

Diocese of El Alto, Bolivia
Congregation of the Mission, “The Vincentians”

“A Mobile Platform for Internet-based Formation: 2010-2014”

Perspectives on the Project

- The project is will be used in the missions *ad gentes*, in the rural Altiplano area of Bolivia, where technology and infrastructure are rudimentary.
- The project is primarily new media-oriented, creatively capitalizing on advanced technology.
- The project is primarily a diocesan-level lay formation program -- especially youth and the lay leaders of the parishes of Mocomoco and Italaque, in the Camacho Province within the Diocese of El Alto, Bolivia, but materials and technology will also be utilized for lay, clergy and religious formation in the entire Northern Zone of the Diocese.

The project concept was derived from conversations with Rev. John Freund, C.M. and Ms. Monica Watson, directors of the Congregation of the Mission's project “VinFormation” (see <http://vinformation.famvin.org> for examples of deliverable materials) about possible missionary uses of online materials and the production of new materials in Spanish.

For several years anterior to my assignment in Bolivia, I had been experimenting with different social media connections (Facebook and other social networking platforms, Twitter, Youtube, Flickr), and using VinFormation materials to resource and educate youth groups and the Vincentian lay Missionaries-USA for several years. After coming to Bolivia in September of 2009, I worked as a volunteer technical advisor with Aymara youth who provide tri-lingual (Aymara, Spanish, English) cultural and political news here in Bolivia. This has encouraged me to think digitally along with the younger generation of Bolivians.

The formation needs on the Altiplano are great, and responses to those needs are in their technological infancy in the diocese – mostly due to lack of experience and knowledge of what technologies are available and how cost effective they can be. As Bolivia slowly develops an internet infrastructure, its rural areas will lag considerably behind the developed regions. As the youth of the rural sectors continue to have both secondary and university level education in the city of La Paz, their expectations of formational experiences grow apace. Formation in Church teaching and appropriate pastoral practice are the needs identified in the Diocesan pastoral plan and our own religious community and parochial plans. This project is a response on all these levels of needs and expectations. The technology is available to deliver quality formation programs in heretofore inaccessible rural, poor areas. We envision a small unit that is easy to transport and assemble, durable, and totally self-contained. This project, aside from accomplishing goals and objectives below, will also

- present the Church as a contemporary community with an orientation toward the future -- a likely place to live out ones spiritual life and a relevant part of a human person's development.
- provide the opportunity to demonstrate the utility of internet-based formation with a moderate capital infusion, considering the numbers of people who can be reached.

Goal of the project

To provide continual catechetical and practical formation to youth and to lay, clerical and religious leaders in the Northern Zone of the Diocese of El Alto, Bolivia, and to resource the Church with our products and experience.

Objectives for the project

- To develop new online materials in Spanish for formation and catechesis, based on successfully tested models on “VinFormation.”
- To translate to Spanish existing applicable materials available in English.
- To develop materials in the Aymaran language for the northern zone of the Diocese of El Alto.
- To assemble, test and deploy a mobile, internet-based formation module.
- To train volunteer pastoral technology assistants to continue the work.
- To provide ten base-community formation sessions in the Northern Zone of the Altiplano during the year 2011. (40 persons X 10 sessions = 400 contacts)
- To provide four parish-level formation sessions on Church teaching during the year 2011. (125 persons X 4 sessions = 500 contacts)
- To provide one catechist formation program at the northern zone - diocesan level in 2011. ((120 contacts)
- To offer a demonstration workshop online hosted by members of the “Vincentian” religious family at World Youth Day 2011. (contacts impossible to estimate)
- To continue to offer formation programs on multiple levels for the the Northern Zone of the Altiplano at a similar rate (80-120% of first year) in the succeeding three years. (2448 – 3672 contacts)
- To evaluate the project each year (evaluation team will be led by the staff of the diocesan office of evangelization)
- To document the process of project development, implementation, evaluation and financing in both English and Spanish.

PROJECT BUDGET

Expense

Equipment and acquisition

- ◆ 2 Macbook Air laptops 5,000.00USD [2,500.00/unit]; equipped with
 - additional RAM, external CD/DVD drives, and special solid-state hard drives to withstand altitude;
 - the latest video and audio editing software.
- ◆ 2 ruggedized (vibration, moisture and dust resistant) DLP projectors 1,400.00USD (700.00/unit).
- ◆ 1 Thrane and Thrane Explorer 700 Satellite unit 5,545.00USD.
- ◆ 2 ruggedized Pelican 1780 transport cases 800.00USD (400.00/unit).
- ◆ development costs (to ensure connectivity in future years) 1,000.00USD.
- ◆ Translation services: donated through <http://jaqi-aru.org> and <http://vocesbolivianas.org> and Vincentian priests and brothers, and parishioners.
- ◆ Transportation costs: integrated into local pastoral budgets.
- ◆ Technology acquisition costs: 1,100.00.
- ◆ Staffing: no additional staff is contemplated.

Total Equipment and acquisition costs: = 14,845.00USD

Internet Satellite Connection fees:

6-month development use 2010: 6 mos. @ 130.00USD/mo. = 780.00USD
 1st year deployment use 2011: 12 mos. @ 450.00USD/mo. = 5,400.00USD
 2nd through 4th year deployment use 2012 – 2014: 36 mos. @ 450.00USD/mo. = 16,200.00USD
TOTAL EXPENSES = **37,225.00USD**

Revenue

Award for equipment and eighteen months connectivity = 20,000.00USD
Private Donation for technology acquisition costs = 1,100.00USD
TOTAL REVENUE thus far = **21,100.00USD**

Note: The estimated per-contact delivery cost over four and one half years at the low-end (80%) of first-year program delivery rate works out to approximately 11.04 USD.

CONTINUING SUPPORT REQUESTED: Satellite connectivity for years 2012-2014: 12 mos.@450.00USD/mo. = \$5,400.00 per year.

TOTAL: \$16,200.00

We are committed to seeking continued funding beyond 2014 if the project is evaluated as successful at the end of the second year of the initial four and on half year cycle.

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