

Microsoft Seattle – Prize September 2006

Hi were Team E-Group Our idea for the 2006 ICT Youth Challenge was the E-menu and it won the fantastic prize of best commercial potential which involved us travelling to the Microsoft research lab in Seattle.

Well we made it. Through 4 stages of judging and competing against 120 or so teams it was a fun struggle. The build up to the 4th of September was brilliant. The thought of travelling almost half way around the world to visit one of the biggest companies *in* the world kept the heart pumping. Just finding out more about the company, from its roots to the templates it has set for the future, had an appeal.

Monday



Team E-Group making a very early start to fly to Seattle from Glasgow!

The day (Monday) came when we would travel to Seattle. It was an early start but Paul, Claire, Cosgrove and I had made the 130+ miles journey from Campbeltown to

Glasgow and were eager to get the travelling part over. We flew over to Amsterdam first and would then board another flight for Seattle (approx 10 hours long!). What a tiring bit of travelling that was, though rather enjoyable watching newly released films to simmer away the hours. This was the first time I had left the continent and the whole idea of the US of A intrigued me. When we arrived at the hotel we would be staying at for the next 3 nights, it struck me at how big this was. 44 floors upwards would be where I would stay for the next 3 nights. The views were amazing and at night time the city just lit up.

Tuesday

On Tuesday we were treated to a trip to Boeing, the space needle and a ride on the duck! The whole day was a very enjoyable experience, site-seeing and eating out at very expensive places (all paid for of course).



Team at Boeing

Wednesday

Then came the visit to Microsoft. It was an intense journey as we drove through the Microsoft headquarters (which populates a lot of jobs and is just as big as our hometown). We were then ushered in to a very modern meeting room with a little meal area at the side and name boards for our respective seats. Microsoft representatives then introduced us to the company and what other activities it does outside the limelight. It was fascinating hearing about the staff volunteering towards helping the community and the amount the company spends on research with a view to 'if your not taking risks your not doing your job right'. We were also interviewed by a camera crew which was very nerve racking. It was very interesting hearing about the whole company and when it came to the house and office of the future we were in for a treat. It just blew all our minds with all the ideas for the future and how they could be reality in the very near future. But we cant discuss them, I'm afraid. Its copyright! The whole day was topped of with a trip to the Microsoft store with big discounts on modern products. As we drove back to the hotel we reflected on what we had all witnessed. That night we were wined and dined (well maybe not wined) at the Wild Ginger restaurant and thought about how we could move on from there.



Team E-Group at Microsoft HQ in Seattle USA

On the Thursday we travelled back home just contemplating what our idea held out for in the future! Lots of thanks from the Team to John, Bill, Joanne, Cozzy and the whole of the ICT Youth Challenge team for making this possible!

www.youth-challenge.co.uk