



Press Release

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For Immediate Release

New SmartClass+ Language Lab Platform Focuses on *Usability* for Teachers

Montréal, Canada: January 1, 2012 – Robotel Inc. has released SmartClass+, a new generation of multimedia classroom management systems that help teachers orchestrate stimulating and challenging activities for their students. SmartClass+ works with traditional labs using desktop computers, portable labs using laptop carts or tablet PCs, and virtual labs where teachers and students can interact from multiple locations. Additionally, SmartClass+ empowers teachers to build self-study exercises that their students can access from any location at any time.

One of the key development goals for SmartClass+ has been a focus on usability in the hands of non-technical teachers and instructors. This focus ensures that teachers master the system more quickly with less training, have greater confidence in using the system, and are more comfortable with integrating new technology into their lesson plans

And when teachers are comfortable with the technology, and use it on a day-to-day basis, their students are rewarded with a richer learning experience and improved language skills.

KISS – Keep It Short & Simple

“To ensure usability, the design philosophy behind SmartClass+ is KISS – Keep It Short & Simple”, says Robotel marketing director Gerry Sullivan. “We have focused on key teaching activities and have consciously eliminated marginal features that might be used by only a few power users; For each activity, we display only those controls that are directly relevant; We give each button a clear, concise, easily-understood label.”

LAD – The Live Activities Dashboard

The system is managed from a simplified graphical user interface called a *dashboard*. In fact, there are separate dashboards for running live activities – where teachers and students interact in real time, and self-study activities – where teachers and students work independently to build or run pre-formatted exercises.

The LAD – or Live Activities Dashboard – is used for activities such as:

- **Presentations & Demonstrations** - Instructors can share their computer screen and their audio with the class, or can have a model student make a presentation or demonstration to the class. Students view the demonstrations directly on their local computer screens with total clarity and listen through comfortable noise-cancelling headsets. And, student screens can be *blanked* when the teacher needs students to direct their attention to the front of the room for a live demonstration.
- **Monitoring & Support** - Instructors can discretely view student screens and listen to student audio while students work on assignments, and can intervene on a one-on-one basis via intercom or via chat to help students or to assure that students remain on-task. Instructors can view multiple student screens concurrently to assess overall class status.

- **Pairing & Grouping** - Students can be organized into pairs or small groups where they can interact with their peers, collaborate on group assignments, or participate in role-playing activities. Pairing is an excellent way to hone listening and speaking skills.
- **Differential Teaching** – The class can be partitioned into multiple sections, and different activities can be conducted in each section. This is useful for review work and in situations where mixed classes of students have different levels of skills.
- **Student PC Management** – SmartClass+ plus includes several PC management utilities that enable teachers to power-up and power-down student computers, block access to the Internet or other applications, launch websites or programs on all student stations, etc.
- **Standardized Testing** – Teachers can run live testing scenarios using their voice or a media file as the stimulus, and can run standardized tests – like Advanced Placement (AP) tests.

MAD – The Media Activities Dashboard

The SmartClass+ Media Activities Dashboard equips instructors with a powerful set of exercise templates for building self-study *media* activities that can be accessed in class or outside of class on an anytime, anywhere basis:

- **Rich Media Authentic Activities** - Instructors employ rich media such as text, images, audio clips, and video clips to provide stimulating and challenging assignments for their students.
- **Powerful Exercise Templates** - Exercises include both text response and oral response options, and templates are provided for common quiz formats like multiple choice questions,

fill-in-the-blanks questions, open text questions, transcription activities, repeat-after-me recording drills, simultaneous translation, and open recording.

- **Rapid Testing, Evaluation, & Feedback** - Instructors can designate any activity as a practice, a test, or a timed test, and SmartClass+ uses a combination of auto-assessment and teacher-assisted assessment to provide rapid scoring of assignments and feedback for students.

VTA – The Virtual Teaching Assistant

SmartClass+ includes a powerful content management engine – called a Virtual Teaching Assistant – that transparently manages routine tasks like regulating access to lessons without teachers even being aware of its presence. This gives students and teachers more time for in-class activities, so that students have more time for practice and review.

The VTA silently keeps track of teachers, courses, classes, students, media files, and exercises, so that teachers are free to focus on teaching. The VTA eliminates time-wasting logistics like transferring files, collecting responses, and includes auto-evaluation capabilities for assessing student performance, assigning grades, and delivering feedback to students within seconds of exercise completion.

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More Information about Robotel's Classroom Management Systems

For more information on Robotel's classroom management solutions, visit the company web site www.robotel.com, or contact Robotel at +1 (450) 680-1448 or (800) 480-1448.

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