

Anywhere, anytime communications with School App

Queensland-based Digistorm Education has developed a school-specific app for iPhone, iPad and Android devices.

The company broke new ground when it released Australia's first native iPhone App for a K-12 school in 2010, for King's Christian College. Close to 50 schools across Australia and New Zealand have since adopted the School App including: Scots College in Wellington, St Paul's School and Somerville House in Brisbane and Radford College in the ACT.

Parents, teachers and students at these schools can now access notices, event information, newsletters and urgent alerts anywhere, anytime. The School App also provides schools with the capability to send targeted push notifications instantly to users, at no cost. This was used to great effect by schools in Queensland to keep parents updated during the recent flooding.

Digistorm Director Tim Oswald says that, although the primary purpose of a having a school app is to communicate efficiently with parents and the school community, there are significant cost savings to be had too. For example, by switching to a digital newsletter, a school with 1000 students can save up to \$6000 annually that would otherwise have to be spent on a printing a fortnightly six-page newsletter.

The Digistorm School App comes in three packages. The entry level White Package provides schools with an easy to use communications platform for notices, and an events calendar.

The Orange Package adds a newsletter and contact directory, while the comprehensive Blue Package includes a virtual school map, as well



as photo and video galleries. Each app is customised to the school's needs and can be upgraded and expanded.

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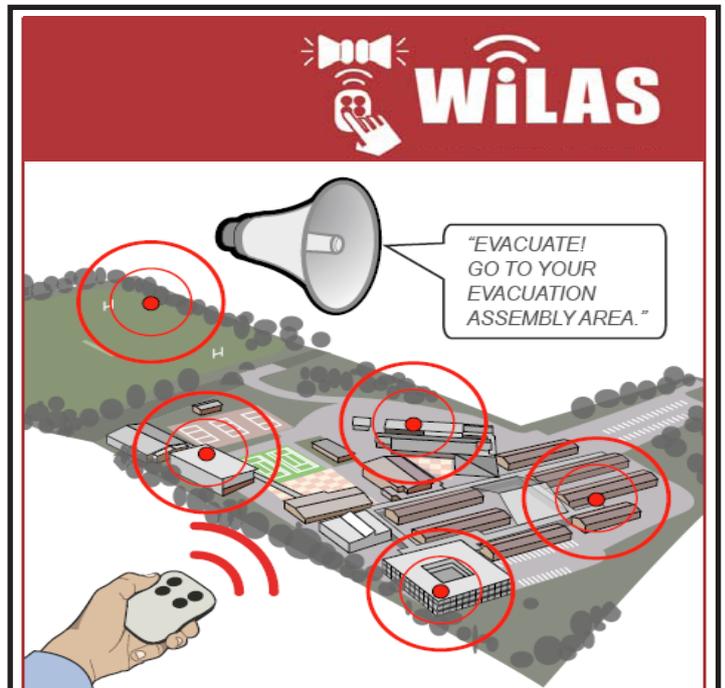
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Corrimal High School Librarian writes her own book

After many years reading other people's books, Corrimal High School's Librarian, Susan Cutsforth has written a memoir that is so engaging it was published just before Christmas 2012.

Words have always been important to Susan, so when she and her husband Stuart made a daring decision to buy their own tumble-down farmhouse in South West France three years ago, she began recording each step of the renovation adventure.

After Susan had sent a 10-page email to friends back home describing her photos of their little house in France, it came to her that perhaps she had the beginnings of something that others would find interesting and enjoyable to read.

She worked on her memoir early in the morning and when she got home from a day teaching at Corrimal High. She said that she used notes that she had taken while they were working on the house; whenever she could snatch a minute from scooping gravel or peeling wall paper, she would record her thoughts. They worked so constantly that



this was often at lunch or over a quick cup of tea.

Susan and Stuart have a love of both renovating and finding second-hand treasure to furnish and decorate houses. Even so, in France they were challenged by the language, shopping

hours and initial lack of contacts in the village. All they had in the kitchen to begin with was a sink and a wood-burning stove.

She says that their hard work on the house won their neighbours over and now they have made great friends in the village. Jean-Claude, a neighbour and retired English teacher, who Susan says is the star of the book, has acted as a mentor, guide and friend and keeps an eye on their little old farmhouse when they are home again in Australia.

Susan says that the students at Corrimal High have encouraged her and have been delighted by her success. The memoir *My House is Not in Paris* was released as an ebook on 23rd December. It is significant for her school and students that it is the first ebook that Melbourne Books has published. As an award-winning teacher librarian, this is another significant achievement – to be at the forefront of reading and technology. Susan Cutsforth believes that her experience shows others that “ordinary people can achieve their dreams.”

ET

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Sir Ken Robinson to headline K-12 education tech event

Sir Ken Robinson will return as presenter at EduTech 2103. This year's event will include the exhibition, three conferences and five masterclasses. Over 3000 delegates are expected to attend the three-day event on 3rd-5th June at Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre, where 150 businesses and educational organisations will be exhibiting.

EduTECH will host three concurrent conferences: K-12 Education Leaders Congress; K-12 IT Directors and Managers Congress; K-12 Business Managers and Administrators Congress.

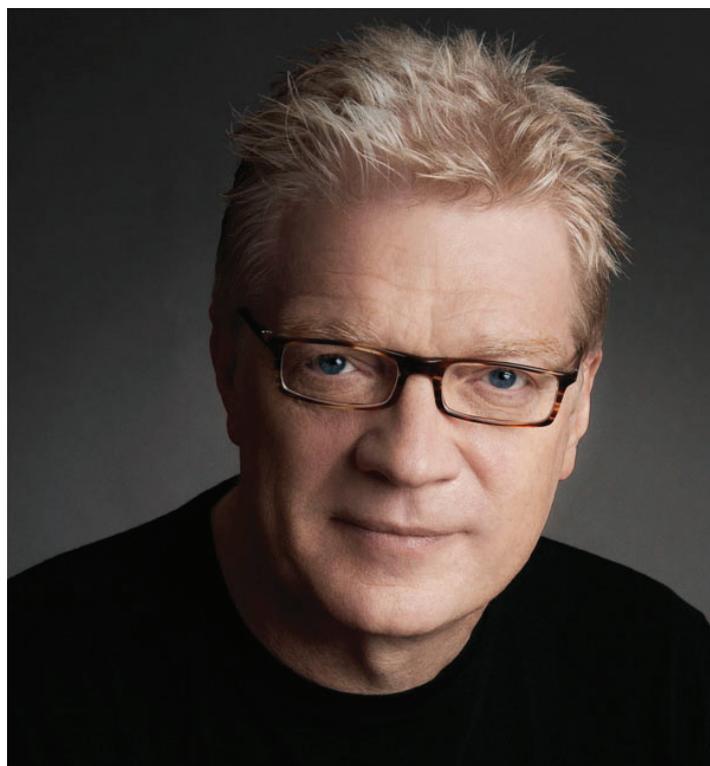
Keynote speakers

- Sir Ken Robinson Internationally recognised leader in the development of education, creativity and innovation (via live satellite link)
- Dan Pink author of *Drive* and *Whole New Mind*, leading thinker on motivation, innovation and leadership
- Sal Khan founder of Khan Academy (via live satellite link)
- Stephen Heppell online education expert
- Alan November international leader in educational technology
- Ewan McIntosh Founder and CEO of NoTosh
- Karen Cator Director – Office of Educational Technology, US Government
- Dr Gary Stager Executive Director – The Constructivist Consortium
- Scott Koslosky futurist

The conferences have been designed for principals and their education leadership teams to come together to delve into the big visions for technology in schools.

For information and to register online visit:

www.edutech.net.au 



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