness of the sales channel	**Benchmark** big data
Level Basic	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will discover: - the potential of data analytics for sales channel understanding - the importance of data analysis in order to gain valuable insights into the behaviour and preferences of customers - how the analysis of data can provide organisations with the ability to optimise their distribution channels - how data analytics allows companies to improve their sales forecasting and demand planning processes - how data analytics can play an important role in improving the performance of the sales team - how data analytics enables companies to develop effective pricing strategies	
Micro-learning activities Learners will 1. watch the video on YouTube *Sales and Channels*	

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Lesson Plan

Module: DATA ANALYTICS feedback

Learning Unit: Customer

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: - explain what customer feedback is and what are the benefits of data analysis in customer feedback analysis.	**Benchmark** big data
Level Basic	**Framework** Empower

Professional micro-learning outcomes

Learners will:

- explain what customer feedback is
- identify the importance and contribution of the monitoring and measurement of customer feedback
- list the 5 main benefits of data analytics in customer feedback analysis

Micro-learning activities

Learners will

1. watch the video "Customer Feedback"
2. have the option to check out more resources:
   - read this blog https://www.hubspot.com/customer-feedback
   The article describes a strategic system for gathering and implementing customer feedback: *The A.C.A.F. Customer Feedback Loop*.
   - watch the video *How to get customer feedback* https://youtu.be/l3ny4RnFyD4

Lesson Plan

Module: DATA ANALYTICS **Learning Unit: Data & Analytics**

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: - understand the fundamentals of data analytics, including its definition and various types, and will also grasp the concept of data-driven decision making.	**Benchmark** big data
Level Basic	**Framework** Empower

Professional micro-learning outcomes

Learners will:

- explain what data analytics is
- identify different type of Data Analytics
- identify the importance and contribution of the monitoring and measurement of data for making business decision

Micro-learning activities

Learners will

1. watch the video *Data & Analytics*
2. have the option to check out more resources:
   read this article What is Business Analytics? Definition, Importance & Examples
   https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/what-business-analytics-definition-importance-examples-jha/
   watch the video Discover the Business Value of Data Analysis
   https://youtu.be/HQEXsShJPvw.

Lesson Plan

Module: DATA ANALYTICS
Protection

Learning Unit: Security & Data

Desired Core professional goal Learners will learn about: - identify the importance and contribution of monitoring and measuring data for making informed business decisions in alignment with regulatory compliance requirements for data security and data protection.	**Benchmark** big data
Level Basic	**Framework** Empower

Professional micro-learning outcomes

Learners will:

- explain what data security and data protection are
- identify the main Data Security Regulations in EU
- identify the importance and contribution of the monitoring and measurement of data for making business decision

Micro-learning activities

Learners will

1. watch the video *Security and Data Protection*
2. read Tips to Keep Personal Data Safe
   Data analytics_Empower_Tips to Keep Personal Data Safe.pdf
3. have the option to check out more resources: Comparing data protection vs. data security vs. data privacy https://youtu.be/SuNtmCgIhiM

Lesson Plan

Module: Data analytics

Learning Unit: How business insights can help you grow

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: - analyse where their organisation is in terms of the use of business insights to drive growth	**Benchmark** e-platform
Level Basic	**Framework** Energise

Professional micro-learning outcomes

Learning how to learn

Learners will:

- reflect on their current situation regarding the use of data for decision making
- identify areas for improvement
- develop an action plan to better use business insights for the future success of their business

Micro-learning activities

Learning how to learn

Title: Leveraging Business Insights for Growth - Self-Assessment Activities (10 minutes)

Introduction:
The ability to derive valuable business insights is crucial for any entrepreneur or business leader looking to drive growth and success. Business insights empower decision-making, enhance strategic planning, and foster innovation. In this self-assessment, we will explore various aspects of using business insights to help you grow your business.

Instructions:
Take 10 minutes to work through the following questions and scenarios. Rate your responses on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 indicates "Strongly Disagree" and 5 indicates "Strongly Agree."

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Understanding Your Market:

a) I regularly conduct market research to identify trends, customer needs, and competitors.

1	2	3	4	5

b) I use customer feedback and surveys to understand preferences and pain points.

1	2	3	4	5

c) I track industry benchmarks and KPIs to gauge my business's performance.

1	2	3	4	5

Data-Driven Decision Making:

a) I base important business decisions on data and insights rather than gut feelings.

1	2	3	4	5

b) I invest in data analytics tools or services to extract valuable insights.

1	2	3	4	5

c) I analyze historical data to identify patterns and make predictions about the future.

1	2	3	4	5

Identifying Growth Opportunities:

a) I regularly brainstorm and explore new product/service offerings.

1	2	3	4	5

b) I collaborate with my team to identify and capitalize on potential growth opportunities.

1	2	3	4	5

c) I assess the viability of expansion into new markets or customer segments.

1	2	3	4	5

Competitor Analysis:

a) I keep a close eye on my competitors' strategies and offerings.

1	2	3	4	5

b) I compare my business's strengths and weaknesses against competitors.

1	2	3	4	5

c) I use competitor insights to differentiate my business and improve offerings.

1	2	3	4	5

Customer Retention and Satisfaction:

a) I use insights to enhance the overall customer experience.

DESIGN OF #SMESGODIGITAL TOOL

1	2	3	4	5

b) I track customer satisfaction metrics and use them to improve service quality.

1	2	3	4	5

c) I implement strategies to retain existing customers and encourage loyalty.

1	2	3	4	5

Risk Management:

a) I use insights to identify potential risks and challenges for my business.

1	2	3	4	5

b) I have contingency plans in place to mitigate identified risks.

1	2	3	4	5

c) I constantly reassess risks based on changing market dynamics and insights.

1	2	3	4	5

Innovating with Insights:

a) I encourage a culture of innovation within my organization.

1	2	3	4	5

b) I use insights to inspire new product development and improvements.

1	2	3	4	5

c) I actively seek out emerging trends and technologies to stay ahead.

1	2	3	4	5

Conclusion:

Total your scores for each section and assess where you stand on leveraging business insights to drive growth. Use your results to identify areas of improvement and create an action plan to better utilize business insights for the future success of your business. Remember, continuous learning and adaptation are essential for sustained growth.

- read tips on steps to create an action plan *Data analytics_Energise_Action_Plan.pdf*

Lesson Plan

Module: E-learning **Learning Unit: Benefits of Upskilling your workforce.**

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: - Understand E-Learning Fundamentals	**Benchmark** e-learning
Level Basic	**Framework** Enlighten
Professional micro-learning outcomes: Learners will develop a clear knowledge of the following key topics: - Define what e-learning is and its key components - Describe the advantages and disadvantages of e-learning	
Micro-learning activities Learners will: 1. watch the video on YouTube: https://youtu.be/wfeJBUr_3ek 2. read this article to have a clear overview of the key elements of e-learning and benefits: https://www.learnupon.com/blog/what-is-elearning/	

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Lesson Plan

Module: E-learning **Learning Unit: E-learning A strategist's guide to upskilling**

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: - Navigate E-Learning Platforms	**Benchmark** e-learning
Level Basic	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes: Learners will develop a clear knowledge of the following key topics: • Description of the most used e-learning platforms or Learning Management Systems (LMS). • Understand the user interface and tools available within the chosen platforms.	
Micro-learning activities Learners will: 1. watch the video on YouTube: https://youtu.be/JrUhNrv1evs?si=SHpJ67kRad517s61 2. read this article to have a clear overview of the various types of e-learning platforms: https://moodle.com/news/top-5-learning-management-systems-in-2023/	

Lesson Plan

Module: E-learning **Learning Unit: Foster a culture of learning in your business**

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: - Engage with Digital Content	**Benchmark** e-learning
Level Basic	**Framework** Energize
Professional micro-learning outcomes: Learners will develop a clear knowledge of the following key topics: - Knows digital learning materials such as text, videos, audio, and interactive elements. - How to Engage effectively through multimedia content.	
Micro-learning activities Learners will: 1. watch the video on YouTube: https://youtu.be/Fot2uiDAoo4?si=sCxsrQu8hHltaUiN 2. read this article to have a clear overview of how to engage with multimedia content: https://www.activecampaign.com/glossary/multimedia-content	

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Once read the articles the learners must search on google "how to engage with multimedia content and make a checklist of the most useful explaining why they think so. Learns can do this activity individually or in group and post it in the course forum.

Lesson Plan

Module: E-learning **Learning Unit: Profiting from your digitalisation**

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to deepen the following: - Communication & Time management	**Benchmark** e-learning
Level Basic	**Framework** Evolve
Professional micro-learning outcomes: Learners will develop a clear knowledge of the following key topics: - Participate in Online Discussions: Engage in discussions and forums within the e-learning environment. - Learn what Netiquette is. - Time Management and Self-Paced Learning: manage their time effectively to balance e-learning with other responsibilities.	
Micro-learning activities Learners will: 1. watch the video on YouTube: https://youtu.be/IoVpUYwX6_U?si=xbPaHc9UCN_ZPmUY 2. read these articles to have a clear overview of the key elements: https://www.columbusstate.edu/online-learning/standards/netiquette-guidelines.php https://elearningindustry.com/examining-the-benefits-of-active-learning-in-online-education	

Lesson Plan

Module: Digital Marketing Learning Unit: Role of digital marketing in promoting SMEs

Desired Core professional goal	Benchmark
Learners will be able to: Understand the role of digital marketing in promoting SMEs.	Digital Marketing
Level Standard	**Framework** Enlighten
Professional micro-learning outcomes: Learners will: • Understand the definition of digital marketing and the role of digital marketing in promoting SMEs.	
Micro-learning activities	

Lesson Plan

Module: Digital Marketing Learning Unit:

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: Evaluate and use the Best free online tools for smart marketing	**Benchmark** Digital Marketing
Level Standard	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes: Learners will: • Analyze and evaluate the best free digital tools for Digital Marketing	

Lesson Plan

Module: Digital Marketing Learning Unit: Digital Marketing Platforms & Channels

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: Recognize and evaluate the most used Platforms and Channels for Digital Marketing.	**Benchmark** Digital Marketing
Level Standard	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes: Learners will: • Recognize and evaluate the most used Platforms and Channels for Digital Marketing	
Micro-learning activities Learners will:	

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Lesson Plan

Module: Digital Marketing Learning Unit: How to develop a social media strategy

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: Develop an efficient Social media strategy.	**Benchmark** Digital Marketing
Level Standard	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes: Learners will: • Learn how to develop an efficient Social media strategy.	
Micro-learning activities Learners will:	

Lesson Plan

Module: Digital Marketing Learning Unit: Evolve: Moving your digital transformation forward

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: How to Launch a digital campaign	Benchmark Digital Marketing
Level Standard	**Framework** Evolve
Professional micro-learning outcomes: Learners will: • How to Launch a digital campaign	
Micro-learning activities Learners will: 1. watch the video on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hZwSPA-JsII	

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Lesson Plan

Module: B2B trade platforms Learning Unit: Easy network & trade

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to – understand the benefits of using B2B trade platforms and be motivated to start their digital transformation by utilizing such platforms.	**Benchmark** e-platform
Level Standard	**Framework** Enlighten
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will – understand, the concept of B2B trade platforms and their role in facilitating business transactions between micro and SME owners. – identify the benefits of using B2B trade platforms for micro and SME owners, such as expanding business networks, increasing sales, and streamlining procurement processes. – gain knowledge of best practices for using B2B trade platforms, such as maintaining a professional online presence	
Micro-learning activities Learners will 1. watch the video Standard level: Module 2: Enlighten: Easy network & trade https://youtu.be/d3_MJ1lQBF8 (2:58) 2. have an option to do the following activity: **Exploring B2B Trade Platforms** Conduct a web search to find and explore at least two articles or resources that provide best practices for using B2B trade platforms. Focus on topics such as maintaining a professional online presence, verifying the credibility of	

potential partners, and managing customer feedback. Take notes on key points and strategies that you find valuable and be prepared to share your findings with the class. You may follow the Guidelines for Conducting a Web Search on Best Practices for Using B2B Trade Platforms. After completing the activity you may check out the Feedback for Best Practices for Using B2B Trade Platforms and compare with your findings.

3. have an option to see more resources:

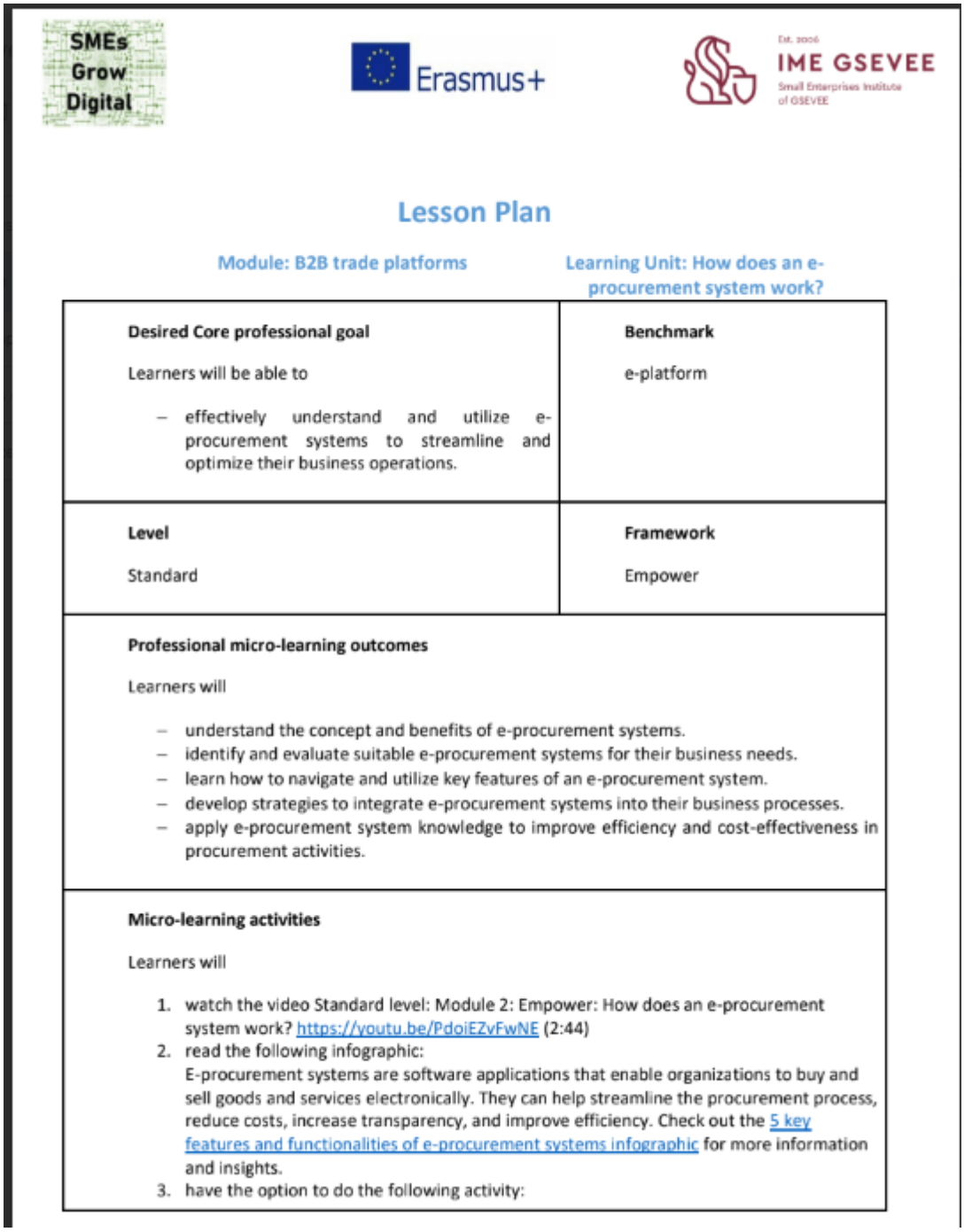
   a. What is B2B Ecommerce? Types + Examples (shopify.com) This article is a comprehensive guide for B2B ecommerce, covering its definition, benefits, challenges, types, examples, best practices, and trends. It also provides tips on how to start a B2B ecommerce company, how to choose a B2B ecommerce platform, and how to learn from successful B2B ecommerce cases.

   b. How to Increase Your Productivity at Work (liveabout.com) This article is a comprehensive guide for improving productivity at work by replacing bad habits and reactive patterns with good habits that make us proactive1. It covers 10 tips on how to increase productivity, such as finding your peak time, avoiding multitasking, focusing on the important tasks, delegating properly, exercising regularly, being optimistic, sleeping well, and taking care of yourself

   c. Platform-to-business trading practices | Shaping Europe's digital future (europa.eu) This webpage is about the EU Regulation on platform-to-business relations (P2B Regulation), which aims to create a fair, transparent and predictable business environment for smaller businesses and traders on online platforms1. It also provides guidelines, Q&A, and related documents on the implementation and enforcement of the P2B Regulation. Additionally, it features some news and events on the digital single market strategy and the online platform economy.

   d. Best Practices For Using APIs To Integrate Your B2B Ecosystem (forbes.com) This article is about how to use APIs to integrate your business ecosystem with your partners and customers1. It provides some best practices for creating, organizing, enabling, and measuring the success of your APIs. It also explains how APIs can help you grow and optimize your business in the digital age.

   e. The New Rules of B2B Lead Generation (hbr.org) This webpage is a summary of an article that discusses the new rules of B2B lead generation in the digital age. It provides a five-step process for creating and distributing outcome-based content that can help salespeople find and engage potential customers online. It also shares a real-life example of how a global technology company successfully implemented this approach



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Lesson Plan

Module: B2B trade platforms

Learning Unit: How does an e-procurement system work?

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to – effectively understand and utilize e-procurement systems to streamline and optimize their business operations.	**Benchmark** e-platform
Level Standard	**Framework** Empower

Professional micro-learning outcomes

Learners will

- understand the concept and benefits of e-procurement systems.
- identify and evaluate suitable e-procurement systems for their business needs.
- learn how to navigate and utilize key features of an e-procurement system.
- develop strategies to integrate e-procurement systems into their business processes.
- apply e-procurement system knowledge to improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness in procurement activities.

Micro-learning activities

Learners will

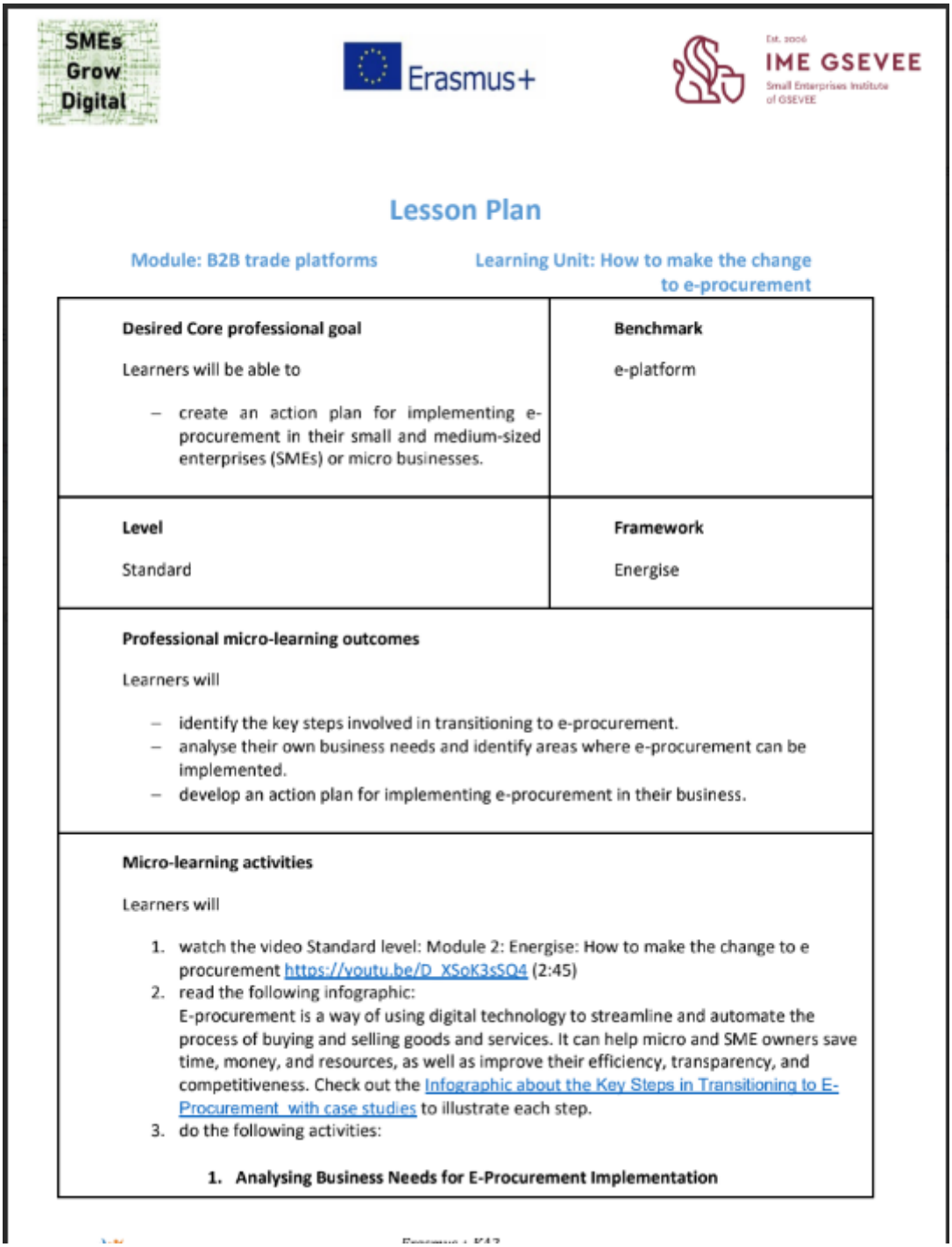
1. watch the video Standard level: Module 2: Empower: How does an e-procurement system work? https://youtu.be/PdoiEZvFwNE (2:44)
2. read the following infographic:
   E-procurement systems are software applications that enable organizations to buy and sell goods and services electronically. They can help streamline the procurement process, reduce costs, increase transparency, and improve efficiency. Check out the 5 key features and functionalities of e-procurement systems infographic for more information and insights.
3. have the option to do the following activity:

Evaluating and Selecting an E-Procurement System

Now that you have a good understanding of e-procurement systems, let's move on to evaluating and selecting the right system for your business. It is important to identify your business needs and requirements before making a decision. Here you can find a checklist or criteria to help you evaluate and compare different e-procurement systems. This checklist covers aspects such as functionality, scalability, user-friendliness, integration capabilities, and cost. Take some time to review the checklist and think about what is most important for your business. Then search the web for e-procurement systems that best suit your business needs. Compare and discuss with other learners sharing the same needs with you to share experiences and insights on selecting the most suitable system for your business. You may use our course forum our chatroom or with your team. You may introduce yourself to the course forum and make a team with other learners sharing the same interests and professional sector. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course.

4. have the option to check out more resources:

   a. What is E-Procurement?: A 3-minute video that gives a brief overview of e-procurement and its advantages.
   b. E-Procurement: what it is and how it's used: This article introduces the main steps and types of e-procurement and provides some best practices and tips for implementation.
   c. E-Procurement: Definition, Benefits, Types & Steps: The article discusses the definition, benefits, types, and steps of e-procurement and showcases some successful case studies.
   d. E-procurement - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development: An article that explains the challenges and opportunities of e-procurement for public sector organizations and provides some recommendations for improvement.
   e. Systems and e-Procurement - Improving Access and Transparency of Public Procurement: An article that analyzes the impact of e-procurement on access and transparency of public procurement in the EU and provides some suggestions for technical and commercial implementation.
   f. Functionalities of the e-Procurement System: An article that presents some indicators on the functionalities of the e-procurement system across OECD countries.



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Lesson Plan

Module: B2B trade platforms

Learning Unit: How to make the change to e-procurement

Desired Core professional goal	Benchmark
Learners will be able to – create an action plan for implementing e-procurement in their small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) or micro businesses.	e-platform
Level Standard	**Framework** Energise

Professional micro-learning outcomes

Learners will

- identify the key steps involved in transitioning to e-procurement.
- analyse their own business needs and identify areas where e-procurement can be implemented.
- develop an action plan for implementing e-procurement in their business.

Micro-learning activities

Learners will

1. watch the video Standard level: Module 2: Energise: How to make the change to e procurement https://youtu.be/D_XSoK3sSQ4 (2:45)
2. read the following infographic:
   E-procurement is a way of using digital technology to streamline and automate the process of buying and selling goods and services. It can help micro and SME owners save time, money, and resources, as well as improve their efficiency, transparency, and competitiveness. Check out the Infographic about the Key Steps in Transitioning to E-Procurement with case studies to illustrate each step.
3. do the following activities:

   1. **Analysing Business Needs for E-Procurement Implementation**

Please take some time to reflect on these questions and provide your responses. Compare and discuss with other learners sharing the same needs with you to share experiences and insights to identify areas within your business where e-procurement can be implemented effectively. You may use our course forum our chatroom or with your team. You may introduce yourself to the course forum and make a team with other learners sharing the same interests and professional sector. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course.

1. What are the current procurement processes in your business?
2. How do you currently handle procurement requests and approvals?
3. Are there any specific areas within your procurement processes that are time-consuming or prone to errors?
4. What are the main challenges you face in managing procurement in your business?
5. Have you considered implementing e-procurement in your business before?
6. If yes, what were the reasons for not implementing e-procurement? If no, what are the main factors that have prevented you from considering it?
7. Are there any specific procurement tasks or activities that you believe could be automated or streamlined through e-procurement?
8. Do you have any concerns or reservations about implementing e-procurement in your business?
9. What are your expectations or goals for implementing e-procurement in your business?
10. Are there any specific features or functionalities that you would like to see in an e-procurement system?

2. Developing an Action Plan for implementing e-procurement in your business

Now, it's time to put your knowledge into action! Individually or collaboratively with other learners create an action plan for implementing e-procurement in your business. I This Action Plan template will guide you through the process. Discuss and fill in the template based on your business needs and the information covered in the previous sections. Brainstorm ideas, set specific goals, and outline the steps for implementation. Take into account the resources and support available to you.

4. have the option to check out more resources:

   a. Effective Practices for Sourcing, Purchasing, and Procurement | Alison: This free online course teaches the essential skills and knowledge to excel in sourcing, purchasing, and procurement.
   b. Procurement in SAP S/4HANA | Free Online Course | Alison: This free online course will teach you to use SAP S/4HANA for master data management and procurement automation.
   c. How to Implement e-Procurement - Basware: This article is about how to implement an effective e-procurement strategy for your business. It outlines the steps to assess your current process, identify potential gaps, think about the benefits, choose a provider, create an implementation plan, and monitor and

evaluate the results. It also provides some useful resources and links to help you along the way.

d. What is The Best E-Procurement System for SMEs? (procureport.com): This article is about how SMEs can benefit from using e-procurement systems to streamline and automate their procurement process. It explains the features and advantages of different types of e-procurement software, such as procure-to-pay and contract management, and how they can help SMEs save time, money, and resources, as well as improve their efficiency, transparency, and competitiveness.

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Lesson Plan

Module: B2B trade platforms

Learning Unit: Procurement: Capitalising on the power of crowd

Desired Core professional goal	**Benchmark**
Learners will be able to – implement an action plan for incorporating crowdsourcing in their procurement process – overcome any fear of technology and potential barriers to gain a competitive edge, increase profitability, and adapt to the rapidly changing business landscape – create a culture of continuous learning and improvement within their business	e-platform
Level	**Framework**
Standard	Evolve

Professional micro-learning outcomes

Learners will

- understand the concept of crowdsourcing as a type of e-procurement.
- identify the benefits and potential drawbacks of crowdsourcing for their business.
- develop an action plan for implementing crowdsourcing in their procurement process.
- implement the action plan and assess its effectiveness through a self-assessment questionnaire.
- assess their fear of technology and potential barriers to their digital transformation through B2B e-commerce marketplace platforms and e-procurement.

Authentic assessment performance task

Learners will

1. watch the video Standard level: Module 2: Evolve: Procurement Capitalising on the power of crowd https://youtu.be/nlk5k479-Bg (2:44)
2. do the following authentic assessment performance task:

Use the Action Plan you developed in the previous lesson or follow the Action Plan Guidelines provided to you to develop a new action plan for your business, incorporating crowdsourcing as a procurement method. You may use the Action Plan Template to start implementing the steps for your business. Discuss your experiences and challenges with your team or other learners sharing the same needs with you using our course forum our chatroom. You may introduce yourself to the course forum and make a team with other learners sharing the same interests and professional sector. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course.
After completing this task do the Self-Assessment Questionnaire Evaluating the Effectiveness of Your Action Plan and/or the Self-Assessment Questionnaire Implementing Crowdsourcing as a Procurement Method and see your score on your effectiveness. Discuss your score with other learners and exchange feedback for collaborative and mutual improvement in low scores. If you cooperate with digital transformation consultants present them with your feedback to receive personalised and professional guidance and make necessary improvements for future planning.

3. Have the option to do the following activity:

Overcoming Tech Fear: Embracing B2B E-commerce and E-Procurement
Technology adoption can be intimidating for some, and there may be concerns or barriers that prevent businesses from fully embracing it. Some common fears include a lack of technical skills, security concerns, or resistance to change. This activity will help you address these concerns through case studies scenarios and provide guidance on how to self-assess your progress.
Listen to the Podcast: Case studies of successfully embracing B2B e-commerce and e procurement https://youtu.be/nWl3UiX1kMk (5:09)
Two SMEs describe the challenges faced by the business before adopting these technologies and the positive outcomes achieved after implementation emphasizing the transformative impact on the business, including increased sales, reduced costs, improved inventory management, etc.
Reflect on your experience during the development and implementation of your action plan on using B2B ecommerce and e-procurement technologies. Then rate your comfort level with them using the Self-Assessment Questionnaire Overcoming Tech Fear Embracing B2B Ecommerce and E-Procurement. Discuss your score with other learners and exchange feedback for collaborative and mutual improvement in low scores.

4. have the option to check out more resources:
    a. 10 Best B2B Courses Online (Free & Paid) (reliablesoft.net): This webpage is a list of the 10 best B2B courses online for learning how to market and sell to other businesses. It covers topics such as social media marketing, lead generation, inbound sales, and business development. Each course has a brief description, price, duration, and link to enroll.
    b. Term: Power of the crowd - Crowdsourcing Glossary (clickworker.com): The article is about the power of the crowd, which is the ability of many people to influence,

solve, or create things together. It gives examples of how the crowd can be used for good or bad purposes, and how platforms can benefit from crowdsourcing.

c. Procurement: Tapping Into the Power of the Crowd (crowdstaffing.com): The article is about how Crowdstaffing, a new talent acquisition model, uses the power of the crowd to help procurement leaders achieve their goals. It explains how Crowdstaffing combines automated hiring technology, a network of independent recruiters, and dedicated account management teams to deliver fast, quality, and compliant staffing solutions

d. Crowdsourcing: Definition, How It Works, Types, and Examples (investopedia.com): The article is a comprehensive guide to crowdsourcing, which is the practice of obtaining work, information, or opinions from a large group of people online. It covers the types, benefits, challenges, and examples of crowdsourcing, as well as how it can be used for various purposes such as product development, research, problem-solving, and fundraising.

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Lesson Plan

Module: Integrated smart workplace

Learning Unit: Can I manage my business virtually?

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to – identify opportunities for managing their business virtually and implementing a smart workplace. – overcome their tech fear and identify potential barriers to digital transformation in order to successfully implement virtual management strategies.	**Benchmark** Cloud computing
Level Standard	**Framework** Enlighten
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will – identify the benefits of managing a business virtually. – evaluate the current state of their business in terms of virtual management potential. – assess their potential barriers and concerns for implementing virtual management strategies in their business.	
Micro-learning activities Learners will 1. watch the video Standard level: Module 4: Enlighten: Can I manage my business virtually? https://youtu.be/55lPzm1_A3Q (2:55) 2. have an option to do the following activities: a. **Self-Assessment Questionnaire: Evaluating Your Business for Virtual**	

Management Potential

Evaluate their current business for virtual management potential. Please take a moment to share your experiences and challenges in managing your business. Are you currently using any virtual management practices? What benefits or challenges have you encountered? Complete the Self-Assessment Questionnaire: Evaluating Your Business for Virtual Management Potential individually. Please take a few minutes to reflect on these questions and then share your thoughts with other learners exchanging feedback for collaborative and mutual improvement in low scores using our course forum our chatroom. You may introduce yourself to the course forum and make a team with other learners sharing the same interests and professional sector. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course.

b. Self-Assessment Questionnaire: Overcoming Tech Fear and Barriers to Digital Transformation

To successfully implement virtual management strategies, it is important to address any tech fear and potential barriers that may hinder the digital transformation process. This activity will help you assess and overcome your tech fear identifying your potential barriers and concerns to your digital transformation while implementing virtual management strategies.
Reflect on your tech fears or concerns related to implementing virtual management strategies and write down your thoughts ensuring that all fears are captured. You may discuss your fears with your team or other learners sharing the same needs with you using our course forum our chatroom. You may introduce yourself to the course forum and make a team with other learners sharing the same interests and professional sector. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course.
The Self-Assessment Questionnaire: Overcoming Tech Fear and Barriers to Digital Transformation will facilitate this process to individually assess their business for potential barriers to digital transformation using the provided criteria. Reflect on your assessment results and identify specific barriers you may face. and brainstorm potential solutions and strategies for overcoming the identified tech fears and barriers. Think creatively and consider both individual and collective actions.
We encourage you to discuss your self-assessment results and share your tech fears and identified barriers such as experiences and challenges you may face or already have faced in adopting and/or implementing virtual management strategies in your business. This is an opportunity for open and honest discussions, so please feel free to share your thoughts and concerns. Remember, this is a supportive and non-judgmental environment. By learning from each other, we can collectively overcome hurdles and achieve success. Discuss with your team or other learners how to transform these barriers into positive statements or actionable steps suggesting strategies and solutions for each transformed barrier. Together, we can find ways to overcome these obstacles and embrace digital transformation.

Action Planning

Now that you have transformed our barriers into positive statements and actionable steps, it is time for you to create your personalized action plans for overcoming tech fear and addressing barriers to digital transformation in order to overcome them and implement virtual management strategies in your businesses. Individually brainstorm potential actions you can take to overcome your tech fears and address the identified barriers and write down your action plans. Share your action plans with your team or other learners sharing the same concerns with you to get feedback and suggestions for improvement if needed. Finally, commit to implementing your action plan. You may use the Action Plan template we provide for guidance and support.

3. have an option to see more resources:

a. 5 Benefits of Using Virtual Offices for SMEs (servcorp.com.sg): The article is a comprehensive guide to virtual offices, which are a flexible and cost-effective alternative to traditional office spaces. It explains how virtual offices can provide SMEs with a prestigious address, a phone number, mail and call forwarding, and access to meeting rooms and office spaces. It also highlights how virtual offices can benefit employees by allowing them to work remotely, set their own schedule, and increase their productivity.

b. 70 Virtual Team Statistics You Can't Ignore: 2023 Data Analysis, Benefits & Challenges - Financesonline.com: This is an article on virtual team statistics. It discusses how companies are reaping a host of benefits by designing flexible workplace policies that formalize virtual teamwork.

c. What is a Virtual Office - Advantages and Disadvantages | Fiverr: This is an article on what virtual offices are and their benefits. It discusses how virtual offices can be an affordable way for companies to cut down on their expenditures.

d. How to Run a Virtual Business (chron.com): This is an article on how to manage your business virtually. It discusses the benefits of virtual management and how to implement it.

e. How to Manage Your Business Remotely: This is an article on how to manage your business remotely. It discusses the benefits of virtual management and how to implement it.

f. Connect with Customers and Manage Your Business Remotely | SCORE: This is a webinar on how to manage your business remotely. It discusses the benefits of virtual management and how to implement it.

Lesson Plan

Module: Integrated smart workplace

Learning Unit: What Goes into a Successful Wearable Solution for Business?

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to – utilize wearable technology in their businesses, enhancing efficiency and productivity.	**Benchmark** Internet of Things Augmented Reality
Level Standard	**Framework** Empower

Professional micro-learning outcomes

Learners will

- understand the benefits of incorporating wearable technology into business operations.
- identify the challenges associated with implementing wearable technology in a business context.
- analyse examples of successful wearable solutions in different industries.
- develop a plan for integrating wearable technology into their own business operations.

Micro-learning activities

Learners will

1. watch the Standard level: Module 4: Empower: What Goes into a Successful Wearable Solution for Business? https://youtu.be/P4z_6Z2px7U (3:09)
2. do the following activity:

   Wearable Technology in business: Challenges & Solutions

   Reflect on the challenges you might face when implementing wearable technology as mentioned in the previous video and propose solutions to overcome these challenges. Discuss with your team or other learners sharing the same challenges and exchange feedback on the proposed solutions. You

may introduce yourself to the course forum and make a team with other learners sharing the same interests and professional sector. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course.

Then listen to the podcast Wearable Technology in business: Challenges & Solutions: https://youtu.be/CgoFMYHqDXQ (2:38) which explains further the discussed challenges in the previous lesson while providing suggested solutions. Compare with your individual or collaborative with your team proposed solutions and reflect or discuss with your team the feasibility of implementing wearable technology in your business context.

3. have an option to do the following activities:

   a. **Developing an integration plan for wearable technology in their own business**

   Follow the Action Plan Template: Integrating Wearable Technology into Business Operations guidelines to develop a plan for integrating wearable technology into your own business operations either individually or collaboratively with your team or other learners. Then use the Self-Assessment Questionnaire: Evaluating the Integration of Wearable Technology into Business Operations to rate your action plan and/or allow other learners to use the questionnaire and evaluate your plan for peer review. Then discuss with other learners exchanging feedback for collaborative and mutual improvement in low scores using our course forum our chatroom. You may introduce yourself to the course forum and make a team with other learners sharing the same interests and professional sector. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course.

   b. **Research and Analysis of Successful Wearable Solutions in Different Industries**

   Focus on any preferred specific industry and (e.g., healthcare, manufacturing, retail, sports, etc.) and conduct a web research on successful wearable solutions that have been implemented in your chosen industry. You should explore case studies, industry reports, articles, and any other relevant sources to gather information. Try to consider the following aspects during your research and analysis:

   - The specific wearable technology used in the industry.
   - The benefits and outcomes achieved through the implementation of wearable solutions.
   - The challenges faced during implementation and how they were overcome.

- Any unique features or functionalities of the wearable solutions.
- The overall impact on the industry and its operations.

Once the research is complete, you may prepare a presentation or discuss and share your findings with your team or other learners to compare and contrast the different wearable solutions across industries and identify any common trends or themes.

4. have an option to see more resources:

   a. Wearable devices in the workplace | Deloitte Insights: This article explains how wearable technologies augment workers' physical and perceptual abilities and help keep them safe presenting their benefits and challenges as well as their future in changing the game for workforce planning.
   b. Wearable Technology In Business & Customer Market - Digital Silk: This is an article that provides an overview of the types, use cases, benefits, and challenges of wearable technology in business. It also showcases some examples of successful wearable tech devices that have transformed businesses in various sectors.
   c. Wearable Technology In Business & Customer Market (digitalsilk.com): This article discusses wearable technology trends, including health-related wearables, 5G-enabled wearables, AR wearables, and smart clothing and footwear. It highlights the benefits of health-related wearables, 5G-enabled wearables, AR wearables, and smart clothing and footwear, predicting their widespread adoption and advancements in health, wellness, and productivity.
   d. For older workers, wearables are where it's at (sme.org): This article presents Comau's MATE exoskeleton, a wearable device that helps workers perform repetitive tasks by reducing the muscular effort and fatigue of the upper limbs. It transfers about 30% of the muscular burden from the shoulders to the pelvis
   e. Use Wearables to Address Your Business Challenges (samsung.com): This article talks about Samsung's Gear S3 wearable technology, which offers hands-free communication and easy-to-manage enterprise mobility management, enhancing productivity and customer satisfaction in various industries like healthcare, safety, and communication.
   f. How wearable technology could promote trust and wellness at work - PwC: This is a video that explores how wearable technology can help employers and employees build trust, monitor wellness, and optimize productivity in the post-pandemic workplace. It also addresses some of the ethical and privacy issues related to wearable data collection and analysis.

g. What Is Wearable Technology? Examples of Wearables | Built In: This article discusses the impact of wearables on various industries, including sports, business, health, gaming, fashion, travel, education, and logistics. It highlights the benefits of wearable devices, such as collecting and analysing data for feedback, guidance, and policy decisions. The document also highlights the innovation and potential of wearable technology, such as smart compression shirts and brain sensor headbands.

h. 21 Examples of Sleek Wearable Tech (trendhunter.com): The article showcases 21 examples of sleek wearable tech that combine convenience, functionality and style. The article covers how wearable devices can enhance various aspects of life, such as sports, business, health, gaming, fashion, travel, education and logistics.

Lesson Plan

Module: Integrated smart workplace Learning Unit: Making Cloud your new friend

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to – understand the concept of cloud computing, its benefits, – identify business processes suitable for migration to the cloud, – recognize various cloud services available for MSMEs.	**Benchmark** Cloud computing
Level Standard	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will – define cloud computing and explain its benefits for MSMEs. – identify key business processes that can be migrated to the cloud. – evaluate different cloud services suitable for MSMEs. – develop a plan for transitioning to cloud computing for their own business.	
Micro-learning activities Learners will 1. watch the video Standard level: Module 4: Empower: Making Cloud your new friend https://youtu.be/hLCUq2C8aa8 (3:09) 2. listen to the podcast: Identifying Business Processes for Cloud Migration: https://youtu.be/lN6NAW6NZNs (2:52) 3. listen to the podcast: Exploring Cloud Services for MSMEs: https://youtu.be/06y4HeOEVZs 4. have an option to do the following activity:	

a. Planning for Cloud Migration

Check out the Infographic with examples of successful cloud migration in MSMEs demonstrating how MSMEs can successfully migrate various aspects of their business operations to the cloud, resulting in improved efficiency, cost savings, and enhanced business outcomes.

Then follow the Action Plan for Cloud Migration guidelines to develop a plan for transitioning your own business processes to the cloud. Reflect on considerations such as data security, cost analysis, and vendor selection.

Here you can find guidelines for Choosing a suitable cloud provider for your business as well as Resources and Tools that will help micro and SMEs owners to migrate their business processes to cloud computing such as

- Cloud migration guides and best practices from reputable sources.
- Cost calculators provided by cloud service providers to estimate expenses.
- Security assessment tools to evaluate data security measures.
- Training materials and online courses on cloud migration and management.

b. Evaluating Your Action Plan for Cloud Migration

Evaluate your Action Plan for Cloud Migration. Please take a moment to share your experiences and challenges in migrating your business processes to cloud computing. Are you currently using any cloud computing services? What benefits or challenges have you encountered? Complete the Checklist for Cloud Migration Action Plan and the Self-Assessment Questionnaire for Cloud Migration Action individually. Please take a few minutes to reflect on these questions and then share your thoughts with other learners exchanging feedback for collaborative and mutual improvement in low scores using our course forum our chatroom. You may introduce yourself to the course forum and make a team with other learners sharing the same interests and professional sector. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course.

5. have an option to see more resources:

a. Cloud Computing In 6 Minutes | What Is Cloud Computing? | Cloud Computing Explained | Simplilearn - YouTube: This video is about cloud computing, which is the delivery of computing services over the internet. It explains the basic concepts, types, and benefits of cloud computing, and gives some examples of how it can be used by individuals and businesses.

b. Benefits of Cloud Computing for Small Businesses - Media 7 - YouTube: This video explains the benefits of cloud computing for small businesses.

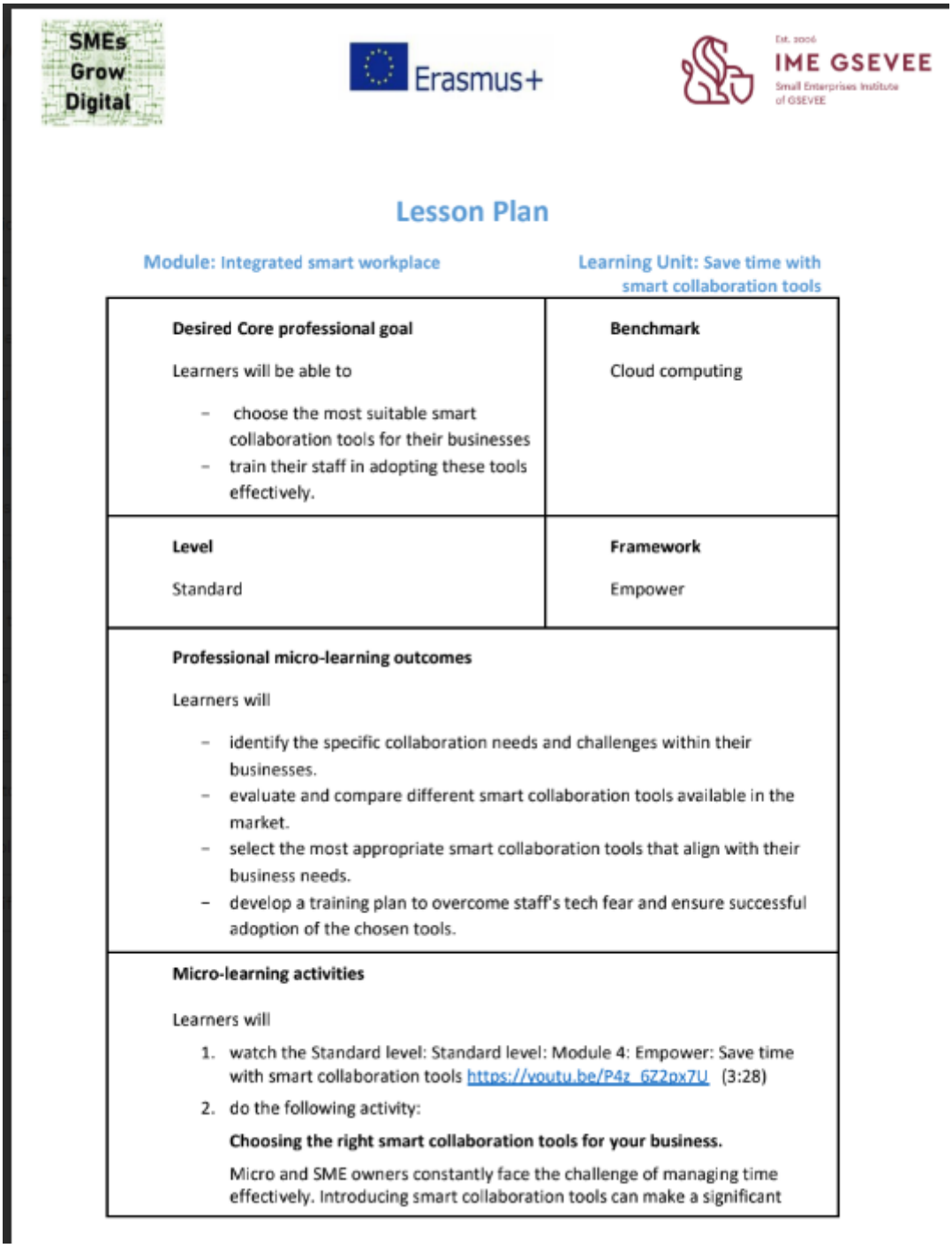
c. Top 10 Challenges Of Cloud Computing- That Will Turn Your World Upside Down. - ThinkCloudly: This article is about the challenges and opportunities of cloud computing for MSMEs. It covers topics such as security, cost, expertise, governance, compliance, multi-cloud, performance, interoperability, and reliability of cloud services. It also provides some resources and tips for learning and adopting cloud computing.

d. What is Cloud Migration? Strategy, Process, and Tools (netapp.com): This article is about cloud migration, which is the process of moving data, applications, and other IT resources from on-premises or co-located infrastructures to the cloud. It covers the benefits, challenges, strategies, phases, tools, and best practices of cloud migration. It also provides some links to other guides and resources on cloud-related topics.

e. 21 Best Practices for Your Cloud Migration | AWS Cloud Enterprise Strategy Blog (amazon.com): This article is a blog post by Stephen Orban, the General Manager of AWS New Initiative, that summarizes 21 best practices for migrating to AWS. It covers the pre-migration, migration, and post-migration stages, and provides some tips and recommendations for each phase. It also includes some links to other guides and resources on cloud-related topics.

f. 15 Best Cloud Computing Tools (Updated 2023) (cloudzero.com): This article is a blog post by CloudZero, a cloud cost intelligence platform, that introduces 15 of the best cloud computing tools for various purposes, such as monitoring, security, migration, backup, and more. It also explains the benefits and features of each tool, and provides links to their websites. The article also promotes CloudZero as a solution for reducing and optimizing cloud costs.

g. What digital tools must MSMEs embrace to survive and scale (yourstory.com): This article is about the digital transformation of MSMEs and the digital tools they need to embrace to survive and scale. It explains the meaning and benefits of digital transformation, and provides some examples of digital tools for connectivity, collaboration, remote work monitoring, data management, analytics, cloud computing, and e-commerce.



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Lesson Plan

Module: Integrated smart workplace

Learning Unit: Save time with smart collaboration tools

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to – choose the most suitable smart collaboration tools for their businesses – train their staff in adopting these tools effectively.	**Benchmark** Cloud computing
Level Standard	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will – identify the specific collaboration needs and challenges within their businesses. – evaluate and compare different smart collaboration tools available in the market. – select the most appropriate smart collaboration tools that align with their business needs. – develop a training plan to overcome staff's tech fear and ensure successful adoption of the chosen tools.	
Micro-learning activities Learners will 1. watch the Standard level: Standard level: Module 4: Empower: Save time with smart collaboration tools https://youtu.be/P4z_6Z2px7U (3:28) 2. do the following activity: **Choosing the right smart collaboration tools for your business.** Micro and SME owners constantly face the challenge of managing time effectively. Introducing smart collaboration tools can make a significant	

difference. These tools, specifically designed for businesses, offer cost-effective, scalable, and secure solutions to streamline operations and enhance productivity.

Choosing the right tool, however, requires careful consideration. It's essential to evaluate factors such as cost, scalability, security, and user-friendliness. A tool might be low-cost, but if it doesn't scale with business growth, it might not be the best choice. Similarly, a tool might offer advanced features, but if it's not user-friendly, staff might struggle to use it, reducing its effectiveness.

Reflect on the collaboration needs and challenges within your business. What are some areas where improved collaboration could benefit your organization? The Assessment Questionnaire/Checklist: Identifying Collaboration Needs and Challenges will facilitate this process for you. Discuss with your team or other learners sharing the same needs and challenges and exchange feedback. You may introduce yourself to the course forum and make a team with other learners sharing the same interests and professional sector. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course.

Then search the web for different smart collaboration tools available in the market and use the Checklist for Evaluating Smart Collaboration Tools for Micro and SME Owners to help you effectively evaluate and compare different smart collaboration tools in order to take an informed decision for the best fit for your business needs. These Examples of smart collaboration tools may facilitate your research.

You may listen to the Podcast: Factors to consider when choosing smart collaboration tools: https://youtu.be/Y383sTfzWEA (2:18) and the Podcast: Tips for choosing the right collaboration tools for your business https://youtu.be/6DyDyo8JO0U (1:54) for further assistance and insight.

3. have an option to do the following activity:

Implementing strategies to address staff's tech fear for successful adoption of the chosen collaboration tool in your business

Once you have chosen a tool, it is important to provide training sessions to familiarize your staff with the tool's features and functionalities. Consider implementing strategies to train your staff on your chosen smart collaboration tool addressing staff's potential tech apprehension. It's important to address these concerns to ensure successful adoption of your chosen tool. Developing a training plan which addresses your staff's tech fear will ensure ensure successful adoption. This will help improve communication, streamline workflows, and enhance productivity among your team members.

Follow the Guidelines for developing your training plan for your staff to help you create your training sessions. Check out these Tips to help you

train your staff to use collaboration tools effectively as well as these Common mistakes to avoid when training staff on collaboration tools and the Best practices for creating a training program on collaboration tools for more resources and insight.
Finally use this Self-assessment checklist for your training plan to evaluate the effectiveness of your training plan and these KPIs to measure the effectiveness of your staff's training on collaboration tools.

You may do this activity either individually or collaboratively with your team or other learners exchanging feedback for collaborative and mutual improvement in low scores using our course forum our chatroom. You may introduce yourself to the course forum and make a team with other learners sharing the same interests and professional sector. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course.

4. have an option to see more resources:

   a. Best 23 Free Visual Collaboration Platforms Picks in 2023 | G2: This webpage lists some free visual collaboration platforms that offer a trial version and have user reviews on G21 providing brief descriptions, entry level prices, and ratings for each platform.
   b. Best online collaboration tools of 2023 | TechRadar: This webpage reviews some of the best online collaboration software for different purposes and needs, such as communication, project management, design, and document sharing providing some tips on how to choose the right collaboration tool and explains how it tests and rates the products.
   c. 50 Best Online Collaboration Tools in 2023 (Free & Paid Platforms) | ClickUp: : This webpage reviews some of the best online collaboration software for different purposes and needs, such as communication, project management, design, and document sharing providing some tips on how to choose the right collaboration tool and explains how it tests and rates the products.
   d. Useful digital collaboration tools for tourism SMEs (europa.eu): This webinar provides an understanding of the different types of digital collaboration tools available and how you, as an SME in the tourism sector, can utilise them. It also discusses the benefits of digital collaboration, such as better communication and coordination within a company.
   e. The Best Remote Team Tools for Collaboration and Productivity: This video introduces some of the best remote team tools for enhancing collaboration and productivity among distributed workers. It

Lesson Plan

Module: Integrated smart workplace Learning Unit: Virtual staff management

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to – effectively manage their staff in a virtual setting, – adapt to the changing workplace dynamics and maximize productivity.	**Benchmark** Cloud computing
Level Standard	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will – understand the benefits and challenges of virtual staff management. – identify key strategies and tools for effective virtual staff management. – develop skills in communication, collaboration, and performance management in a virtual environment. – create an action plan to implement virtual staff management practices in their own businesses.	
Micro-learning activities Learners will 1. watch the Standard level: Standard level: Module 4: Empower: Virtual staff management https://youtu.be/43fkz1MpsLs (3:06) 2. listen to the podcasts: a. Podcast: What are the benefits and challenges of managing staff in a virtual setting? https://youtu.be/XeEZGV1L6Og (1:26) b. Podcast: What strategies and tools can enhance virtual staff management? https://youtu.be/0j31XRInwQ4 (3:08) c. Podcast: How can effective communication, collaboration, and performance management be achieved in a virtual environment?	

https://youtu.be/Lc4NdbZtzjo (2:18)

3. have an option to do the following activity:

   Developing a virtual staff management action plan for their own business

   Check out the Case Study Analysis: Effective Virtual Staff Management Practices in a Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (SME) demonstrating how MSMEs can successfully implement virtual staff management practices in their business having positively impacted employee productivity, engagement, and overall organizational success.

   Then follow the Guidelines for your virtual staff management Action Plan to help you develop your own Action Plan based your business needs. Use the Virtual Staff Management Action Plan Template we provide to help you develop your Action Plan.

   Finally use the Checklist for Self-Assessment of your Action Plan to evaluate the effectiveness of your action plan. You may do this activity either individually or collaboratively with your team or other learners exchanging feedback for collaborative and mutual improvement in low scores using our course forum our chatroom. You may introduce yourself to the course forum and make a team with other learners sharing the same interests and professional sector. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course.

4. have an option to see more resources:

   a. Webinars | BambooHR: This website offers various webinars on topics related to human resources, such as practical strategies to deliver learning and development, AI in the workplace, independent HR consultants, and more. You can watch the on-demand webinars or register for the upcoming ones.
   b. Webinars | CIPD: This website provides webinars from leading practitioners, specialists and CIPD advisers who examine topics and issues concerning the people profession. You can filter by topics such as flexible and hybrid working, employee engagement, ethics, wellbeing, and more. You can also browse their A-Z catalogue of information, guidance and resources covering all aspects of people practice.
   c. Free online Management Seminars (Webinars) on Leadership - Management 3.0: This website allows you to pick the brains of industry leaders and business people who have experience in managing remote teams, agile organisations, self-organisation, and more. You can watch the recorded seminars or join the live ones.
   d. Remote Team Management and Leadership | Free Online Course | Alison: This is a free online course from Alison that teaches you how to manage virtual teams effectively. You will learn how to hold meaningful virtual meetings and manage the personal differences of a remote team.

Explore how to deal with inclusivity, employee productivity and mental health challenges from afar.

e. Diploma in Remote Team Management | Free Online Course | Alison: This free online leadership course explains how to manage virtual teams and boost productivity, cooperation and morale. This diploma course provides leadership and management skills to help you get the most out of your staff as you coordinate virtual teams and keep them engaged and productive.

f. Leadership Skills & Remote Team Management | Free Course | Alison: This free course will help you achieve those goals by guiding you through management and decision making, showing you how to take and give feedback, and demonstrating how to manage and defuse potential conflict situations. You will discover how to manage your business and employees remotely to find the right balance between supervision and independence.

g. How to Manage Remote Teams | Free Online Course | Alison: This free online management course provides the leadership principles required to get the most out of remote teams. It explains why your leadership is essential to your teams' success, regardless of size, and provide management techniques that sharpen communication between team members in different locations.

h. What is a Remote Work Policy And How Can You Implement It? - YouTube: This video explains how to to make a successful transition to a remote workplace and make it work for your company, you will need a well-written remote work policy.

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Lesson Plan

Module: Integrated smart workplace Learning Unit: Advanced Data Analytics

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to – integrate and benefit from Advanced Data Analytics to enhance business efficiency and productivity.	**Benchmark** big data Machine Learning
Level Standard	**Framework** Empower

Professional micro-learning outcomes

Learners will

- understand the concept and importance of Advanced Data Analytics in the context of SMEs and micro-businesses.
- identify the key components and tools of Advanced Data Analytics relevant to their business needs.
- analyse and interpret data using Advanced Data Analytics techniques to make informed business decisions.
- apply Advanced Data Analytics to identify business opportunities and optimize operational processes.
- develop a data-driven business strategy to enhance business efficiency and productivity.
-

Micro-learning activities

Learners will

1. watch the Standard level: Module 4: Empower: Advanced Data Analytics https://youtu.be/iJVnNuPIjAc (3:06)
2. listen to the podcasts Advanced Data Analytics :https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLYGW4T5m5Mips93Fi5BvLKiCkdP5B8cez:

a. Podcast: Importance of Advanced Data Analytics for SMEs & micro businesses https://youtu.be/U-3qpUrhcmE (3:11)

b. Podcast: Success Stories of MSMEs benefitted from Advanced Data Analytics https://youtu.be/yuh5TaNvwnk (2:48)

c. Podcast: Key components and tools of Advanced Data Analytics relevant to your business needs https://youtu.be/LA_O2aiEv9c (2:48)

d. Podcast: Tools and technologies used in Advanced Data Analytics https://youtu.be/rsdcKvq-AfY (3:22)

e. Podcast: Data Analysis Techniques https://youtu.be/LmUkWBMOWNo (2:13)

f. Podcast: Challenges and Benefits of integrating Advanced Data Analytics into your businesses https://youtu.be/YE1fyPuekyY (3:00)

g. Podcast: Real life business applications of Advanced Data Analytics https://youtu.be/4rB7iG-I-BI (2:41)

3. have an option to do the following activities:

a. How Advanced Data Analytics can be applied to your own businesses

Brainstorm how Advanced Data Analytics can be applied to your own businesses. Write down your ideas on potential business opportunities and operational improvements through data analytics. You may do this activity either individually or collaboratively with your team or other learners discussing and exchanging ideas. You may introduce yourself to the course forum and make a team with other learners sharing the same interests and professional sector. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course.

Then check out the Infographic with Case Studies of how Advanced Data Analytics can be applied to businesses and the suggested Business opportunities and operational improvements through data analytics for more feedback and insight

b. Developing your data-driven business strategy

Follow the Guidelines for developing a data-driven business strategy to help you develop your own based your business needs. Use the Data-driven Strategy Template we provide to help you develop your strategy.

Finally use the Self-assessment checklist for your Data-driven strategy to evaluate the feasibility of your strategy. You may do this activity either individually or collaboratively with your team or other learners exchanging feedback for collaborative and mutual improvement in low scores using our

course forum our chatroom. You may introduce yourself to the course forum and make a team with other learners sharing the same interests and professional sector. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course.

4. have an option to see more resources:

a. Advanced Analytics: Definition, Benefits, and Use Cases | Coursera: This article explains what advanced analytics is, how it differs from business intelligence, what techniques it uses, and what benefits and examples it has.
b. Fundamentals of Retail Analytics | Free Online Course | Alison: This free online course covers the fundamentals, psychology, techniques and skills necessary for retail analytics. Retail analytics analyses inventories, supply chains, customer demand and sales.
c. The Best Free Online Data Analytics Courses [2023 Guide] (careerfoundry.com): The article provides a list of eight free online data analytics courses for beginners, and explains the differences between free courses and paid programs. It also gives some tips on how to choose a suitable course and answers some common questions about data analytics.
d. Best Data Analysis Online Courses - Updated [August 2023] (udemy.com): This page includes a collection of free and paid courses and lessons on Data Analysis.
e. Data Analytics Webinars and Training - BrightTALK: This is a website that offers free and unlimited talks, webinars and videos from industry experts. You can discover the latest trends and advancements in the field of data analytics from a variety of data analytics professionals including CTOs, CIOs, business analysts, data engineers, data scientists and more. You can also browse by topics, such as data visualization, machine learning, data governance, and more.
f. Artificial intelligence: Changing landscape for SMEs: This is a chapter from a report by the OECD that aims to provide an understanding of what AI is, its potential impact on SME activities, and barriers to adoption. The chapter covers the rise of data-driven AI systems, the implications of these technological changes on SME practices and business environment, and the challenges and opportunities for SMEs to adopt AI solutions.

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Lesson Plan

Module: Integrated smart workplace

Learning Unit: How can 3D printing help small businesses?

Desired Core professional goal	**Benchmark**
Learners will be able to – understand and effectively utilize 3D printing technology in their businesses.	Robotics
Level	**Framework**
Standard	Empower

Professional micro-learning outcomes

Learners will

- understand the basics of 3D printing technology and its applications in various industries.
- identify potential benefits and opportunities that 3D printing can bring to small businesses.
- evaluate the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of integrating 3D printing technology into their specific business models.
- develop a plan to integrate 3D printing technology into their businesses, including identifying suitable applications and potential challenges.

Micro-learning activities

Learners will

1. watch the Standard level: Module 4: Empower: How can 3D printing help small businesses? hhttps://youtu.be/KsRBy3fLpp0 (3:12)
2. watch the podcasts: How can 3D printing help small businesses?
   a. Podcast: Case studies & success stories of other businesses that have implemented 3D printing https://youtu.be/T4XgF-11VSw (3:12)
   b. Podcast: Potential challenges in integrating 3D technology and how to overcome them https://youtu.be/TJ8vuDZbJWU (2:02)

3. have an option to do the following activities:

   a. **Feasibility and cost-effectiveness of integrating 3D printing technology into your business**

To evaluate the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of integrating 3D printing technology into your specific business models, go through a feasibility analysis exercise to determine if 3D printing is suitable for your business. Consider factors such as the type of products you offer, the volume of production, and the market demand. Think about the initial investment costs, ongoing maintenance, and potential return on investment. It is important to have a clear understanding of the costs involved before making any decisions.
Check out the Feasibility and Cost Analysis of 3D printing technology integration, which will facilitate your evaluation process. After assessing the feasibility and costs, you move on to integration planning.

   b. **Developing your 3D-printing technology integration planning**

Think about your current products or services and how 3D printing could enhance or expand them. How can it enhance your current products or services? Are there any new opportunities that 3D printing can open up for your business? Try to think creatively and consider both practical applications and innovative ideas. For example, a micro or SME owner in the jewellery industry could explore using 3D printing to create custom jewellery pieces or prototypes for new designs. A furniture maker could consider using 3D printing to create unique and intricate decorative elements for their products. A small electronics company could use 3D printing to create custom enclosures or prototypes for new electronic devices.

Check out the Podcast: Case studies & success stories of other businesses that have implemented 3D printing: https://youtu.be/T4XgF-11VSw (3:12), which will help you identify potential applications of 3D printing technology. Once potential applications have been identified, explore potential challenges and how to overcome them. Listen to the Podcast: Potential challenges in integrating 3D technology and how to overcome them: https://youtu.be/TJ8vuDZbJWU (2:02) for more feedback and insight.

Follow the guidelines for Developing a 3D printing integration plan for your business to help you develop your own based your business needs. Use the 3D printing integration action plan template we provide to help you develop your own Action Plan.

Finally use the Self-Assessment Checklist for Evaluating your Action Plan to assess your plan. You may do this activity either individually or collaboratively with your team or other learners exchanging feedback for collaborative and mutual improvement in low scores using our course forum our chatroom. You may introduce yourself to the course forum and make a

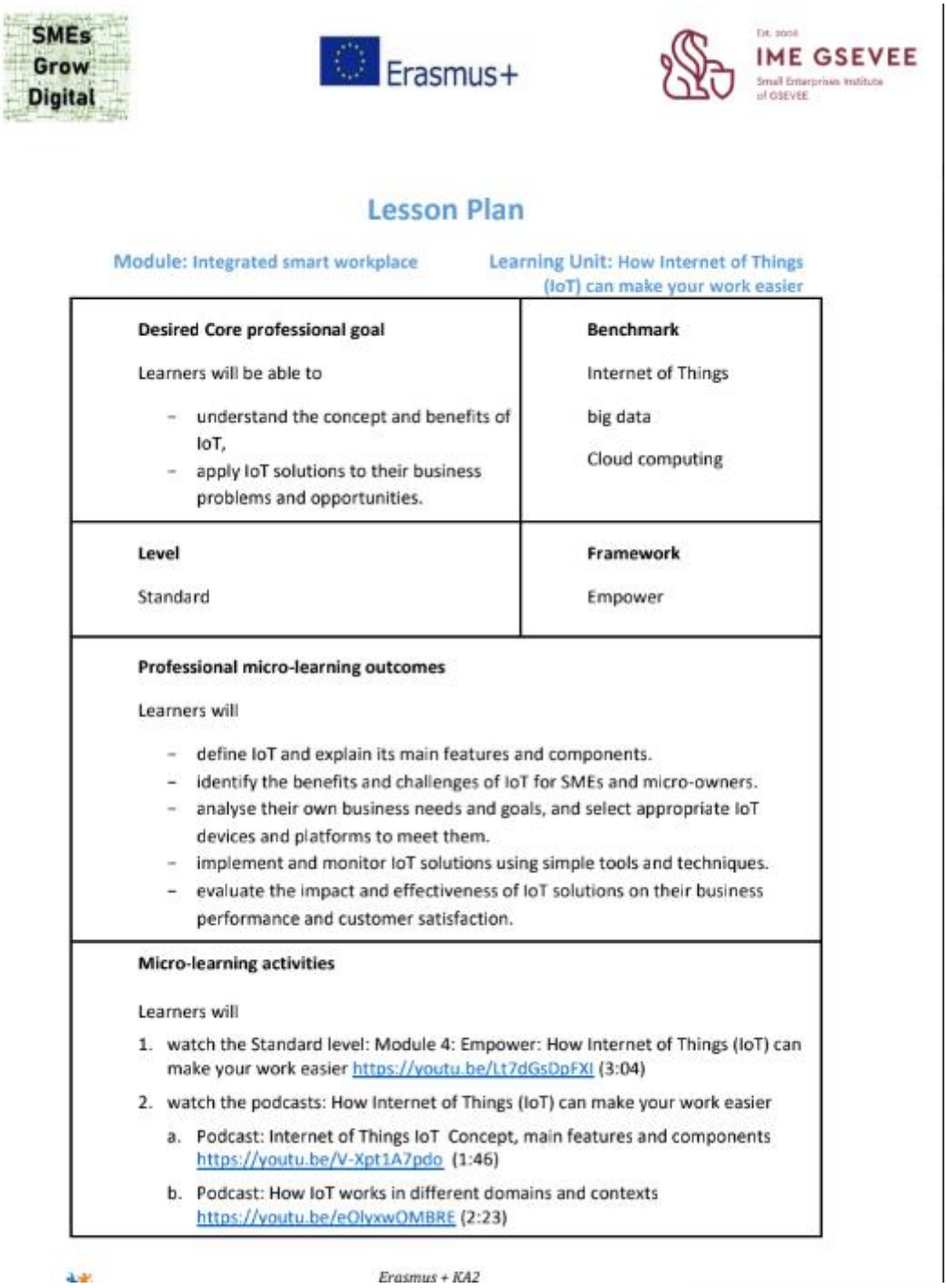
team with other learners sharing the same interests and professional sector. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course.

4. have an option to see more resources:
   a. 3D printing - OpenLearn - Open University: The article explains how 3D printing works by depositing polymer droplets on a substrate, and the advantages and limitations of this technique. It also provides some links to other related topics and resources.
   b. Childhood Accident Transforms Adversity Into Passion For Helping Others | U.S. Small Business Administration (sba.gov): The article tells the story of Rakesh Srivastava, a Nebraska small business owner who overcame childhood adversity and became a successful innovator in prosthetics and orthotics integrating 3D technology. He received help from the SBA and its partners, and was named the SBA Nebraska Small Business Person of the Year for 2020.
   c. 3D Printing with Windows 10 | Free Online Course | Alison: This free online 3D printing course will teach you everything you need to know about 3D printing with Windows 10. You will study the 3D Manufacturing Format (3MF) which allows design applications to send full-fidelity 3D models to a mix of other applications, platforms, services, and printers, the different use cases for a 3D printer, the applications you can use to make, examine, and share 3D models, plus a whole lot more!
   d. 3D Printing | How To Use A 3D Printer | Alison: This free online course on How To Use A 3D Printer will teach every professional in the areas of engineering, design, and manufacturing about 3D printing technology and its applications. Many manufacturing industries now use 3D printing hardware and software technology to manufacture their products. With the help of this course, you will learn how to build a three-dimensional object from a computer-aided design model so make sure to check it out!
   e. Additive Manufacturing Architecture | Free Online Course | Alison: This free online course provides you with a comprehensive understanding of 3D printing. The manufacturing industry has evolved and now uses advanced processes and cutting-edge technologies like additive manufacturing to meet soaring production goals. This course trains you to draw on these dynamic new procedures to help you achieve your professional goals and get ahead in your manufacturing career.
   f. Webinars: See our Collection of Free 3D Printing Webinars: This is a website that offers free educational webinars, product demos, and virtual events on various topics related to 3D printing, such as materials, applications, design, post-processing, quality management, and more. You can register for upcoming sessions

or watch the recordings on-demand. The webinars are hosted by Formlabs, a leading provider of 3D printing solutions.

g. Additive Manufacturing & 3D Printing - SME: This is a website that provides news, articles, expert opinions, and resources on additive manufacturing and 3D printing. You can learn about the latest trends, innovations, challenges, and opportunities in the industry. You can also access free webinars, white papers, eBooks, case studies, and reports from SME's Manufacturing Resource Centre.

h. 3D Printing Webinars | Materialise: This is a website that features free webinars on 3D printing topics such as software, medical devices, orthognathic surgery, mass customization, and more. You can learn from the experts and leaders in the industry and get inspired by their stories and insights. The webinars are organized by Materialise, a global leader in 3D printing software and services.



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Lesson Plan

Module: Integrated smart workplace

Learning Unit: How Internet of Things (IoT) can make your work easier

Desired Core professional goal	**Benchmark**
Learners will be able to - understand the concept and benefits of IoT, - apply IoT solutions to their business problems and opportunities.	Internet of Things big data Cloud computing
Level	**Framework**
Standard	Empower

Professional micro-learning outcomes

Learners will

- define IoT and explain its main features and components.
- identify the benefits and challenges of IoT for SMEs and micro-owners.
- analyse their own business needs and goals, and select appropriate IoT devices and platforms to meet them.
- implement and monitor IoT solutions using simple tools and techniques.
- evaluate the impact and effectiveness of IoT solutions on their business performance and customer satisfaction.

Micro-learning activities

Learners will

1. watch the Standard level: Module 4: Empower: How Internet of Things (IoT) can make your work easier https://youtu.be/Lt7dGsDpFXI (3:04)
2. watch the podcasts: How Internet of Things (IoT) can make your work easier
   a. Podcast: Internet of Things IoT Concept, main features and components https://youtu.be/V-Xpt1A7pdo (1:46)
   b. Podcast: How IoT works in different domains and contexts https://youtu.be/eOlyxwOMBRE (2:23)

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c. Podcast: Benefits of IoT for Micro and SMEs with practical examples https://youtu.be/OiksJMRKdjs (3:45)

d. Podcast: Challenges of IoT for Micro and SMEs https://youtu.be/UyzsoilRiSU (2:13)

e. Podcast: Examples of IoT solutions that can be integrated into micro and SME businesses https://youtu.be/ob4-MZ6eddY (1:32)

3. have an option to do the following activities:

a. **Integrating IoT technology into your business**

To integrate IoT technology into your specific business models, go through your own business needs and goals analysis exercise to determine if IoT is suitable for your business. Check out the Business needs and goals analysis for selecting appropriate IoT solutions, which will facilitate your need analysis process. After assessing your needs and goals, you move on to the implementation and monitoring phase. These Guidelines for implementing and monitoring IoT solutions using simple tools and techniques will provide step-by-step assistance during the whole process. Finally, use the Checklist for evaluating impact and effectiveness of IoT solutions on your business Evaluate the impact and effectiveness of IoT solutions on your business performance and customer satisfaction.
The case study of Jane, a SME or micro-owner that wants to adopt IoT solutions for her business will inspire you along this process providing feedback and insight

b. **Measuring your confidence and competence in using IoT for your business**

Complete this self-assessment questionnaire that measures their confidence and competence in using IoT for your business. You may do this activity either individually or collaboratively with your team or other learners exchanging feedback for collaborative and mutual improvement in low scores using our course forum our chatroom. You may introduce yourself to the course forum and make a team with other learners sharing the same interests and professional sector. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course.

4. have an option to see more resources:

a. 100 Internet of Things (IoT) Courses You Can Take for Free: This is a comprehensive list of free IoT courses available online. The courses cover a wide range of topics from smart homes to connected cities.

b. Learn Internet of Things (IoT) with Online Courses | edX: edX offers a variety of IoT courses that delve into sensors, networks, and protocols. They also offer courses geared toward data analysis professionals covering data management, machine learning, and cloud computing applications.

c. IoT Webinars - IoT Now: IoT Now offers a range of webinars that provide insights about future trends and major challenges in the field of IoT. Topics include boosting IoT product performance and quality with device reliability engineering, the art of IoT device design, and how to easily add digital intelligence and visibility to supply chains.
d. "Digital for SMEs" (D4SME) webinar on SME Digitalisation & Sustainability: The D4SME webinar on SME Digitalisation & Sustainability: The Twin Transition was held virtually on 11 May 2021. It gathered over 128 participants from 34 countries to discuss the connection between SME digitalisation, sustainability, and resilience to "build back better" our economies and societies.
e. IoT Full Course - Learn IoT In 4 Hours | Internet Of Things | IoT Tutorial For Beginners | Edureka: This video by Edureka is a comprehensive tutorial that covers the basics of IoT and Raspberry Pi from scratch. It's a great resource for beginners who want to learn about IoT.
f. IoT Tutorial for Beginners | Internet of Things (IoT) | IoT Training | IoT Technology | Edureka: This video by Edureka is another great resource for beginners who want to learn about IoT. It covers the basic concepts of IoT and explains how it is trying to revolutionize the world.
g. IoT for Beginners | Microsoft Learn: This video by Microsoft Learn is part of a 12-week, 24-lesson curriculum designed to get university and high school students ready for the fast-growing world of IoT. It's a great resource for beginners who want to learn about IoT.
h. Introduction to the Internet of Things (IoT) | Alison: This free online course on the Internet of Things(IoT) will teach you about the extension of Internet connectivity to physical and electronic devices, and how it can be used to complete both complicated and menial tasks.
i. Internet of Things and the Cloud | Alison: This free online course on the internet of things and the cloud quickly teach you the most important details of the integration of cloud computing and the IoT.

Lesson Plan

Module: Integrated smart workplace Learning Unit: Plan your smart business

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to – plan their smart business using the technologies they have learned in previous lessons	**Benchmark** Internet of Things big data Robotics big data Cloud computing
Level Standard	**Framework** Energise

Professional micro-learning outcomes

Learners will

- analyse the current state of their business and the gaps that can be filled by the technologies.
- create a SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) action plan for implementing the technologies in their business.

Micro-learning activities

Learners will

1. watch the Standard level: Module 4: Energise: Plan your smart business https://youtu.be/emuVmOlg7BU (2:53)
2. do the following activities:
   I. **Analysing the current state of your business and the gaps that can be filled by smart technologies.**

   Listen to the podcasts: Plan your smart business

   a. Podcast: How do the technologies you learned in this Module align with your business goals and vision? https://youtu.be/PPWTHdkNQyU (2:25)

b. Podcast: Implementing smart technologies in your workplace https://youtu.be/X5y3Uva1XkE (1:43)

c. Podcast: Conducting a needs assessment in your business https://youtu.be/FIRqNU9NhXY (3:44)

d. Podcast: Conducting a gap analysis for cloud technology in your business https://youtu.be/0dKHhJH_XjA

Then check out the example of a gap analysis for identifying needs related to cloud technology in a business provided to facilitate your Gap Analysis process and create a similar one for one or more of the smart technologies you have learned in this Module which will help you transform your business into a smart workplace. You can work individually or collaboratively with your team or other learners with who has similar interests or goals as you. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course.

II. Creating a SMART Action Plan for your identified business needs

Listen to the podcasts: Plan your smart business

a. Podcast: What is a SMART Action Plan https://youtu.be/HZIsEr8A1Hs
b. Podcast: How you create a SMART Action Plan for implementing cloud technology in your business https://youtu.be/rq_A2_mtPIM

Then check out the SMART action plan for implementing cloud technology in your business provided to help you create your own SMART action plan for your identified business needs. Now it's your turn to choose the right technology for your business and create a SMART action plan for implementing it. You can work individually or in pairs with another learner who has similar interests or goals as you. Use the example provided above and this SMART action plan template. Share your choice and action plan with your peers for feedback and suggestions.

3. have an option to see more resources:

a. Joint webinar video | Smart workplaces with CBRE & Microsoft: This webinar discusses how to create smart workplaces with IoT. The speakers include Brennan McReynolds, Global Product & Technology Lead at CBRE, Emmanuel HR Daniel, Director of Industry Innovation - Smart Buildings & Campuses at Microsoft, and Paul Dupont, VP of Technical Sales at Pointr.

b. Smart Workplace Webinar Part 1 - Cohesion: In this webinar, Taylor Marsh, VP of Sales at Cohesion, demos their Smart Workplace product line and deep dives into some of their most popular features: Cloud User Management, Mobile Keycard, Flex Space Reservations, Visitor Management, and Understanding Office Utilization.

c. Digital workplace for innovative SMEs | Swisscom: The web page is about Swisscom's digital workplace solutions, which offer a range of products and services to help SMEs improve their productivity, collaboration, and communication. The web page also provides information on how to analyse, optimise, and learn about the modern workplace with Swisscom's expertise

and support.

d. The Key Elements of the Smart Workplace (cmswire.com): The web page discusses the trends and technologies that are shaping the digital workplace in the post-COVID-19 era, such as the smart workplace, the new work nucleus, BYOT, desktop-as-a-service, the distance economy, and user-composed services. The web page also highlights the importance of security, collaboration, training, and communication tools for the modern workforce.

e. SME Webinars: SME offers a variety of webinars on different topics. Some of the webinars include "Smart Robotic Cells for Composite Prepreg Sheet Layup" and "Shorten Training Time and Improve Quality with Digital Work Instructions".

f. Ricoh's Smart Workplace solutions: A game-changer for SMEs in the new normal | BusinessToday: The web page is about Ricoh's smart workplace solutions, which help businesses to improve their connectivity, productivity, security, and collaboration in the post-COVID-19 era. The web page also showcases some of Ricoh's products and services, such as video conferencing, document management, surveillance, and visitor management.

Lesson Plan

Module: Integrated smart workplace Learning Unit: All aboard to future Tech

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to – assess their understanding and application of smart technologies and tools such as cloud computing, cloud-based virtual management and collaboration, wearables, IoT, advanced data analytics, and 3D printing, – pursue advanced learning to leverage deep tech benefits to enhance their businesses. – create a culture of continuous learning and improvement within their business	**Benchmark** Cloud computing big data Internet of Things Robotics
Level Standard	**Framework** Evolve
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will – summarize the key concepts and principles of creating a smart workplace using smart technologies and tools. – evaluate their own knowledge and skills in utilizing smart technologies and tools for creating a smart workplace in their business. – successfully demonstrate the application of smart technologies and tools to a given scenario-based activity.	
Authentic assessment performance task Learners will 1. watch the video Standard level: Module 4: Evolve: All aboard to future Tech https://youtu.be/nhg8lqN7Oog (3:43) 2. do the following authentic assessment performance task: Use the Scenario-based Activity Worksheet Embracing Technological Solutions for Micro	

& SMEs and follow the instructions to solve the challenges faced. Discuss the challenges and the solutions with your team or other learners sharing the same needs with you using our course forum our chatroom. You may introduce yourself to the course forum and make a team with other learners sharing the same interests and professional sector. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course.
After completing this tasks check out the Feedback provided to you with suggested answers.

3. have the option to do the following activity:

   Self-Assessment Questionnaire - Creating a Smart Workplace using smart technologies in Micro and SME Businesses
   Reflect on your understanding and implementation level of the smart technologies and tools you learned in this Module. Then take the Self-Assessment Questionnaire - Creating a Smart Workplace using smart technologies in Micro and SME Businesses to rate your progress. Discuss your score with other learners and exchange feedback for collaborative and mutual improvement in low scores. If you cooperate with digital transformation consultants present them with your feedback to receive personalised and professional guidance and make necessary improvements for future planning.

4. have the option to check out more resources:
   a. 12 Smart Workplace Technology Examples | iOFFICE (iofficecorp.com): The article explains what a smart workplace is and how it uses various technologies, such as sensors, IoT, software, and mobile apps, to improve building management, collaboration, and employee experience. The page also provides some examples of smart workplace solutions and how they can benefit organizations.
   b. Smart Workplace | Definition, Examples, and Benefits – deskbird: The article introduces the concept of a smart workplace, which is an office that uses various technologies to improve building management, collaboration, and employee experience. The page also gives some examples of smart workplace solutions and their benefits for organizations.
   c. Top 12 Emerging Digital Workplace Technologies (gartner.com): The article discusses various consumer technologies that can enhance the workplace experience, including dark data extraction, multimedia production, immersive technologies, Bürolandschaft, beacons and sensors, crowdsourcing tools, virtual personal assistants, personal clouds, codeless programming, mobile communication and collaboration, and digital literacy programs.
   d. 7 Ways Smart Technology Can Improve Your Workplace | Blog | Optify (optifyyourworld.com): The article is about how IoT technology can improve the workplace by enhancing office efficiency, employee productivity, energy conservation, cybersecurity, supply chain management, operation coordination, manufacturing tracking, and user experience. The page also gives some examples of IoT devices and applications that can be used for these purposes.
   e. Best-in-class 3D Printers | Formlabs: The page is a promotional website for

Formlabs, a company that produces 3D printers and materials. The page offers free educational webinars, product demos, and virtual events for people who want to learn more about 3D printing. The page also invites dental professionals to check out their dental webinars and provides a link to request a free sample part.

f. Internet of Things (IoT) | What is IoT | How it Works | IoT Explained | Edureka - YouTube: This Edureka video on the "Internet of Things (IoT)" will explain all the basic concepts of IoT you need to know. This short video on IoT has several facts and figures which you will be amazed to see. It also explains different IoT applications and the future of IoT.

Lesson Plan

Module: Crowdsourcing Learning Unit: Raising capital for your SME

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to – use crowdfunding as a viable option for financing their SME	**Benchmark** e-platform
Level Standard	**Framework** Enlighten

Professional micro-learning outcomes

Learners will

- define crowdfunding and crowdsourcing and explain their benefits and challenges for SMEs.
- identify different types of crowdfunding platforms and campaigns and select the most suitable one for your SME.
- evaluate the suitability of different types of crowdfunding platforms and campaigns for your SME

Micro-learning activities

Learners will

1. do the following activity

   Welcome to this lesson on raising capital for your SME using crowdfunding. In this lesson, you will learn how to use crowdfunding as a viable option for financing your SME. You will also learn how to identify different types of crowdfunding platforms and campaigns and how to design and launch a successful crowdfunding campaign that attracts and engages potential backers. Before watching the explanatory video, reflect and check your prior knowledge and experience with crowdfunding and crowdsourcing. What do you know about these concepts? Have you ever participated in a crowdfunding or crowdsourcing project, either as a backer or as a creator? Please share your thoughts with your team or other learners for a few

minutes using our course forum or our chatroom. You may introduce yourself to the course forum and make a team with other learners sharing the same interests and professional sector. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course.

2. watch the video Standard level: Module 3: Enlighten: Raising capital for your SME https://youtu.be/k5PLb3m4EZY (2:39)
3. Listen to the Podcast: Exploring different types of crowdfunding platforms and campaigns https://youtu.be/KX7kOf21ows (1:43)

   You may use the Worksheet for recording your findings provided to you here.
4. have an option to do the following activities:

   a. **Success stories of crowdfunding**

   Listen to the Podcast: Examples of successful crowdfunding campaigns from various sectors https://youtu.be/-QlUsh1lxuM (4:25) & the Podcast: Reflect on crowdfunding success stories https://youtu.be/SZYtHlUGqdI (1:38)

   Please take a few minutes to reflect on these questions and then share your thoughts with other learners exchanging feedback for collaborative and mutual improvement in low scores using our course forum our chatroom. You may introduce yourself to the course forum and make a team with other learners sharing the same interests and professional sector. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course.

   b. **Evaluating the suitability of different types of crowdfunding platforms and campaigns for your SME**

   Not all crowdfunding platforms and campaigns are suitable for every type of MSME. Therefore, it is important to evaluate the suitability of different options before choosing one. Based on what you have seen and heard so far, try to evaluate the suitability of different types of crowdfunding platforms and campaigns for your SME. Think about your goals, needs, and preferences, as well as the benefits and challenges of each type. Which type of crowdfunding platform and campaign would you choose for your SME and why?

   To help you with this process, you can use the following Checklist for evaluating crowdfunding platforms and campaigns and the respective worksheet. It contains some questions that you should ask yourself and the potential crowdfunding platform before deciding to launch a campaign. The questions are grouped into four categories: goals, audience, rewards, and fees. For each question, you can rate the answer on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means very unsuitable and 5 means very suitable. You can also add some notes or comments to explain your rating. Please discuss your choices with your team or other learners for a few minutes using our course forum or our chatroom.

   The Worksheet for evaluation crowdfunding platforms and campaigns is not

meant to be exhaustive or definitive. It is only a tool to guide your thinking and research. You should also consult other sources of information and advice before making a final decision. The worksheet is based on some general principles and best practices of crowdfunding, but you should always check the specific rules and requirements of each platform and campaign.

Additionally, you may want to research some popular crowdfunding platforms that match your goals and audience. Listen to the Podcast: Popular crowdfunding platforms https://youtu.be/odQHaMp0L40 (1:15) and/or do your own web research individually or collaboratively.

5. have an option to see more resources:

a. What is Crowdfunding? – Indiegogo Help Center:T his is a platform where people can support projects, ideas or causes that they care about. Backers can claim perks as a reward for their contribution, but they are not buying a finished product.

b. 9 Important Crowdfunding Pros and Cons - YouTube: This video explains the benefits and drawbacks of using crowdfunding to raise money for your business or passion project.

c. How Kickstarter Works - YouTube: This video explains what crowdfunding is and how Kickstarter platform works.

d. Free Kickstarter Email Course (crowdcrux.leadpages.co): Free course for learning how to use Kickstarter.

e. The Benefits of Crowdfunding | The Essential Guide - Indiegogo: This article explains the benefits and challenges of Crowdfunding providing alternative options for startups..

f. 10 Pros and Cons of Business Crowdfunding (fitsmallbusiness.com): The document discusses the advantages and disadvantages of crowdfunding for businesses, and also mentions alternatives like SBA loans, ROBS, and small business grants.

g. The 6 Best Crowdfunding Platforms of 2023 (investopedia.com): The document reviews six crowdfunding platforms based on their ease of use, success rates, pricing, and features. It recommends Indiegogo for overall best, SeedInvest Technology for startups, Mightycause for nonprofits, StartEngine for investors, GoFundMe for personal needs, and Patreon for creative professionals.

SMEs Grow Digital

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Lesson Plan

Module: Crowdsourcing

Learning Unit: What is Crowdsourcing?

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to – use crowdsourcing as a strategic tool for business innovation and problem-solving.	**Benchmark** e-platform
Level Standard	**Framework** Empower

Professional micro-learning outcomes

Learners will

- define crowdsourcing and its benefits for SMEs
- identify different types of crowdsourcing platforms and tools
- apply a step-by-step process to plan and execute a successful crowdsourcing project
- evaluate the results and outcomes of your crowdsourcing project
- create an action plan for future crowdsourcing initiatives

Micro-learning activities

Learners will

1. watch the video Standard level: Module 3: Empower: What is Crowdsourcing? https://youtu.be/6x6cDrCztMM (3:11)
2. have an option to do the following activities:
   a. **Creating an action plan for your crowdsourcing initiatives**
   To help you apply a step-by-step process to plan and execute a successful crowdsourcing project for your own SME follow the Guidelines for developing a crowdsourcing Action plan provided to you with examples to facilitate you with this process. Then use the Crowdsourcing Action Plan Template to draft your own action plan for a crowdsourcing initiative. Share

your draft with other learners exchanging feedback for collaborative and mutual improvement using our course forum and/or our chatroom. You may introduce yourself to the course forum and make a team with other learners sharing the same interests and professional sector. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course.

b. Evaluating the impact of your crowdsourcing action plan for your SME

To help you with this process, you can use the following Self-assessment questionnaire for your Crowdsourcing Action Plan. You may give and receive feedback on your draft from your peers. Please exchange your draft with another learner or team and review their draft using the checklist provided. The checklist includes some criteria and questions for each step of the guidelines you have learned. You can also rate with the rubric provided. Reflect and/or discuss with your team on your feedback and ratings for further feedback and improvement.

3. have an option to see more resources:

a. What is Crowdsourcing? - YouTube: This video is an introduction to crowdsourcing, a process of outsourcing tasks to a large group of people online. It explains the benefits of crowdsourcing, such as cost reduction, quality improvement, and innovation. It also gives some examples of crowdsourcing platforms, such as Amazon Mechanical Turk, Wikipedia, and Kickstarter.
b. What is Crowdsourcing ? - YouTube: This video is a tutorial on how to use crowdsourcing platforms to get feedback on your design projects. It shows you how to create a project, choose a platform, set a budget, and review the results. It also gives some tips on how to improve your design based on the feedback.
c. Crowdsourcing in 2023: Types, Benefits & Top Use Cases (aimultiple.com): This web page explains how crowdsourcing can help businesses reduce costs, increase efficiency, and access diverse talent. It also describes different types of crowdsourcing, such as microtasking, crowdfunding, and contests, and how they can be used for various purposes, such as AI development, market research, e-commerce, and software testing.
d. Top 4 Crowdsourcing Platforms In 2023 + 9 Alternatives (createandgo.com): This article presents the top4 4 crowdsourcing platforms with comparisons. It also provides some alternative platforms depending on your project.
e. 7 Best Crowdsourcing Platforms of 2023 (Ultimate Guide) (adamenfroy.com): This web page is a guide to the best crowdsourcing platforms of 2022. It reviews seven platforms that offer different services, such as graphic design, software testing, 3D modelling, and more. It also explains what crowdsourcing is, how it works, and what are its benefits.

f. Best Free Crowdsourcing Platforms - 2023 Reviews & Comparison (sourceforge.net): This web page is a comparison of seven free crowdsourcing platforms that offer different features and services for businesses and individuals. It helps users to find the best platform for their needs by providing ratings, reviews, and descriptions of each platform.

g. What Is Crowdsourcing? | How to Use it for Business Growth & Examples (patriotsoftware.com): The webpage is an article that explains the concept of crowdsourcing and how businesses can use it for growth. It provides advice on using crowdsourcing for investments, idea generation, finding new partners, data collection, talent acquisition, and problem-solving.

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Lesson Plan

Module: Crowdsourcing

Learning Unit: Crowdfunding for Business

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to – use crowdfunding as a way of raising funds for their business projects	**Benchmark** e-platform
Level Standard	**Framework** Empower

Professional micro-learning outcomes

Learners will

- understand the concept and benefits of crowdfunding
- identify and analyse the key elements of a successful crowdfunding campaign
- design a successful crowdfunding campaign that attracts and engages potential backers
- guide and self-monitor the development of a successful crowdfunding campaign
- evaluate a crowdfunding campaign

Micro-learning activities

Learners will

1. watch the video Standard level: Module 3: Empower: Crowdfunding for Business https://youtu.be/-6iBcfQT85U (3:08)
2. Listen to the Podcast: Crowdfunding for Business:
   a. Podcast: Criteria and best practices for a successful crowdfunding campaign https://youtu.be/Lb3Yr9i4IcU (2:19)
   b. Podcast: Guidelines on how to create and pitch a crowdfunding campaign https://youtu.be/zKu-pb2wGLE. (4:12)
3. have an option to do the following activities:
   a. **Creating a draft of your crowdfunding campaign**

and crowdfunding

Reflect on your understanding and implementation level of crowdsourcing and crowdfunding you learned in this Module. Then take the Self-assessment for your crowdsourcing and crowdfunding strengths and weaknesses to rate your performance. Discuss your score with other learners and exchange feedback for collaborative and mutual improvement in low scores. If you cooperate with digital transformation consultants present them with your feedback to receive personalised and professional guidance and make necessary improvements for future planning.

5. have an option to see more resources:

a. Information Systems: Technology and Business | Free Course | Alison: This free course introduces you to the various information systems strategies and technology infrastructures used by organizations today. Topics covered include the alignment of IT with business objectives, a paradigm shift to cloud computing, virtualization and various eCommerce models. You will also gain critical organizational alignment skills and master the process of selecting a cloud vendor.

b. What Is Crowdsourcing? | How to Use it for Business Growth & Examples (patriotsoftware.com): The article explains what crowdsourcing is and how it can benefit businesses in various ways, such as raising funds, getting feedback, finding talent, and solving problems. It also compares crowdsourcing with crowdfunding and lists some pros and cons of using crowdsourcing.

c. Report: 5 key insights on the future-readiness of SMEs | World Economic Forum (weforum.org): This article provides insights on the future-readiness of SMEs and discusses the role of crowdsourcing.

d. TechInnovation 2021: Crowdsourcing @ TechInnovation (ipi-singapore.org): This webinar discusses how crowdsourcing offers companies and organizations an open platform to engage the audience from the industry and R&D partners to seek solutions, technologies, and partnerships for innovation and growth.

e. Crowdsourcing the Future of SME Financing (ifc.org): This report discusses the future of SME financing and the role of crowdsourcing.

f. Crowdfunding Webinars For Organizations - Crowdfund Better: Crowdfund Better offers options from crowdfunding basics to specific strategies for crowdfunding success2. Individual webinars are designed to be 1-hour in length and can be combined to create a tailored webinar series for your organization.

To help you apply the principles you learned in the video to your own SMEs and to create a draft of your crowdfunding campaign use the Template for a crowdfunding campaign provided to you with examples to facilitate you with this process. The template includes sections for each of the factors mentioned in the video. You can use the examples you explored earlier in the Enlighten section as inspiration or reference. You can also use your own devices to access more resources and information on how to design and launch a successful crowdfunding campaign.

Share your drafts with other learners exchanging feedback for collaborative and mutual improvement using our course forum our chatroom. You may introduce yourself to the course forum and make a team with other learners sharing the same interests and professional sector. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course.

b. Evaluating the draft of your crowdfunding campaign for your SME

To help you with this process, you can use the following Self-assessment checklist for your crowdfunding campaign. You may give and receive feedback on your drafts from your peers. Please exchange your drafts with another learner or team and review their draft using the checklist provided. The checklist includes some criteria and questions for each step of the guidelines you have learned. You can also rate their draft on a scale from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent). Reflect or discuss with your team on your feedback and ratings for further feedback and improvement.

4. have an option to see more resources:

a. The Fundraiser's Guide to Successful Crowdfunding (shopify.com): The webpage provides a comprehensive guide on running a successful crowdfunding campaign, discussing the concept of crowdfunding, its advantages, steps to launch a campaign, and strategies to fulfill promises and grow the business.

b. Elements of a Successful Crowdfunding Campaign | CrowdFund.News: The webpage discusses the 7 key elements for a successful crowdfunding campaign: planning, setting realistic goals, creating a pitch video, building trust, communicating with backers, offering rewards, and planning for the end.

c. 7 Key Elements of a Successful Crowdfunding Campaign | BusinessCollective: The webpage discusses the 7 key elements for a successful crowdfunding campaign: planning, setting realistic goals, creating a pitch video, building trust, communicating with backers, offering rewards, and planning for the end.

d. First Steps Toward A Successful Crowdfunding Campaign by Emily Best (Seed&Spark Founder / CEO) - YouTube: The video by Emily Best, CEO of

Seed&Spark, outlines the importance of a compelling video, direct outreach, concise communication, and meaningful rewards for a successful crowdfunding campaign.

e. Patreon Tips for a Successful Crowdfunding Campaign - YouTube: The video tutorial guides viewers on setting up a Patreon page, emphasizing the importance of identifying your niche, creating an engaging profile, setting up appropriate reward tiers, promoting your page, and maintaining regular engagement with patrons.

Lesson Plan

Module: Crowdsourcing

Learning Unit: New business models for a changing world

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to – evaluate their current level of competence in using crowdsourcing and crowdfunding for their business – prepare them for the next module – create a culture of continuous learning and improvement within their business	**Benchmark** e-platform
Level Standard	**Framework** Evolve
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will – summarize the key concepts and skills of crowdsourcing and crowdfunding – reflect on how they have applied or can apply crowdsourcing and crowdfunding to their business – assess their strengths and weaknesses in using crowdsourcing and crowdfunding – identify the benefits and challenges of new business models for smart workplaces – motivate themselves to learn more about new business models for smart workplaces	
Authentic assessment performance task Learners will 1. watch the video Standard level: Module 3: Evolve: New business models for a changing world https://youtu.be/cSBiRhc8brQ (3:04) 2. listen to the Podcast: New business models for a changing world a. Podcast: Smart workplaces benefits and challenges	

https://youtu.be/xDjXY0W0Db4 (1:38)

b. Podcast: Why learning about smart workplaces
https://youtu.be/wV3RpWsh9h8 (1:44)

3. do the following authentic assessment performance task:

The authentic professional task for this lesson is to create a short presentation (5-10 slides) that showcases how you have used or plan to use crowdsourcing and crowdfunding for your business. You should include the following elements:

- A brief introduction of your business and its context

- A description of the problem or opportunity that you addressed or want to address with crowdsourcing and crowdfunding

- A summary of the process and outcomes of your crowdsourcing and crowdfunding initiatives (if applicable)

- A reflection on the benefits and challenges of using crowdsourcing and crowdfunding for your business

- A conclusion that highlights the main points and lessons learned.

If you have not used or plan to use crowdsourcing and crowdfunding for your business you may look at the scenarios that simulate real life situations where crowdsourcing or crowdfunding is needed and use these scenarios for your presentation.

You will present your slides to the course forum and receive feedback on your work from your peers. You can use the feedback you received to revise your plan and make it more appealing and convincing. You may also provide feedback to other learners on their presentation. You may do this activity either individually or collaboratively with your team or other learners discussing and exchanging ideas. You may introduce yourself to the course forum and make a team with other learners sharing the same interests and professional sector. We highly recommend working collaboratively throughout the course.

4. have an option to do the following activities:

a. **Reflecting on your crowdsourcing and crowdfunding implementation**

Reflecting on your implementation of crowdsourcing and/or crowdfunding can help you assess how these methods have been applied in your business. The Self-assessment for your crowdsourcing and crowdfunding implementation will give you insights on how to improve and optimize their use. You may check out these sample answers to help you with your reflections.

b. **Evaluating your strengths and weaknesses in using crowdsourcing**

and crowdfunding

Reflect on your understanding and implementation level of crowdsourcing and crowdfunding you learned in this Module. Then take the Self-assessment for your crowdsourcing and crowdfunding strengths and weaknesses to rate your performance. Discuss your score with other learners and exchange feedback for collaborative and mutual improvement in low scores. If you cooperate with digital transformation consultants present them with your feedback to receive personalised and professional guidance and make necessary improvements for future planning.

5. have an option to see more resources:

a. Information Systems: Technology and Business | Free Course | Alison: This free course introduces you to the various information systems strategies and technology infrastructures used by organizations today. Topics covered include the alignment of IT with business objectives, a paradigm shift to cloud computing, virtualization and various eCommerce models. You will also gain critical organizational alignment skills and master the process of selecting a cloud vendor.

b. What Is Crowdsourcing? | How to Use it for Business Growth & Examples (patriotsoftware.com): The article explains what crowdsourcing is and how it can benefit businesses in various ways, such as raising funds, getting feedback, finding talent, and solving problems. It also compares crowdsourcing with crowdfunding and lists some pros and cons of using crowdsourcing.

c. Report: 5 key insights on the future-readiness of SMEs | World Economic Forum (weforum.org): This article provides insights on the future-readiness of SMEs and discusses the role of crowdsourcing.

d. TechInnovation 2021: Crowdsourcing @ TechInnovation (ipi-singapore.org): This webinar discusses how crowdsourcing offers companies and organizations an open platform to engage the audience from the industry and R&D partners to seek solutions, technologies, and partnerships for innovation and growth.

e. Crowdsourcing the Future of SME Financing (ifc.org): This report discusses the future of SME financing and the role of crowdsourcing.

f. Crowdfunding Webinars For Organizations - Crowdfund Better: Crowdfund Better offers options from crowdfunding basics to specific strategies for crowdfunding success2. Individual webinars are designed to be 1-hour in length and can be combined to create a tailored webinar series for your organization.

Lesson Plan

Module: Big Data **Unit: Introduction**

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: • Indicate the value of Big Data • Recognize the added value of Big Data for their SME • Determine if their SME is ready for the Big Data benefits • Explore the ways they could maximize the Big Data value	**Benchmark** Data volume Data value Data scalability Data security
Level Advanced	**Framework** Enlighten Empower Energise Evolve
Micro-learning activities Learners will - Read the learners Guidelines	

Lesson Plan

Module: Big Data **Unit: Big Data Value**

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: • Understand the definition of Big Data • Indicate the value of Big Data	**Benchmark** Data volume Data value Data scalability Data security
Level Advanced	**Framework** Enlighten
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will understand the value of Big Data (foundational knowledge)	
Micro-learning activities Learners will - View the relevant video available at https://youtu.be/pZIfJ53_bO0 - Attend the existing educational community for Big Data available at https://www.big-data-value.eu/ and navigate through the available resources (https://www.big-data-value.eu/resources/). - You may discuss in the course forum sharing your experience with Big Data, as well as the challenges you may have faced. It is highly recommended to work collaboratively throughout the course.	

Lesson Plan

Module: Big Data **Unit: Big Data for SMEs Growth**

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: • Recognize the added value of Big Data for their SME • Understand how Big Data could contribute to their SME's growth	**Benchmark** Data volume Data value Data scalability Data security
Level Advanced	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will recognize the added value of Big Data for their SME	
Micro-learning activities Learners will - View the relevant video available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ChVxG4PL81g - Read the booklet *SMEs in the European Data-Economy* to discover success stories in EU. - You may discuss in the course forum sharing your opinion about the added value of Big Data for your SME. It is highly recommended to work collaboratively throughout the course.	

Lesson Plan

Module: Big Data **Unit: Big Data for SMEs Growth**

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: • Recognize the added value of Big Data for their SME • Understand how Big Data could contribute to their SME's growth	**Benchmark** Data volume Data value Data scalability Data security
Level Advanced	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will recognize the added value of Big Data for their SME	
Micro-learning activities Learners will - View the relevant video available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ChVxG4PL81g - Read the booklet *SMEs in the European Data-Economy* to discover success stories in EU. - You may discuss in the course forum sharing your opinion about the added value of Big Data for your SME. It is highly recommended to work collaboratively throughout the course.	

Lesson Plan

Module: Big Data **Unit: Is your business ready for Big Data benefits?**

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: • Recognize both benefits and challenges of Big Data for SMEs • Determine if their SME is ready for the Big Data benefits	**Benchmark** Data volume Data value Data scalability Data security
Level Advanced	**Framework** Energise
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will determine if their SME is ready for the Big Data benefits	
Micro-learning activities Learners will - View the relevant video available at https://youtu.be/CS9tqcqWLpY?si=mfZQfOgB6_ANhVNZ - Read the article: Are you ready for the era of 'big data'?, available at: https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/are-you-ready-for-the-era-of-big-data - You may discuss in the course forum sharing your opinion about an SME's readiness for the Big Data era. It is highly recommended to work collaboratively throughout the course.	

Lesson Plan

Module: Big Data **Unit: Maximising Big Data value**

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: • Explore the ways they could maximize the Big Data value • Understand the overall value of Big Data for their SMEs • Proceed with next steps in integrating Big Data within their SMEs	**Benchmark** Data volume Data value Data scalability Data security
Level Advanced	**Framework** Evolve
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will explore the ways they could maximize the Big Data value	
Micro-learning activities Learners will - View the relevant infographic (maximize Big Data value) - Read the article: 7 Insights to Maximize Big Data and Machine Learning Benefits, available at: https://www.dataart.com/blog/7-insights-to-maximize-big-data-and-machine-learning-benefits - You may discuss in the course forum sharing your opinion about an SME's options for maximizing the Big Data value. It is highly recommended to work collaboratively throughout the course.	

Lesson Plan

Module: MACHINE LEARNING **Unit: Introduction**

Desired Core professional goal	Benchmark
After completing this module, learners will be able to: - understand the strength of Machine Learning methodologies for their business - streamline their business through the introduction of machine learning - identify the processes that can be supported by machine learning techniques in their business - Understand the difference between Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence	Machine Learning
Level Basic	**Framework** Enlighten Empower Energise Evolve
Micro-learning activities Learners will: 1. read what is the module about CLICK HERE	

Lesson Plan

Module: Machine Learning

Learning Unit: What it is and why it matters

Desired Core professional goal	Benchmark
Learners will learn - What is machine learning - How can machine learning be useful in a company - Different approaches/categories of Machine Learning	Machine Learning
Level Advanced	**Framework** Enlighten

Professional micro-learning outcomes

Learners will be able to:

- Identify the importance of machine learning for a business
- Recognise the different types of Machine learning and their main use

Micro-learning activities

Learners will:

- Read the ppt presentation provided *link to be added*
- Go through the infographic "Machine Learning for Beginners" *link to be added*

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Check for a deeper knowledge in the guide provided
  https://youtu.be/ukzFI9rgwfU
  https://www.simplilearn.com/tutorials/machine-learning-tutorial/what-is-machine-learning

Lesson Plan

Module: Machine Learning

Learning Unit: Streamline your business with machine learning

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to • Understand the main benefits of machine learning • Acquire new expertise on how to use and implement machine learning system in a company	**Benchmark** Machine Learning
Level Advanced	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will be able to: • Identify the advantages of machine learning for their own business • Develop a plan for applying machine learning tool to their business case	
Micro-learning activities Learners will have to • Look at the video provided: *Streamline Your Business with Machine Learning* • Go through in depth further reading and resources: *In depth Guide to Machine Learning in the Enterprise - https://drive.google.com/file/d/1pvtwTzDLL82ngR0yOyuH3GbDaEhDYny7/view?usp=drive_link*	

Lesson Plan

Module: Machine Learning versus AI: what's the difference

Learning Unit: Upskilling your staff

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: - Know what Artificial Intelligence is - Consider how the relation between Artificial Intelligence and Machine learning can be exploited in a business	**Benchmark** Machine Learning
Level Advanced	**Framework** Evolve
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will: - Understand the difference between the concepts of Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence - Recognize in which situations Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence are useful and why; - Understand the relation within the 2 concepts, and how they can be connected in running a digital business.	
Micro-learning activities Learners will 1. watch the video *Machine Learning Versus AI*	

Lesson Plan

Module: Artificial Intelligence (AI) **Unit: Introduction**

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: • Indicate the value of Microsoft Bing's AI assistant for an SME • Recognize AI applications for SMEs • Determine if AI can leverage an SME • Explore the ways AI and Blockchain are changing businesses	**Benchmark** AI accuracy AI scalability AI ethics AI robustness
Level Advanced	**Framework** Enlighten Empower Energise Evolve
Micro-learning activities Learners will - Read the learners Guidelines	

Lesson Plan

Module: Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Unit: what does Microsoft Bing's new AI assistant mean for your business?

Desired Core professional goal	**Benchmark**
Learners will be able to: • Indicate the value of Microsoft Bing's AI assistant for an SME	AI accuracy AI scalability AI ethics AI robustness
Level Advanced	**Framework** Enlighten
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will understand the value of Microsoft Bing's AI assistant for an SME	
Micro-learning activities Learners will - Read the announcement and watch the relevant videos, concerning the next wave of AI innovation with Microsoft Bing and Edge, by Yusuf Mehdi - Corporate Vice President & Consumer Chief Marketing Officer, available at https://blogs.microsoft.com/blog/2023/05/04/announcing-the-next-wave-of-ai-innovation-with-microsoft-bing-and-edge/ - Read the online article entitled "What does Microsoft Bing's new AI assistant mean for your business?", available at https://www.techrepublic.com/article/microsoft-new-ai-assistant/ and reflect on the relevant issues. - You may discuss in the course forum sharing your experience with AI, as well as the challenges you may have faced. It is highly recommended to work collaboratively throughout the course.	

Lesson Plan

Module: Artificial Intelligence (AI) **Unit: AI applications for SMEs**

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: • Recognize AI applications for SMEs • Understand the pros and cons of AI applications for SMEs	**Benchmark** AI applications AI ethics AI benefits AI challenges
Level Advanced	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will recognize AI applications for SMEs	
Micro-learning activities Learners will - View a video entitled "10 AI Tools To Run Your Business from A to Z" available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BYpJQ0pYBVE - Read an online article entitled "7 AI Applications for Small Businesses to Use in 2023" available at https://marketingniceguys.com/7-ai-applications-for-small-businesses-to-use-in-2023/. - Get deeper into the topic and get familiarized with relevant tools through an online article entitled "AI for Small Businesses: 19 Ways to Scale Up Using Artificial Intelligence" available at https://10web.io/blog/ai-for-small-businesses/ - You may discuss in the course forum sharing your opinion about the added value of AI Applications for your SME. It is highly recommended to work collaboratively throughout the course.	

Lesson Plan

Module: Artificial Intelligence (AI) **Unit: Can AI leverage your business?**

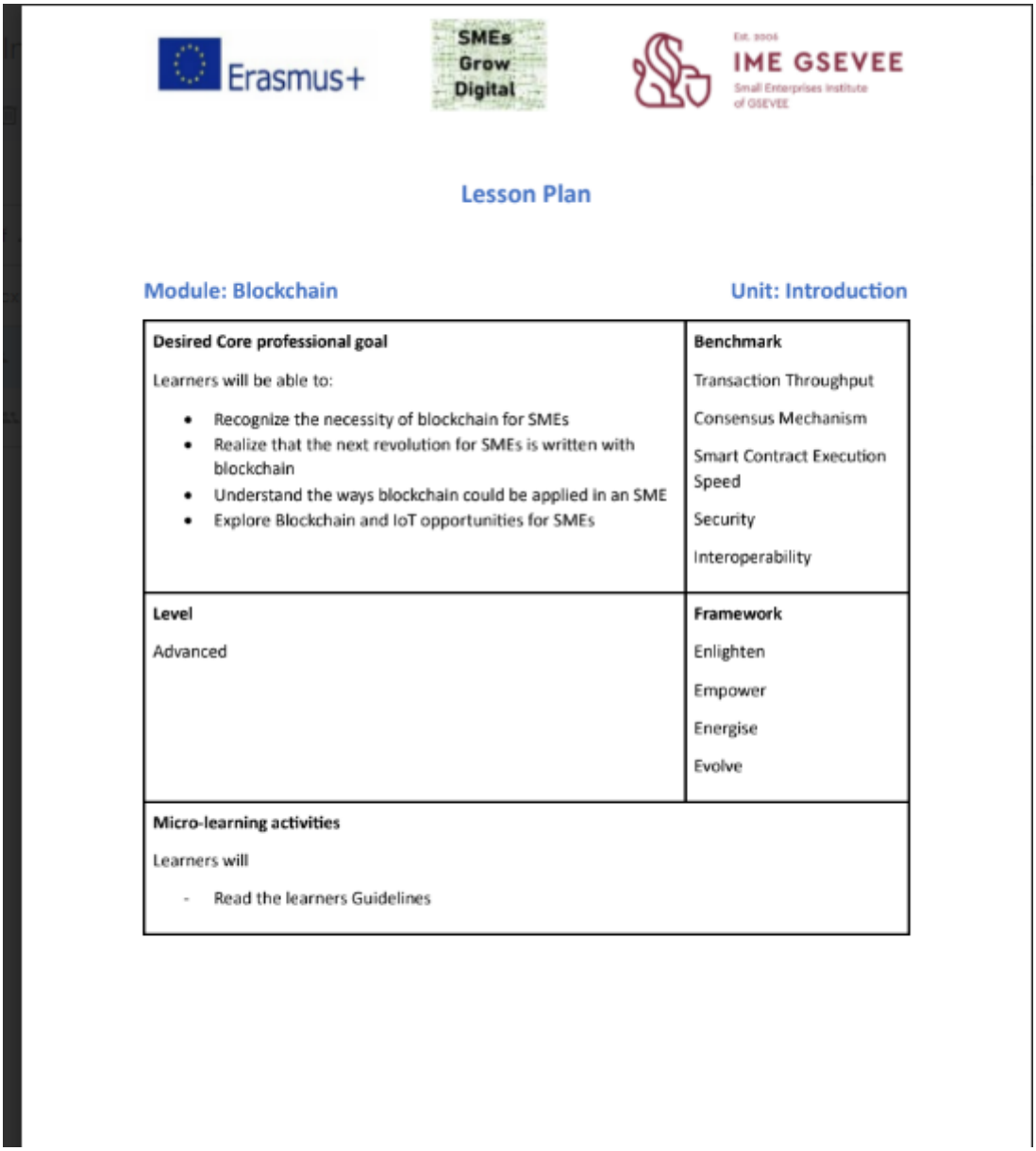
Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: • Determine if AI can leverage an SME • Recognize the pros and cons of AI for SMEs	**Benchmark** AI accuracy AI scalability AI ethics AI robustness
Level Advanced	**Framework** Energise
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will determine if AI can leverage an SME	
Micro-learning activities Learners will - View the relevant infographic (AI leverage SME) - Read an online article entitled "How to Leverage Machine Learning & AI for Small Business?" available at: https://www.cameralyze.co/blog/how-to-leverage-machine-learning-ai-for-small-business - You may discuss in the course forum sharing your opinion about an SME's readiness for the AI era. It is highly recommended to work collaboratively throughout the course.	

Lesson Plan

Module: Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Unit: How AI & Blockchain are changing businesses

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: • Explore the ways AI and Blockchain are changing businesses • Get introduced to the next module which refers to Blockchain	**Benchmark** AI innovation AI ethics Blockchain Evolvement
Level Advanced	**Framework** Evolve
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will explore the ways AI and Blockchain are changing businesses	
Micro-learning activities Learners will - Read the article: How AI and Blockchain are Changing Businesses, available at: https://firstbridge.io/blog/blockchain/how-ai-and-blockchain-are-changing-businesses - Reflect on the use cases described in the article. - You may discuss in the course forum sharing your opinion about an SME's options for maximizing the AI and Blockchain value. It is highly recommended to work collaboratively throughout the course.	



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Lesson Plan

Module: Blockchain **Unit: Introduction**

Desired Core professional goal	**Benchmark**
Learners will be able to: • Recognize the necessity of blockchain for SMEs • Realize that the next revolution for SMEs is written with blockchain • Understand the ways blockchain could be applied in an SME • Explore Blockchain and IoT opportunities for SMEs	Transaction Throughput Consensus Mechanism Smart Contract Execution Speed Security Interoperability
Level Advanced	**Framework** Enlighten Empower Energise Evolve
Micro-learning activities Learners will - Read the learners Guidelines	

Lesson Plan

Module: Blockchain

Unit: Do you need blockchain?

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: • Recognize the necessity of blockchain for SMEs	**Benchmark** Transaction Throughput Consensus Mechanism Smart Contract Execution Speed Security Interoperability
Level Advanced	**Framework** Enlighten
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will recognize the necessity of blockchain for SMEs	
Micro-learning activities Learners will - Read what this module is about. - Watch this video (by Simplilearn), in which the basics of blockchain are explained in 7 minutes! What is blockchain? How does it work? All answers available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yubzJw0uiE4 - Read the online article entitled "Why small businesses should look to the blockchain", available at https://www.eurodns.com/blog/why-small-businesses-should-look-to-the-blockchain and reflect on the relevant issues. - You may discuss in the course forum sharing your experience with blockchain, as well as the challenges you may have faced. What do you think, do you actually need blockchain, now that you have been introduced into this technology? It is highly recommended to work collaboratively throughout the course.	

Lesson Plan

Module: Blockchain **Unit: The next revolution is written with blockchain**

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: • Realize that the next revolution for SMEs is written with blockchain	**Benchmark** Transaction Throughput Consensus Mechanism Smart Contract Execution Speed Security Interoperability
Level Advanced	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will realize that the next revolution for SMEs is written with blockchain	
Micro-learning activities Learners will - Read what this module is about. - Read the online article entitled "Revolution is written with blockchain: a snapshot of decentralized finance", available at https://www.bbvaspark.com/contenido/en/news/snapshot-of-decentralized-finance/ and reflect on the relevant issues. - Get deeper into the topic through two different use cases, one in food supply chain (available at https://www.fooddive.com/news/blockchain-the-next-revolution-in-the-food-supply-chain/513741/) and one in agriculture (available at https://www.orfonline.org/research/blockchain-technology-agricultures-next-revolution-55488/). - You may discuss in the course forum sharing your opinion about the ways blockchain technology could revolutionize an SME in any sector. It is highly recommended to work collaboratively throughout the course.	

Lesson Plan

Module: Blockchain

Unit: Implementing Blockchain Technology in your business

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: • Understand the ways blockchain could be applied in an SME	**Benchmark** Transaction Throughput Consensus Mechanism Smart Contract Execution Speed Security Interoperability
Level Advanced	**Framework** Energise
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will understand the ways blockchain could be applied in an SME	
Micro-learning activities Learners will - Read what this module is about. - The Digital Transformation of SMEs has become a core dimension of economical development; thus, OECD (the organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) has released a series of publications which provide a means for assessing and improving the performance, design and implementation of SME and entrepreneurship policies, and for sharing policy experiences among OECD member countries and partner economies. One of these books is "The Digital Transformation of SMEs", available online for free at https://doi.org/10.1787/bdb9256a-en - Focus on the chapter "How can Blockchain ecosystems serve SMEs?", available at https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/18ac5acb-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/18ac5acb-en#chapter-d1e20573 and the highlights provided in brief. - View a video entitled "How Can a Blockchain Help Your Business?" (by Growth Tribe) available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tUSNJQkjM-Y - You may discuss in the course forum sharing your opinion about the ways blockchain technology could be applied in your SME. It is highly recommended to work collaboratively throughout the course.	

Lesson Plan

Module: Blockchain

Unit: Blockchain and IoT opportunities for the SMEs

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: • Explore Blockchain and IoT opportunities for SMEs	**Benchmark** Transaction Throughput Consensus Mechanism Smart Contract Execution Speed Security Interoperability
Level Advanced	**Framework** Evolve
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will explore Blockchain and IoT opportunities for SMEs	
Micro-learning activities Learners will - Read what this module is about. - Go back to the book "The Digital Transformation of SMEs", discussed in the "energize" framework, available online for free at https://doi.org/10.1787/bdb9256a-en. Explore the different tools described in the book to enhance digital transformation, including artificial intelligence, internet of things, blockchain etc. Reflect on the tools described in the book. - Read the online article entitled "IoT blockchain to drive new business models", available at https://futureiot.tech/iot-blockchain-to-drive-new-business-models/. - Get deeper into the above-mentioned topics by reading the article "The collaborative role of blockchain, artificial intelligence, and industrial internet of things in digitalization of small and medium-size enterprises", available at https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9886850/. - Explore "Blockchain Opportunities for SMEs in North West Europe" available at https://vb.nweurope.eu/media/20163/blockstart_blockchain-opportunities-for-smes-in-north-west-europe.pdf. - You may discuss in the course forum sharing your opinion about Blockchain and IoT opportunities for SMEs. It is highly recommended to work collaboratively throughout the course.	

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Lesson Plan

Module: Internet of Things (IoT) **Unit: Introduction**

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: • Realize the reasons every single SME needs the Internet of Things • Indicate 5 benefits of the IoT for SMEs • Indicate the top current IoT applications and examples in business • Recognize the ways IoT can transform an SME's supply chain • Explore the ways AR and VR technologies can enhance IoT applications	**Benchmark** Connectivity Sensors Interoperability Network Smart devices
Level Advanced	**Framework** Enlighten Empower Energise Evolve
Micro-learning activities Learners will - Read the learners Guidelines	

Lesson Plan

Module: Internet of Things (IoT)

Unit: Why every single SME needs the Internet of Things

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: • Realize the reasons every single SME needs the Internet of Things	**Benchmark** Connectivity Sensors Interoperability Network Smart devices
Level Advanced	**Framework** Enlighten
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will realize the reasons every single SME needs the Internet of Things	
Micro-learning activities Learners will - Read what this module is about. - Watch this video (by Simplilearn), in which the basics of IoT are explained in 6 minutes! What is IoT? How does it work? All answers available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6mBO2vqLv38 - Read an online article entitled *"Why Every Single Small Business Needs the Internet of Things"* available at https://keap.com/business-success-blog/growth/apps-tools/internet-of-things. - View the relevant infographic (also available here https://prezi.com/i/_vwz1lw21ldp/). - You may discuss in the course forum sharing your experience with the Internet of Things, as well as the challenges you may have faced. It is highly recommended to work collaboratively throughout the course.	

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Lesson Plan

Module: Internet of Things (IoT)

Unit: 5 Benefits of the Internet of Things (IoT) for SMEs

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: • Indicate 5 benefits of the IoT for SMEs	**Benchmark** Connectivity Sensors Interoperability Network Smart devices
Level Advanced	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will be able to indicate 5 benefits of the IoT for SMEs	
Micro-learning activities Learners will - Read what this module is about. - Read an online article entitled "5 Benefits of the Internet of Things (IoT) for SMBs" available at https://www.impactmybiz.com/blog/blog-5-benefits-of-the-internet-of-things-for-smbs/. - Get deeper into the topic reading an online article entitled "Top Benefits of IoT for SMEs" available at https://www.datasciencecentral.com/top-benefits-of-iot-for-smes/ and reflect on the relevant issues. - You may discuss in the course forum sharing your opinion about benefits of the Internet of Things (IoT) for SMEs. It is highly recommended to work collaboratively throughout the course.	

Lesson Plan

Module: Internet of Things (IoT)

Unit: Top 8 IoT application and examples in business

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: • Indicate the top current IoT applications and examples in business	**Benchmark** Connectivity Sensors Interoperability Network Smart devices
Level Advanced	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will be able to indicate the top current IoT applications and examples in business	

Micro-learning activities
 	
Learners will
 	
- Read what this module is about.
- Read the following list of online articles:
  ○ Top 12 IoT applications and examples in business (https://www.techtarget.com/iotagenda/tip/Top-8-IoT-applications-and-examples-in-business)
  ○ 10 Powerful Internet Of Things (IoT) Examples Of 2023 (Real-World Apps) (https://www.softwaretestinghelp.com/best-iot-examples/)
  ○ 29 Internet of Things Examples You Should Know (https://builtin.com/internet-things/iot-examples)
  ○ Top 10 Examples of Internet of Things Applications in Business (https://www.airdroid.com/mdm/iot-applications-examples/#2)
- Based on these articles, reflect on the following issues:
  ○ Have you already used IoT in your SME, probably without even knowing it?
  ○ What kind of IoT solutions suit your own business?
  ○ What kind of IoT solutions have other businesses in your field already applied in their everyday tasks?
- You may discuss in the course forum sharing your opinion about current IoT applications for SMEs. It is highly recommended to work collaboratively throughout the course.	

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Lesson Plan

Module: Internet of Things (IoT) **Unit: How can IoT transform your supply chain?**

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: • Recognize the ways IoT can transform an SME's supply chain	**Benchmark** Connectivity Sensors Interoperability Network Smart devices
Level Advanced	**Framework** Energise
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will recognize the ways IoT can transform an SME's supply chain	

Micro-learning activities

Learners will

- Read what this module is about.
- Watch this video (by Simplilearn), in which the basics of Supply Chain Management are explained in 6 minutes! What is Supply Chain Management? How does it work? All answers available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lpp9bHtPAN0
- Read an online article entitled *"How IoT is Revolutionising Supply Chain Management"* available at https://www.erlang-solutions.com/blog/how-iot-is-revolutionising-supply-chain-management/.
- Read an online article entitled *"Top 10: strategic benefits of IoT tech in supply chains"* available at https://supplychaindigital.com/digital-supply-chain/top-10-strategic-benefits-of-iot-tech-in-supply-chains.
- You may discuss in the course forum sharing your experience with the Internet of Things in Supply Chain Management, as well as the challenges you may have faced. It is highly recommended to work collaboratively throughout the course.
- Now it's your turn! What can you do to transform supply chain management? What are your ideas and suggestions? How do you plan to manage any challenges? Write down your design and share it with others through the course forum.

Lesson Plan

Module: Internet of Things (IoT)

Unit: How AR and VR technology can enhance IoT applications?

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: • Explore the ways AR and VR technologies can enhance IoT applications	**Benchmark** Connectivity Sensors Interoperability Network Smart devices
Level Advanced	**Framework** Evolve
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will explore the ways AR and VR technologies can enhance IoT applications	

Micro-learning activities

Learners will

- Read what this module is about.
- Watch this video (by Bernard Marr), in which the Top 4 Internet of Things (IoT) Trends in 2023 are presented. Which technologies do you recognize? How can AR and VR technology enhance IoT? All answers available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d7Rd6UgcrWo
- Read an online article entitled *"How AR and VR technology can enhance IoT applications"* available at https://www.verizon.com/about/blog/vr-and-iot#:~:text=VR%20and%20AR%20could%20eventually,capabilities%20of%20remote%20work%20tech.
- Read an online article entitled *"How IoT will Change the Future of Virtual Reality Technology"* available at https://iot.eetimes.com/how-iot-will-change-the-future-of-virtual-reality-technology/.
- You may discuss in the course forum sharing your ideas on the ways AR and VR technologies can enhance IoT application. It is highly recommended to work collaboratively throughout the course.
- Now it's your turn! Which other technologies could enhance IoT applications? Do you plan to integrate them in your business? Share your thoughts with others through the course forum.

Lesson Plan

Module: Augmented Reality (AR) **Unit: Introduction**

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: • Indicate the value of Augmented Reality for an SME • Recognize the way AR and VR could transform the future of SMEs • Determine if AR can leverage an SME • Explore the ways AR and VR are driving automation and robotics	**Benchmark** AR trigger/ overlay AR wearables AR interaction AR stability
Level Advanced	**Framework** Enlighten Empower Energise Evolve
Micro-learning activities Learners will - Read the learners Guidelines	

Lesson Plan

Module: Augmented Reality (AR)

Unit: Augmented Reality for everyone

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: • Indicate the value of Augmented Reality for an SME	**Benchmark** AR trigger/ overlay AR wearables AR interaction AR stability
Level Advanced	**Framework** Enlighten
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will understand the value of Augmented Reality for an SME	
Micro-learning activities Learners will - Read what this module is about. - Read an online article entitled *"Augmented Reality (AR) vs. Virtual Reality (VR): What's the Difference?"* available at https://www.pcmag.com/news/augmented-reality-ar-vs-virtual-reality-vr-whats-the-difference. - View the relevant video available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CaX4uG2iwt8 - You may discuss in the course forum sharing your experience with AR/VR technologies, as well as the challenges you may have faced. It is highly recommended to work collaboratively throughout the course.	

Lesson Plan

Module: Augmented Reality (AR)

Unit: How AR and VR are Transforming the Future of Businesses

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: • Recognize the way AR and VR could transform the future of SMEs	**Benchmark** AR trigger/ overlay AR wearables AR interaction AR stability
Level Advanced	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will recognize the way AR and VR could transform the future of SMEs	
Micro-learning activities Learners will - Read what this module is about. - View the relevant video available at https://www.youtube.com/shorts/LxTrcSfOsIY or download the relevant presentation (Empower_presentation.pptx) - Read an online article entitled "How AR and VR are Transforming the Future of Businesses" available at https://www.datasciencecentral.com/how-ar-and-vr-are-transforming-the-future-of-businesses-1/. - Get deeper into the topic reading an online article entitled "Role Of AR and VR in Shaping Customer Experience's Future" available at https://www.analyticsinsight.net/role-of-ar-and-vr-in-shaping-customer-experiences-future/. - You may discuss in the course forum sharing your opinion about the way AR and VR could transform the future of SMEs. It is highly recommended to work collaboratively throughout the course.	

Lesson Plan

Module: Augmented Reality (AR)

Unit: Augmented Reality and Business: Can your business join in?

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: • Determine if AR can leverage an SME	**Benchmark** AR trigger/ overlay AR wearables AR interaction AR stability
Level Advanced	**Framework** Energise
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will determine if AR can leverage an SME	
Micro-learning activities Learners will - Read what this module is about. - View the relevant infographic (VR/AR Challenges). - Read an online article entitled "Augmented Reality and Business: Can SMEs join in?" available at: https://thinkmarketingmagazine.com/augmented-reality-and-business-can-smes-join-in/#. - Get deeper into the topic reading an online article entitled "Why Every SME Needs an Augmented Reality Strategy" available at: https://www.q3tech.com/blogs/why-every-sme-needs-an-augmented-reality-strategy/. - Find some examples of use cases here: https://techhq.com/2021/03/augmented-reality-ar-use-cases-for-small-and-all-businesses/ - You may discuss in the course forum sharing your opinion about an SME's readiness for AR/VR technologies. It is highly recommended to work collaboratively throughout the course.	

Lesson Plan

Module: Augmented Reality (AR) **Unit: How AR/VR is driving automation and robotics**

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to: • Explore the ways AR and VR are driving automation and robotics	**Benchmark** AR trigger/ overlay AR wearables AR interaction AR stability
Level Advanced	**Framework** Evolve
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learners will explore the ways AR and VR are driving automation and robotics	
Micro-learning activities Learners will - Read what this module is about. - Read an online article entitled "How AR/VR Is Driving Automation and Robotics for Manufacturers", available at: https://www.spiceworks.com/tech/innovation/guest-article/how-ar-vr-is-driving-automation-and-robotics-for-manufacturers/ - Get deeper into the topic reading an online article entitled "The Role of Extended Reality in Robotics and Autonomous Vehicles" available at: https://ts2.space/en/the-role-of-extended-reality-in-robotics-and-autonomous-vehicles/ - Reflect on the topics discussed in the articles. - You may discuss in the course forum sharing your opinion about the ways AR and VR are driving automation and robotics. It is highly recommended to work collaboratively throughout the course.	

Lesson Plan

Module: AUTOMATION AND ROBOTICS **Unit: Introduction**

Desired Core professional goal	Benchmark
After completing this module, learners will be able to: - Consider the phenomenon of Robotisation as an opportunity rather than a threat to SMEs - gain knowledge for starting a robotisation and automatisation process for their business - start process automation for small businesses - understand if the application of SME robotics can take their business to Automation - recognise that industry 4.0 is becoming affordable to SMEs	e-platform
Level Basic	**Framework** Enlighten Empower Energise Evolve
Micro-learning activities Learners will: 1. read what is the module about CLICK HERE	

Lesson Plan

Module: Automation and Robotics

Learning Unit: Robotisation: opportunity or threat for SMEs?

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to - Understand the concept of Robotization - Identify the main advantages Robotization can bring to SMEs	**Benchmark** Robotics
Level Advanced	**Framework** Enlighten

Professional micro-learning outcomes

Foundational Knowledge

Reflect about the needs...

Learners will be able to:

- Recognise the actual guidelines for implementing a robotization process
- Compare the advantages brought by a robotization process and with the hurdles a SME can encounter in approaching this idea

Micro-learning activities

Learners will have to

- Watch the video provided *What can robotics brings to SMEs part 1* https://youtu.be/2d4yAGaVf9k
- Go through the infographic provided *link to be added*

Optional: have a chance to watch the following resources
What can robotics brings to SMEs part 2: https://youtu.be/Ogz0WYpAhm4
What can robotics brings to SMEs part 3: https://youtu.be/qPeBY4zhoXc

Lesson Plan

Module: Automation and Robotics

Learning Unit: Helping SMEs to automate with Robots

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to - Recognise the advantages given by a process of Robot automation - Identify which types of Automation could be useful for their own company/business	**Benchmark** Robotics
Level Advanced	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes Integration **Reflect about the needs...** Learners will be able to: - Identify the impact of the implementation of Robot automation on a business - Recognize the most suitable type of Robotics Automation for their professional context.	
Micro-learning activities Learners will have to - Look at the video provided: *Helping SMEs to automate with Robots* - Go through in depth further reading and resources: 1 - https://youtu.be/hkypCOb1kvQ "What is RPA (Robotic Process Automation) 2 - Advantages and Disadvantages of Robotic Automation	

Lesson Plan

Module: Automation and Robotics

Learning Unit: Process automation for small businesses

Desired Core professional goal Learners will be able to - Understand the steps needed for starting a process automation - Commit to identify some processes in their company that needs to be automated.	**Benchmark** Robotics
Level Advanced	**Framework** Empower
Professional micro-learning outcomes Learning how to learn **Reflect about the needs...** Learners will be able to: - Identify the steps for the setting up of a process automation - Prepare their company to start applying the automation of some defined procesesses	
Micro-learning activities Learners will have to - Look at the video provided *Process Automation for Small businesses* - Go through in depth further reading and resources: 1. The ultimate Guide to Process Automation	