



More Middle Eastern Schools choose Engage

St Christopher's 2,200 student school in Bahrain and the 950 student Doha English Speaking School in Qatar are among recent schools which have chosen Double First to provide their Management Information Systems.

The schools evaluated many providers of MIS and Double First is delighted to have been selected.

Ed Goodwin, Principal of St Christopher's School was also very

perfect for an international school such as DESS," he said.

Sponsored by the British Embassy, DESS is the leading British school in Qatar and maintains its not-for-profit status, ensuring all resources go into providing the best quality learning experiences. The school was established in 1971 and was officially opened by Her Majesty

Queen Elizabeth II and His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani.

Double First has received growing demand from international schools recently. Richard Jones, Group Sales Director, was particularly pleased. "This demonstrates how committed we are to providing a market leading product to schools globally," he said. "Our capabilities

now reach far beyond the UK and we have created new teams of support staff and developers, purely to service schools around the world without impacting on the care we provide to existing UK-based schools. We are very excited with this recent growth and we expect it to continue into the future."

"Engage is flexible and adaptable, which is perfect for an international school such as the Doha English Speaking School"

Eddie Liptrot, Headmaster

happy with the decision. "We are looking forward to an excellent relationship with all the staff at Double First. They truly understand how our school operates," he said.

Eddie Liptrot, Head of the Doha English Speaking School (DESS) in Qatar, was equally happy with the decision to use the software. "Engage is flexible and adaptable, which is



Double First with St Christopher's School



The recent change in St Christopher's Management Information System (MIS) was no small decision for them, and was decided upon only after extensive testing and evaluating was carried out. This ensured the

Engage software would integrate all functions of the school to the satisfaction of each user.

"St Christopher's has made the right decision selecting the Engage software," said Kim Hollamby, Director of Double First. "Apart from anything else, it's the only MIS fully written in a modern and future-proof programming language," Kim continued.

St Christopher's and Double First have been working closely to develop the specific enhancements

required for schools in the Middle East. This has positioned Engage as the benchmark for MIS software in the Gulf region.

The school has chosen to install all software modules, taking advantage of the single database concept and simplifying information management.

"These are very exciting times," said Richard Jones, Group Sales Director. "We are looking forward to a strong future with St Christopher's School."

Exhibition

Why not visit the Double First stand (No. 24) in the exhibition area and see the Engage software for yourself? Our team of representatives is able to provide a hands-on demonstration to allow you to try the system for yourself and they can answer any questions you might have.

To see a full demonstration, please book a session this week. Alternatively, you might rather arrange a future date when someone can visit your school.

Expansion

The Support team for Double First has been expanding again as the company serves schools in both the UK and overseas. Effective customer support is a high priority for the team, and this forms a core element of the current growth. Kim Hollamby, Director of Double First, was very clear about this growth strategy, as he explained. "Supporting schools outside the standard UK working hours is important, and, as we do not outsource our customer support, it's simply a case of managing a broader range of hours and requirements."

The Double First Support Centre is available for all schools using the software, and provides 'best practice' advice as well as technical support at all levels. For further information on the Support Centre, contact one of the Double First team directly by calling +44 (0) 1935 40 30 20.

Jeddah International School



Jeddah International School in Saudi Arabia "strives to maximise the academic, cultural and physical potential of all their students by providing them with the tools to become successful". It is no surprise, therefore, that Tarek Al-Harazy, Owner, contacted Double First to see how the Engage software could make a difference in his school.

The school embraced the software by choosing all modules, allowing each department to benefit from a single database. Furthermore, the Double First

team of developers tailored the fees module to allow for a perfectly smooth transition. Providing this level of customisation is crucial for ensuring that users feel comfortable when switching system providers. See our document '10 Key Stages in Successfully Implementing an MIS' for more information on this.

Double First's Group Managing Director, Jeff Elliott was full of admiration for the forward thinking approach of Jeddah International School. "Like many others in the Middle East region, this is a growing school and the need for a reliable Management Information System is paramount to ensuring a controlled and tightly managed operation," he said.

Jeff will be visiting the region throughout the next two months and is very happy to visit any other schools at the same time. To book an appointment with Jeff, please call +44 (0)1935 40 30 20.

New Director

Double First is pleased to welcome Kim Hollamby as the new Director. He joins the company after successfully creating a 70-person technology department for IPC Media, a London-based division of the \$40bn Time Warner group.

Kim says, "I've been following the excellent progress of Engage since its launch, so I am really pleased to join Double First's great team in Yeovil."

Outside work, Kim's interests include boating, diving, flying, technology and most team sports.



Protecting school data in a secure environment

Following the success of the Data Security seminar hosted at Cisco's headquarters near London, schools in the UK have been contacting Double First with requests for help in the field of data security. Double First has now taken this a stage further by highlighting the benefits of rigid Access Control.

What is Access Control?

Access Control is the ability to permit, restrict or deny access to a system or building. In a school environment this could be classrooms, changing rooms or the internal Management Information System.

What access methods exist?

Through effective use of identification and authentication (I&A), access can be granted based on one of the following: something you **know** (such as a password), something you **have**

(such as a smart card or token) or something you **are** (such as a fingerprint, voice or retina).

Recognising that data security in a school environment is of paramount importance, Double First has been investing heavily in the research of biometrics as a method



of identification, in particular looking at facial recognition systems.

Other security methods?

On the subject of data security, many schools have been seeking advice from Double First on how to protect pupils from access to inappropriate websites while using the school IT network. A simple 'Google' search on "How to bypass my school firewall" reveals numerous websites dedicated to the subject.

Double First now promotes a unique solution using a technology which performs a live analysis of web content. This means it stops 'nasty' content reaching school PCs while providing control over access to other types of websites that affect pupil development, such as shopping websites. Furthermore, this approach means the internet will never outgrow the limitations of the web filtering software.

For further information, simply call us on +44 (0) 1935 40 30 20.

Product Development

Double First's team of developers is being further expanded to support and progress all products in the software family.

The new Engage Portal is designed to be the main user interface for use by the majority of staff. For example, the Teacher portal includes a fully integrated events diary, attendance and assessments marking, while the Parent portal allows parents to monitor what is happening with their children on a day-to-day basis. The portal is shortly entering beta trials with four schools.

Double First's Accounts users can download version 1.51 now, allowing next period posting for Sales and Purchase Ledgers, whilst also making Profit & Loss reports user configurable in Windows. "We're not just supporting the older products," said Kim Hollamby, Director of Double First. "We continue to invest time and money in their development also."