

Using Minecraft to inspire interest in computer science

Computer science remains one of the most exciting, transformative and lucrative careers for the youth to embark upon, but is still underrepresented in terms of race and female developers. Code.org is an NGO on a mission to change this through their annual global campaign entitled Hour of Code, through which the company partners with organisations around the globe in an effort to expand access to computer science to women and underrepresented minorities.



Microsoft partnered with Code.org to inspire young people around the globe to take up computer science through learning how to code. Within South Africa, this was achieved through 50 training sessions taking place across the country on Tuesday in places like Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban and Port Elizabeth. Through these sessions, Microsoft aimed to reach at least 50 high school and university students, graduates, teachers and parents at every session.

Zoib Hoosen, managing director of Microsoft SA, attended an interactive Hour of Code session with pupils from Blairgowrie Primary School in Randburg. During this session, learners utilised a new tutorial called Minecraft Hour of Code Designer, which was released last month.

“We are partnering with Code.org again this year to make computer science more accessible to thousands of youth from all around South Africa through Hour of Code and Minecraft,” said Hoosen.

Creators of new worlds

He added: “I am inspired by the ‘Minecraft’ generation who view themselves not as players of a game, but as creators of the new worlds they dream up. This is the generation that will imagine, build and create the country’s future, by developing the apps and services we are going to use and starting their own businesses that will employ us in future. Through this amazing initiative, we can equip these learners with the computational thinking and problem-solving skills to seize the opportunities ahead.”



Zoaib Hosen, MD of Microsoft SA, during the coding session with the pupils

The new web-based tutorial, which is [available for free](#), enables beginner coders to create and share their own simple Minecraft game, and is designed to empower anyone to begin learning the problem-solving and critical thinking skills required in today's tech-fuelled world.

"Minecraft is a special game that appeals to a diverse global community, making it the perfect vehicle through which to teach learners of all backgrounds and skill levels to code. By programming familiar game events themselves, learners will be able to experience computer science in a way that is authentic as well as fun. Furthermore, these open-ended challenges also help show them that our favourite games are ultimately created with code themselves, helping to spark a career in computer science and app development."

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>