



By: Marijke Uitdehaag

Medialab Curaçao:

Develop your new media skills for free!



On the 2nd of April 2011 the Medialab Curaçao was officially opened at the Public Library in Scharloo (Punda). Here kids and grown-ups both can subscribe to improve their new media skills, for example on how to create your own weblog, animation or online video. Between April and July all the workshops are for free. Two ladies, Saskia Meijer en Ilse Godtschalk, have been working on this project for almost three years: "We finally did it! Our goal is that after July the library will continue the project on its own. And maybe set the example for other surrounding islands like St Maarten, Bonaire and Aruba."

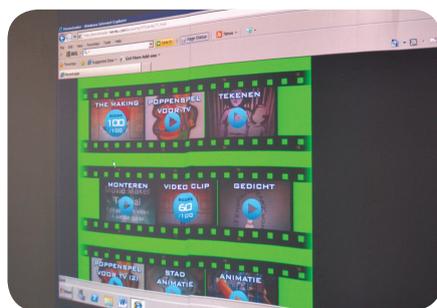


Medialab found its origin in The Netherlands a couple of years ago at the launch of 'Teleblik', a Dutch website that contains thousands of hours of television and radio material. Through Teleblik all this information on all kinds of topics becomes accessible for educational purposes for students as well as teachers. "Former Minister Paul Comenencia was present at the launch and the three of us came to talk about doing a similar project on Curaçao", Ilse explains. "Saskia was already active on the island and was traveling back and forth between The Netherlands and Curaçao. She immediately was very enthusiastic about the idea, so Stichting Cultuur Kameleon was founded to start a project here. Saskia adds: "Medialab is an important milestone for us, as it is one of the more visible achievements of our Foundation for which a lot of people have worked very hard. Ilse even came to live here for six months with her family to get Medialab up and running."

The Medialab project focuses on different groups: For schools it's possible to do a group workshop for the whole class, with kids or teenagers from 10 till 18 years old. This also involves teaching material which is available for the school in advance in Dutch and Papiamentu. Besides schools, anyone between 10 and 80 years old can participate in the workshops. Saskia: "Don't worry, little or no knowledge about the subject is required. It's not theoretical. During the 3 hour workshop, we immediately focus on how to put things into practice. Step by step you'll develop your own movie, animation, weblog or other product." Until the summer holiday of 2011 all of the workshops will be for

free. The working language is Dutch, but translation to Papiamentu is possible.

Every workshop starts with Movietrader, a communication and marketing tool developed by Ilse, which is used to make online videos interactive: "Through the Movietrader Spaarkaart, users can add videos and play a quiz concerning a certain topic or product, which makes it an interesting educational instrument."



Next to that the ladies approached skilled teachers from the Netherlands to lead the workshops. For example Daphne Zandberg, who performs Tommie in Sesame Street, will teach some workshops on how to make an animation. No wonder that from the first day on Medialab has been very popular. "We hope that after the summer holiday the library will be able to run Medialab on its own and Curaçao can continue to develop its new media skills, as comprehension of it will become more and more important in the future".

