



Tell Me What You Need

MAGIC BOX

In business, there are two basic strategies. The first is to have a product and persuade¹ people they need it. The second is to ask people what they want and then produce it. Here is a story about the second strategy. / ALASTAIR S. EDWARDS (UK)

The Czech company Projektmedia, s.r.o. has over ten years of experience equipping² multimedia rooms with computers, projectors and interactive boards. Schools and companies are very interested in buying interactive boards. However, in the beginning, Projektmedia wasn't very successful selling their interactive boards to nurseries³. So Jaroslav Veselý, owner⁴ of Projektmedia, consulted with nursery teachers and asked them, "Why don't you buy our interactive boards? What kind of technology do you need?"

The teachers said they needed a device⁵ which was light and easy to move, so that they could use it in different classrooms. They also wanted to project images⁶ onto the floor, rather than the wall. Walls are ineffective because teachers and children are different heights, so this makes it difficult to find the right height to project images. Moreover, children love playing on the floor! Jaroslav asked his team of professionals to come up with a solution⁷. The result⁸ was MAGIC BOX – a portable* box with a built-in PC and interactive projector. The projection screen is placed on the floor and the interaction between the screen and the PC is through an interactive pen, which works like a mouse. All kids love learning and playing with MAGIC BOX, including⁹ those with special educational needs (SEN**). Children don't have to sit at a desk – they can lie on the floor! And of course, the teachers are happy, too.

MAGIC BOX triumphed at the education and technology Bett Show in London in January this year. There's a lot of interest in the product, particularly from Scandinavian countries and Kuwait. So, it seems that listening to your potential customers¹⁰ pays off¹¹!

Ask your classmates what products they want to see on the market¹².

Discuss

LANGUAGE NOTE

- * portable – easy to move
- ** SEN – dyslexia, dysgraphia, etc.

VOCABULARY

- ¹ to persuade [pə'sweɪd] – přesvědčit
- ² to equip [ɪ'kwɪp] – vybavovat (něco něčím)
- ³ nursery ['nɜːsəri 'ti:tʃə] – mateřská škola
- ⁴ owner ['əʊnə] – majitel
- ⁵ device [dɪ'vaɪs] – zařízení
- ⁶ image ['ɪmɪdʒ] – obraz
- ⁷ solution [sə'lju:ʃn] – řešení
- ⁸ result [rɪ'zʌlt] – výsledek
- ⁹ including [ɪn'kludɪŋ] – včetně
- ¹⁰ customer ['kʌstəmə] – zákazník
- ¹¹ to pay off [peɪ, ɒf] – vyplatit se
- ¹² market ['mɑːkɪt] – trh

MAGIC BOX

It looks like a small cupboard or bedside table on wheels. You can move it about and sit on it, but most importantly, it's magic.

ALASTAIR S. EDWARDS (UK)

MAGIC BOX is a new, mobile interactive teaching device¹ produced by the Czech company Projektmedia, s.r.o. It was a big hit at the Bett Show 2015 – an exhibition² of new technologies for education³ – in London this January. Why? It creates new opportunities⁴ in the teaching of young pupils and disabled⁵ children, it's practical, simple and cheaper than most interactive boards.

onto a monitor, the projector sends the images to the floor. If you want to move an image or click a mouse, you use an **interactive pen**. If you touch something with the pen tip⁷, a diode in the pen lights up and the optical sensors in the interactive projector detect⁸ the position of the infrared light. The projector passes the information of the position of the pen to the computer, which responds⁹ back via the projector.

How it works

Inside the box, there's a **personal computer** and an **interactive projector**. The projector lets children and teachers work actively with the image⁶ projected using a special pen. Instead of projecting a picture

What is the projection screen?

With MAGIC BOX, you can project onto any surface¹⁰, but for the interactive pen, it's better to choose a smooth, hard surface (preferably not a carpet).

Task

In the text, find synonyms for:

- 1) picture
- 2) kids
- 3) to discover, find

Solutions on page 2.

VOCABULARY

- ¹ device [dɪ'vaɪs] – zařízení
- ² exhibition [ˌeksɪ'bɪʃn] – výstava
- ³ education [ˌedʒu'keɪʃn] – vzdělání
- ⁴ opportunity [ˌɒpə'tjuːnəti] – příležitost, možnost
- ⁵ disabled [dɪ'seɪblɪd] – zdravotně postižený
- ⁶ image ['ɪmɪdʒ] – obraz
- ⁷ tip [tɪp] – hrot
- ⁸ to detect [dɪ'tekt] – zaznamenat
- ⁹ to respond [rɪ'spɒnd] – odpovědět, zareagovat
- ¹⁰ surface ['sɜːfɪs] – povrch

