VOICE-EU

Valuing Opportunities for Inclusive Civic Engagement in Europe

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Activity 2 Report:
"Tackling Misinformation"
Workshops in Spain

Partners:

timeducation

Ακαδημος
ΚΔΒΜ
Κέντρο Δια Βίου Μάθησης 2 & Ξένων Γλωσσών

MedioCubo

Content

Report - "Tackling Misinformation" Workshops

1 Preamble

For this second activity of the project, several contacts were made with entities in order to organize the workshop. On the one hand, the Provincial Home of Alicante, dependent on the Provincial Council of Alicante, a public entity that houses several **training classrooms** for different courses throughout the year. Taking advantage of this context, we have held two sessions on May 22 with two groups of primary and secondary school teachers, adapting games for each case to raise awareness about disinformation. The total number of teachers in the two practical sessions was 18.

We replicated the workshop held and adapted it for the marketing students of the IES Cotes Baixes vocational training center in Alcoi on Friday, May 30, 2025. The total number of attendees at this workshop was 17. In the workshop we have worked on digital skills, critical thinking and democratic participation.

In the workshops we have used our own presentations created for each target and also the documentation that is available from the European Union: https://learning-corner.learning.europa.eu/learning-materials/staying-vigilant-online-can-you-spot-information-manipulation_es

We have downloaded the presentation prepared to work on the essential skills to navigate the internet and we have carried out group exercises to encourage critical thinking about fake news.

2 Preparation and announcements

Following the line defined for this activity, within the consortium the previous publicity was prepared that was also promoted on social networks.

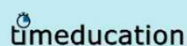The brochure created for this first seminar was:

3 The Programme and the Experts

Medio Cubo's experts have led the workshops and have adapted the presentations according to the targets they have served so that they are more efficient according to the profiles and needs.

3.1 Documentation and presentations

Specific presentations and related games were prepared in Spanish. We make a small summary of the concepts covered:

Presentations were tackling **disinformation** and **misinformation**, as well as efforts to combat them, both at individual and institutional levels, and a specific case of how advertising can generate disinformation or "fake activism".

1. Disinformation: Concepts, Functioning, and How to React

- **Key Definitions**:

  - **Disinformation** is false or misleading content spread with the **intent to deceive** others. For example, the claim that "5G causes coronavirus" was used to exploit conspiracy theories and fear, leading to consequences such as the vandalization of 5G towers. It can also manifest when a single person assumes different identities.

  - **Misinformation** is erroneous information that is spread because the person **believes it to be true**, although the effects can be equally harmful.

  - **Satire/humour** are jokes not intended to deceive, such as "Dozens injured in a stampede at Lidl" or "The Pope wears a Balenciaga puffer coat".

- **How Disinformation Works**: Its main goal is not to convince, but to **confuse**. It uses tactics such as diverting attention to unrelated issues ("What about...?"), misrepresenting the interlocutor's position ("Straw men"), aggressive attacks, mockery, and overwhelming details. It spreads both on social media and in traditional media.

- **How to React**:

  - **Pause and think** before sharing.

  - **Check the information** by verifying: if the title matches the content, if the content makes sense, if other reliable sources report it, the reliability of the channel/URL and the author, the publication date, and if the image corresponds to the text.

  - **Be aware of your own biases**.

  - Share the results of your investigations, but **without humiliating** those who believe disinformation; empathy is key.

  - **Do not believe everything you are told** and think critically.

- **EU Resources and Actions**: There are data verification networks (such as the International Fact-Checking Network and the European Digital Media Observatory - EDMO), Google's fact-check explorer, and EUvsDisinfo.eu. The EU seeks to raise awareness, collaborate with partners, promote access to information (media literacy), and work with social media platforms to minimize the spread of falsehoods. Games like "Bad News" are offered to practice detecting disinformation.

2. The EU's Fight Against Disinformation

- Disinformation is an unprecedented challenge that **threatens democracy** and citizens' trust in Europe.

- **European Democracy Action Plan (2020)**: Seeks to strengthen democracies through three pillars: protecting elections, media pluralism, and combating disinformation.

- **Code of Practice on Disinformation**: A voluntary agreement (implemented in June 2022) between digital platforms and sector players, which includes 44 commitments and 128 specific measures, and is integrated into the Digital Services Act.

- **European Digital Media Observatory (EDMO)**: Combines technical and academic expertise to strengthen the European response. It performs fact-checking in multiple languages and countries, research, and develops technological tools against malicious campaigns.

- **Rapid Alert System (2019)**: Allows for early detection, instant information exchange between Member States, coordinated countermeasure design, and continuous analysis of transnational disinformation threats.

- **European Disinformation Shield**: A new initiative that seeks to strengthen EU defences through development, implementation of a multilingual fact-checker network, integration with existing platforms like EUvsDisinfo, and expansion of resources.

- **Legislation and Regulation**: The European legislative framework includes the **Digital Services Act** (responsibilities for content moderation), the **European Media Freedom Act** (editorial independence and transparency), and the **Digital Markets Act** (regulates large platforms for fair competition).

- **Future Challenges**: Coordinating efforts among 27 Member States and 24 official languages, benefiting 450 million citizens with media literacy, and maintaining the balance between freedom and security. International cooperation and citizen education are crucial.

- **Fake News Verification Process**: Involves analysing the context (date, source, changes), evaluating the article's structure (reputation, biases), and corroborating information with credible sources and diverse perspectives.

3. Advertising and Corporate Activism: The Pepsi-Kendall Jenner Case

- **The "Live for Now" Ad (2017)**: Showed Kendall Jenner joining a protest, resolving tension by offering a Pepsi to a police officer. It was launched at a time of high social tension in the US due to protests like Black Lives Matter (BLM).

- **Reaction and Consequences**: The ad was pulled in less than 48 hours after generating over 3 million negative interactions on social media. Pepsi issued public apologies but suffered significant reputational damage and was subjected to media ridicule.

- **Key Criticisms**:

- o **Trivialization of Social Movements**: It was perceived as trivializing decades of struggle for social justice, showing a protest as a festive event and simplifying complex conflicts like police brutality. Critics stated, "You can't solve police brutality with a can of soda".

- o **Appropriation of Activist Aesthetics**: The brand used vague messages and adopted the visual appearance of activism without real political commitment, commercializing social resistance.

- o **Inappropriate Protagonism**: It was criticized that a white celebrity with no activist history (Kendall Jenner) was presented as a mediator or "saviour" in a struggle where the voices of racialized communities were relegated.

- o **Disconnection with Target Audience**: The attempt to attract socially conscious young people (Generation Z) failed, as this same audience led the criticism, expecting authenticity rather than social opportunism.

- **"Fake Activism"**: This concept is introduced to describe when brands simulate support for social causes as a marketing strategy, lacking concrete actions and deep understanding. It is characterized by performative activism (appearance without real commitment), commercial motivation, lack of understanding, and community disconnection.

- **Learnings for Advertisers**: The case highlights the need for **deep research** into the social and political context, **authentic inclusion** of movement representatives, **real commitment** with measurable actions, and **active listening** to respond to criticism. Marketing requires ethical, contextual, and social responsibility.

4 First workshop

This first workshop was attended by 18 participants in two groups: Secondary teachers and primary teachers.

The brochure announcing it was:

Jueves 22 de mayo de 2025, a las 10:00 horas

Tackling Misinformation - WORKSHOP

Aula nº 6, Hogar Provincial - Calle del Hogar Provincial, 33. 03559. Santa Faz. Alicante - España
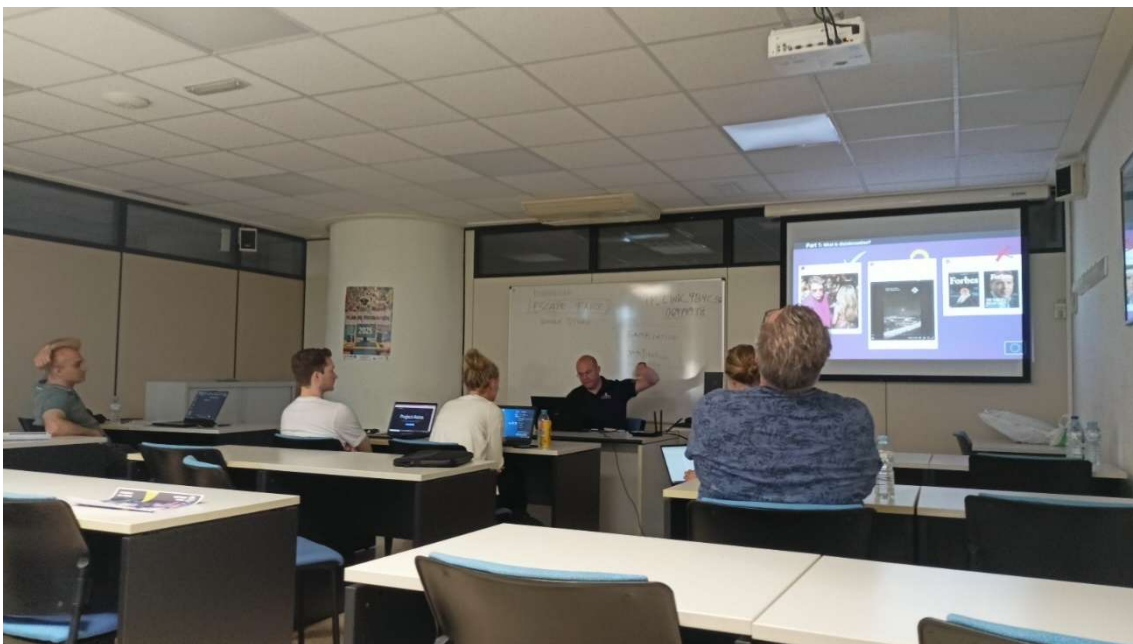
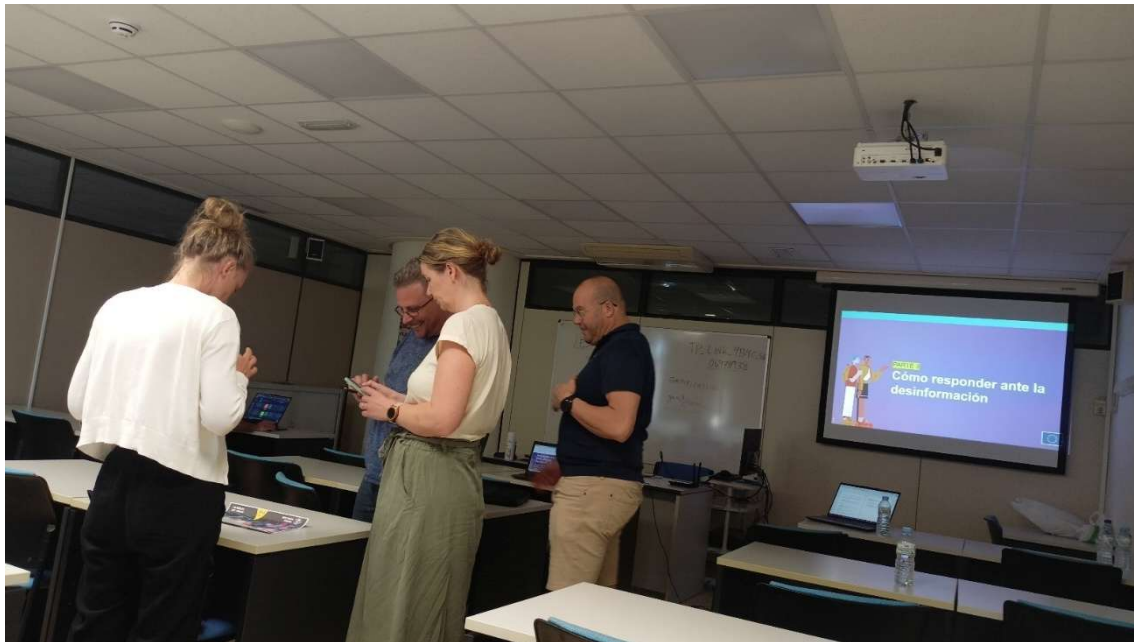*INFORMACIÓN LIBRE, MENTE CRÍTICA*

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4.1 Photographic report first workshop

5 Second workshop

This Second Seminar was attended by 17 participants.

The brochure announcing it was:

Viernes 30 de mayo de 2025, a las 10:20 horas

Tackling Misinformation - WORKSHOP

IES Cotes Baixes - Polígon Industrial Cotes Baixes, Carrer C, 03804 Alcoi - España

INFORMACIÓN LIBRE, MENTE CRÍTICA

5.1 Photographic report second workshop

6 Evaluation

6.1 Questionnaire

After each workshop, a questionnaire was proposed to have a compilation of the evaluation by the participants.

To facilitate the evaluation, an online questionnaire (https://forms.gle/1X9ye8viNmUAXKeY7) was carried out with simple answers that could be completed from the phone itself. To do this, a QR code was generated:

A total of 34 responses have been received and the following analysis is carried out by response:

Evaluación del Taller VOICE-EU

Este cuestionario permite valorar el taller VOICE-EU que usted acaba de asistir. Por favor, complete todas las preguntas para que nos ayuden a mejorar. Muchas gracias por su participación.

Iniciar sesión en Google para guardar lo que llevas hecho. Más información

* Indica que la pregunta es obligatoria

Valore del 1 al 5 la calidad de las presentaciones y los ponentes (Siendo 1 poca   *
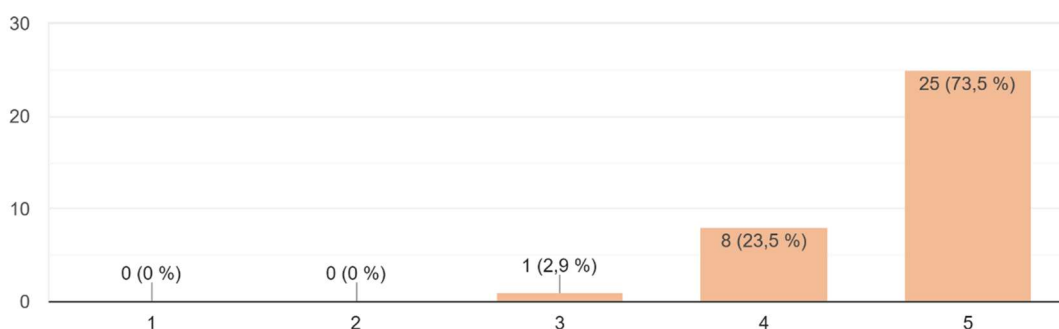calidad y 5 la nota máxima)

	1	2	3	4	5
	○	○	○	○	○

1. **Rate the quality of the presentations and speakers from 1 to 5 (with 1 being poor quality and 5 being the maximum mark)**

Valore del 1 al 5 la calidad de las presentaciones y los ponentes (Siendo 1 poca calidad y 5 la nota máxima)
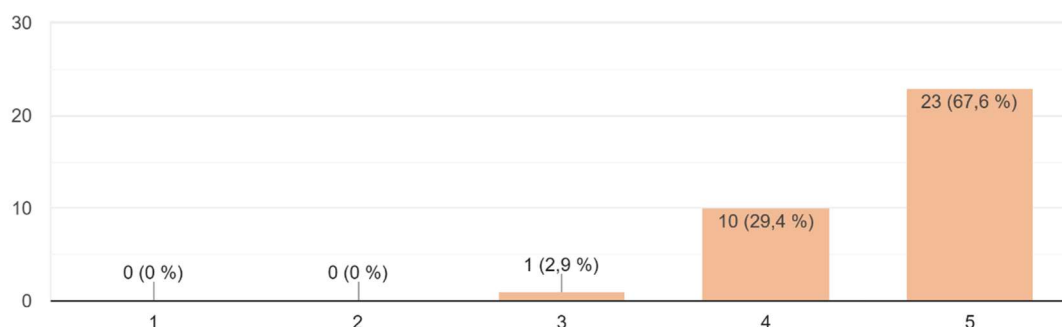34 respuestas

1. **Rate the game on fake news from 1 to 5.**
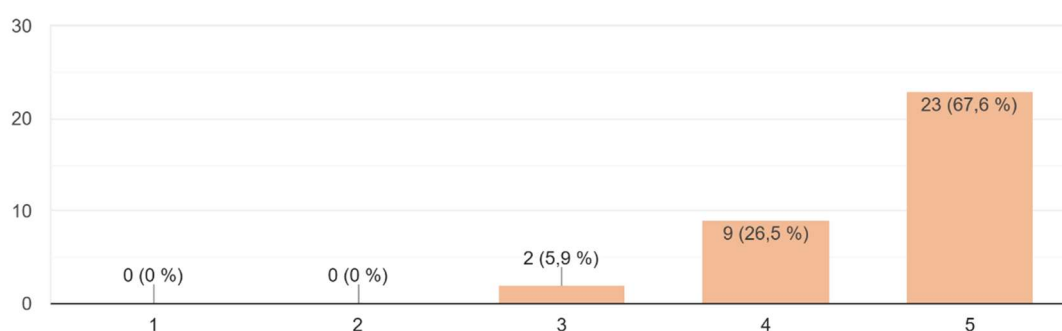
Valore del 1 al 5 el juego sobre fake news planteado
34 respuestas

2. Rate the approach to raising awareness of misinformation from 1 to 5 (1 being not very interesting and 5 being very interesting)

Valore del 1 al 5 el planteamiento para concienciar sobre la desinformación (siendo 1 poco interesante y 5 muy interesante)
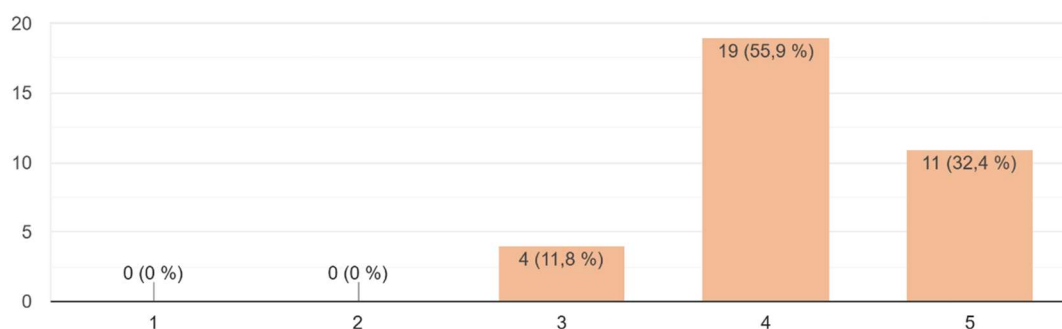34 respuestas

3. Rate from 1 to 5 the increase in knowledge on how to detect fake news that you consider you have acquired with this workshop.

Valore del 1 al 5 el incremento de conocimientos sobre cómo detectar fake news que usted considera que ha adquirido con este taller.
34 respuestas

4. **Rate from 1 to 5 if you have increased your awareness of misinformation, its impact and importance of its detection (with 1 being no increase and 5 being the maximum increase)**

Valore del 1 al 5 si ha incrementado tu conciencia sobre la desinformación, su impacto e importancia de su detección (siendo 1 al no haber ningún incremento y 5 el incremento máximo)
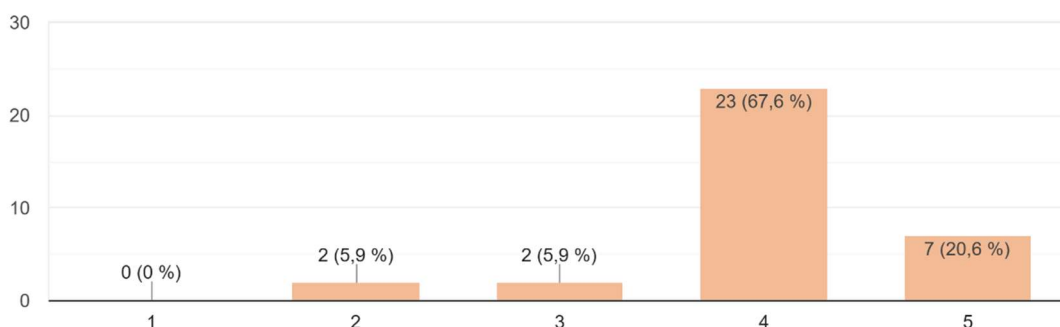34 respuestas
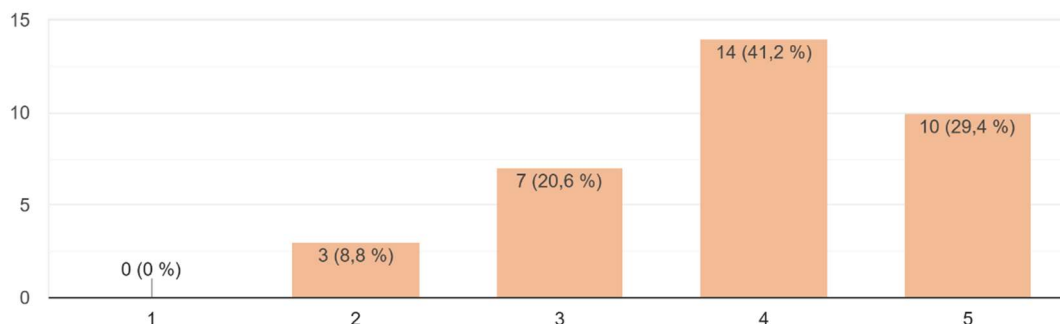
5. **Rate from 1 to 5 the adequacy of the time spent in the workshop to deal with the topics (with 1 being the score of very little time and 5 the adequate time)**

Valore del 1 al 5 la adecuación tiempo dedicado en el taller a tratar los temas (siendo 1 la puntuación de muy poco tiempo y 5 el tiempo adecuado)
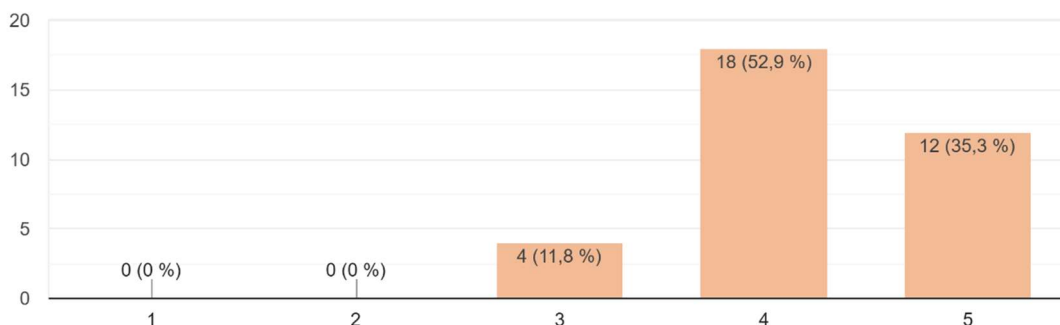34 respuestas

6. **Please give an overall assessment of the workshop from 1 to 5 with respect to your initial expectations**

Por favor de una valoración general del taller del 1 al 5 respecto a sus expectativas iniciales

34 respuestas

7. **Please let us know any additional comments you would like to make (things to improve, your impressions, etc.)**

- I found it a very useful workshop to apply in my classes
- I have learned a lot about the mechanisms and algorithms that promote fake news.
- The proposed game is very interesting, it can be replicated with the students
- Thanks a lot.
- I found it very helpful
- I really liked the game
- no, nothing
- The case of fake social appropriation is very interesting
- Next year we will repeat the game!
- More time to develop
- It has been very interesting, the game very fun and clear
- Thank you very much, I found it interesting and thoughtful

7 Conclusions

Based on the analysis of the 34 surveys covering the 8 questions from the VOICE-EU Activity 2 workshop evaluation questionnaire, the following general conclusions can be drawn:

1. **High overall satisfaction**: Most responses reflected a positive assessment of the workshops. Participants expressed satisfaction with both the content and the methodology used.

2. **Relevance of the content**: The topics addressed were considered relevant and appropriate for the aims of the workshop. Respondents indicated that the content covered important aspects for their learning.
3. **Clarity and dynamism of the facilitators**: The facilitators received very positive evaluations. Their ability to explain the topics clearly and to lead the session in an engaging manner was appreciated.
4. **Interactivity and participation**: The practical and participatory activities were well received. The interactive approach was highlighted as a key factor in the learning process.
5. **Usefulness of the knowledge gained**: Most responses indicated that the knowledge acquired would be useful for future application, suggesting a positive impact on participants' personal or professional development.
6. **Organisation and logistics of the event**: The event was rated as well organised, which also contributed to the overall positive experience.
7. **Areas for improvement**: Although less frequently mentioned, some responses suggested extending the duration of the workshop or exploring certain topics in more depth, reflecting an interest in further learning.
8. **Overall assessment of the workshop**: In general, the evaluation shows a highly positive perception of the workshop, indicating its success in both planning and delivery.