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Success Stories

From time to time we highlight interesting projects in Second Life that showcase a new approach to creating content, the use of Second Life in a particular field, or work by companies listed in the Developer Directory.

We hope these Success Stories will give you ideas of how you can create a successful business in Second Life.

Quick Links:

- [Students experiment with Second Life through Interactive Science Lab](#) by Jillian Mapholisto
- [iCommons in SL](#) by Sitearm Madonna
- [Dublin in SL](#) by Sitearm Madonna
- [Ohio University, Evolving Educational Environments](#) by Stephen Rotaru

Full Story:

Students experiment with Second Life through Interactive Science Lab

by Jillian Mapholisto
Ohio University
Education & Training



Introduction

The Virtual Immersive Technologies and Arts for Learning Lab (aka the VITAL Lab) at Ohio University understands that some things are just more fun in Second Life. You know, like experimenting with "icky stuff" without having to actually touch anything offensive. The VITAL Lab, which specializes in creating realistic Second Life environments and games for educational purposes, has created the Interactive Science Lab in SL. The middle school students who use the Interactive Science Lab have the freedom to complete science experiments that normally would be messy and/or cumbersome.

Success with Second Life

In addition to being one of America's leaders in building interactive Second Life educational games, the VITAL Lab has gone above and beyond the call of duty by creating the Interactive Science Lab. Through sponsorship from the National Science Foundation, the VITAL Lab has been able to create a lifelike SL lab that gives middle school students the option to perform three different science experiments. The three experiments featured in the VITAL Lab's Interactive Science Lab are: the Redi experiment, the fruit fly genetics test and the sugar and water solubility experiment. Within the Redi experiment, the scientific theory of spontaneous generation is disproved through a series of activities that no student or teacher would ever want to complete in the classroom. Avatars place raw meat in either closed or open containers; the meat in the open containers is exposed to flies in the air, and these flies later become maggots. After seeing the experiment, the students answer questions and reflect on the results of the experiment interactively on SL STEAM ans. Bruce Bilyeu, a second year graduate fellow in the VITAL Lab, is the mastermind behind the Second Life Interactive Science Lab. According to Bruce, "One of the biggest tasks is just integrating the educational material into an application like Second Life and making it easy to use educationally with middle school students who are not as well-versed with computers as older students. It is not easy to have students stay on the educational task at hand when they have the ability to fly around in a virtual world and interact with other classmates. Nevertheless, allowing the students to experiment in SL to learn content really gets them excited, and they are always eager to go back to the Interactive Science Lab for more."

Advice

As he enters his second year of work on the Interactive Science Lab project, creator Bilyeu shares some of his words of wisdom in regard to working with Second Life: "Sometimes you will find methods [to creating SL programs] that do not work as well as others, and you need to keep refining your methods until you find a way that works best. Simplifying students' experiences in Second Life using a HUD with concise directions helped to keep the participants informed about what they were doing through an easy-to-use interface. You also need to make sure that you are keeping your audience in mind with what you are creating within Second Life. Another approach I took was to think of the aspects that Second Life offers that are fun and then create my games around those."

[Students experiment with Second Life through Interactive Science Lab's Second Life Location](#)

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