

Navitas expands reach in Canada, Australia and UK

Navitas, the global education group previously known as IBT Education and now based in Australia, has announced plans to establish its second college in Canada, in an agreement with the University of Manitoba, and has also acquired Hawthorn English Language Centre in Melbourne, VIC, Australia.

Navitas has also concluded agreements with two UK universities, Swansea University and Anglia Ruskin University, to open colleges on site, and teaching is expected to start in September at all three university campuses. The company, which changed its name from IBT Education in May last year, posted a good set of figures for half-year growth for the year ending 31 December. Chief Executive, Rod Jones, pointed to "growing student enrolments and the integration of new colleges and acquisitions to improve future earnings growth".

Under terms of the latest agreement in Canada, the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg will provide Navitas with access to its teaching and other facilities, including accommodation, in order to offer pre-university and pathway programmes for international students wanting to go on to study in higher education in Canada. The college will also offer programmes that will be transferable to the university.

Meanwhile, Navitas subsidiary, ACL, has bought Hawthorn-Melbourne and the franchise agreement for Hawthorn-Muscat from the University of Melbourne in a deal worth AUS\$4.73 million (US\$4.3 million). The company has also been granted a five-year endorsed provider agreement that will entitle it to refer to Hawthorn-Melbourne as being endorsed by the University of Melbourne as a provider of intensive English language courses. Another franchise, Hawthorn-Singapore, was not included in the deal.

Jones said this was an "excellent opportunity to purchase one of Australia's most respected English language colleges, which is associated with the prestigious University of Melbourne, and to add to bottom line growth."

Navitas reported total revenue was up 18 per cent to AUS\$162.2 million (US\$147.3 million) by mid-year, with a significant increase in operating cashflow, global re-branding implemented, new college agreements and acquisitions which also included a 75 per cent stake in Australian College of Business and Technology in Sri Lanka. Jones said that university programmes were the biggest earner for the group, while English language maintained a positive margin. ●

Study Group to open new study centre in the USA

STUDY GROUP is to open a new International Study Centre at Merrimack College in North Andover, MA, in the USA. The college will also host a new Embassy CES location and has become a Universities in America partner.

Marylou Retell, Vice President of Enrolment at Merrimack College, said, "We're delighted to have a strong global player like Study Group on our campus. They very much share our vision for growing the international student presence at the college."

The International Study Centre will open in August this year and will offer EFL transition programmes as well as the opportunity

to gain credits for higher education in the USA. Embassy CES will offer general, intensive and Toefl preparation courses, as well as a summer school at the campus located near Boston. The college had perviously hosted a Kaplan-operated language school at the campus for 10 years. ●

Italian agency shuns Malta

ALP Corsi di Inglese, an Internet-based agency working in Italy, has warned its customers not to book any study holidays in Malta this summer after experiencing problems with too many Spanish students in the country last year.

Colin Furness at the agency has pasted up the following message on his website: "State subsidies offered by the Spanish government in 2007 stimulated massive flows of Spanish students to Maltese schools provoking serious problems. Given that the Spanish government intends to repeat its study incentives again this year, we feel unable to recommend this destination for study holidays in July and August."

However, Isabelle Pace Warrington, Executive Officer of schools' association Felton in Malta, explained that the problem with Spanish students last year occurred because the Spanish government announced that scholarships were available just at the start of the

busy summer season. "There tended to be a concentration of Spanish students over a relatively short period of time," she said. "This in turn made planning quite difficult for most organisations. This year, the scholarships have already been announced, thus enabling Spanish students to travel over a wider period of time than was possible last year. This will allow our schools to plan ahead to accommodate all students in the most beneficial conditions."

Last year, problems reported included students being housed in hotels because of a lack of any other accommodation. Other destinations also experienced a late surge in Spanish bookings, but Malta was hardest hit because it was the most popular destination. Many language schools in the country have strategies in place this year to cope with increased demand, including new residential accommodation facilities and extra teachers on hand. ●



ExpoBeta
Date: March 29-April 7
Venue: various, Brazil
Email: tsetuguti@beta.org.br
Web: www.expobeta.org.br

Study Abroad and Language Fair
Date: April 1
Venue: Busan, Korea
Email: kamc21@kornet.net
Web: www.kamc.com

Palestine Fourth Educational Exhibition
Date: April 1-4
Venue: Ramallah, Palestine
Email: info@pedex.ps
Web: www.pedex.ps

Ukrainian International Education Fair - UIEF 2008
Date: April 4-6 and April 8
Venue: Donetsk, Kharkov, Kiev - Ukraine
Email: info@dteducation.com
Web: www.dteducation.com/en/fair

International Language and Study Abroad Fair
Date: April 5-6
Venue: St Petersburg, Moscow - Russia
Email: iciep@aha.ru
Web: www.iciep.ru

MEI-Relsa Agent Workshop
Date: April 12
Venue: Galway, Ireland
Email: info@mei.ie
Web: www.mei.ie

Ialc Agents' Workshop
Date: April 24-27
Venue: Munich, Germany
Email: info@ialc.org
Web: www.ialc.org

StudyWorld 2008
Date: April 25-26
Venue: Berlin, Germany
Email: beate.kleessen@icwve.net
Web: www.icwve.net

Internet embraced for language study

THE UK Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, announced earlier this year that the government will set up a new learning, teaching and training website to help two billion people learn English by 2020. The news follows the recent launch of a number of web-based language learning projects, proving that innovation within the language learning industry is alive and well.

Guardian Languages, a joint venture between Languages Out There and the Guardian newspaper, where students can sign up to be taught English or find a conversation partner online, was launched in November 2007, while Voxswap.com, a social networking site for language learners was launched in January this year.

The UK government site will establish networks between teachers and students



throughout the globe and enable one-to-one tuition between people anywhere in the world using Voice Over Internet Protocol (Voip). Brown said that the new website would provide the tools for anyone in the world to learn English. "In total, two billion people worldwide will be learning English by 2020 but there are millions more on every continent who are still denied the chance to learn English," he said. The British Council will also start a programme in India to recruit "master trainers", responsible for developing the skills of 750,000 teachers of English over a five-year period.

Users of Voxswap can sign up to the site for free and state which language they want to practise so they can be matched up with a speaker of that language. As well as chat sites and forums to get people talking to each other the site also features a virtual keyboard that supports multiple languages, a built-in Google translator service and news feeds in multiple languages.

Co-Founder Sean Hargrave, who set up the site with his wife Nicola, said, "I am convinced social networking is here to stay but it needs to have a point. That's why I decided to launch a social network site that will help people learn or to practise a foreign language so everybody benefits." ●

Korea to introduce English medium classes

THE KOREAN government has introduced an education reform policy that will see high school students being taught their normal classes in English. The pilot programme will begin this year at a number of private and elite public high schools, with the intention of introducing the scheme to all high schools in 2010.

The government transition committee hosted a public hearing in January of this year where the US\$4 billion plan to increase the number of English teachers in Korea and overhaul the current curriculum were unveiled. Committee Chairwoman, Lee Kyung-sook, said, "Everybody is aware of the agony of parents who spend over one million won per month sending their children to English kindergartens." She continued, "I believe the project – spending four trillion won for five years and hiring 23,000 additional Eng-

lish teachers – has a sufficient chance of success."

Julia Hong, from Korean agency Uhak.com, said that the reforms would mean the country would experience an increasing demand for English Education and Tesol courses. Although this phenomenon has become a major social issue, with English-language learning becoming a national passion, the public education system in its current state cannot satisfy the needs of interested citizens, she said. "According to the Ministry of Education, less than half the nation's English teachers are capable of teaching more than one hour a week in English," she continued, adding, "We are also anticipating the receipt of an increasing number of enquiries regarding opportunities for studying abroad, not only by individuals but also by the government and national educational institutions." ●

QE's membership is growing

ENGLISH language school network, Quality English (QE), has announced that the latest school to join its ranks is Millfield Holiday Courses in the UK. Carolyn Blackmore, Chief Executive of QE, said that the school joined up after a meeting in Miami during a round-the-world-trip of QE schools in South Africa, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the USA at the end of last year.

Blackmore added that Boston School of English in the USA was also interested in joining and would be "taking part in the QE mission to Bogota and Mexico city as a guest school, "which is an opportunity to learn more about QE before applying". She added, "At least four other schools in Australia, the USA and Canada have also expressed interest in joining."

Lewis School of English, ILS English and The Language Project in the UK; ATC Bray in Ireland; and Clubclass Residential Language School and Global Village English Centre in Malta all joined QE in 2007. ●

Currency

1xUS\$ =currency*

Argentinean	Pesos	3.166
Australian	Dollar	1.101
Brazilian	Real	1.748
British	Pound	0.512
Bulgarian	Leva	1.345
Canadian	Dollar	0.998
Chilean	Pesos	467.09
Chinese (PR)	Yuan RMB	7.189
Czech	Koruny	17.59
Danish	Kroner	5.127
Egyptian	Pound	5.511
EU	Euro	0.687
Hong Kong	Dollar	7.798
Hungarian	Forint	181.20
Icelandic	Kronur	68.390
Indonesian	Rupiah	9,263.55
Israeli	New Shekels	3.577
Japanese	Yen	107.19
Malaysian	Ringgit	3.239
Mexican	Peso	10.754
New Zealand	Dollar	1.259
Norwegian	Kroner	5.506
Pakistan	Rupees	62.910
Polish	Zloty	2.478
Russian	Rubles	24.660
Singaporean	Dollar	1.417
Slovakian	Koruny	22.811
South African	Rand	7.763
South Korean	Won	945.28
Swedish	Kroner	6.478
Swiss	Franc	1.101
Taiwanese	NT Dollar	31.868
Thai	Baht	32.202
Turkish	New Lira	1.215
Venezuelan	Bol. Fuertes	2.144

*Rates are subject to change and should be used as indications only. 12/02/08.

The ICEF Asia Workshop

Date: April 28-30
Venue: Singapore
Email: info@icef.com
Web: www.icef.com

The Australia New Zealand Agent Workshop

Date: May 5-7
Venue: Sydney, Australia
info@anzaworkshop.com
www.anzaworkshop.com

IH Agent Workshop 2008

Date: May 7-9
Venue: Dublin, Ireland
Email: affiliates@ihworld.co.uk
Web: www.ihworkshop.com

The Partnership Workshop, Canada

Date: May 12-13
Venue: Whistler, Canada
Email: info@csglobal.net
Web: www.csglobal.net / www.bmimedia.net

Nafsa Annual Conference

Date: May 25-30
Venue: Washington DC, USA
Email: kathleenp@nafsa.org
Web: www.nafsa.org

The AAIEP Agents Workshop

Date: early September tbc
Venue: Washington DC, USA
Email: info@csglobal.net
Web: www.csglobal.net / www.bmimedia.net

The Alpha UK Workshop

Date: September 5-7
Venue: London, UK
Email: jane@hothousemedia.com
Web: www.hothousemedia.com

The LTM Star Awards

Date: September 6
Venue: London, UK
Email: jane@hothousemedia.com
Web: www.hothousemedia.com

The ICEF Higher Education Workshop

Date: September 7-9
Venue: Antwerp, Belgium
Email: info@icef.com
Web: www.icef.com

StudyWorld London

Date: September 8-10
Venue: London, UK
Email: info@studyworldfair.com
Web: www.studyworldfair.com