Blaise 5

Gaining **deeper** understanding

IBUC 2016, The Haque

Blaise users from across the world exchange experiences

This year CBS' Blaise software celebrates its 30th birthday. To mark this important anniversary, CBS hosted the International Blaise Users Conference (IBUC) from 4 to 6 October. It was the seventeenth edition of this conference, and it was held in Meeting Centre New Babylon in The Hague. Just under 130 guests from 25 countries attended the event.

Cooperation

Every 18 months, the IBUC conference brings together international Blaise users. In addition to sharing ideas and experiences, cooperation between users is also a central element. Harry Wijnhoven, who works for CBS and is CEO of Blaise, took a moment to commemorate the thirty years of Blaise history, recalling the huge amount of work done in recent years to make Blaise to what it is today.

Wide range of surveys

Blaise is a Computer Assisted Interviewing system for surveys and survey processing. The newest version Blaise 5.2 is platform independent and can be used on Android and iOS systems. The software is now used worldwide by 135 different institutions and persons in 40 countries. Statistics and research institutes and universities are the heaviest users. Blaise is used for a wide range of surveys: household, business and economic surveys.

Sharing experiences

Large users play an important role; they are united in the Blaise Corporate Licence Users Board (BCLUB). Jacqueline Hunt, of the Central Statistics Office in Ireland is president of the BCLUB: 'BCLUB offers users the opportunity to share experiences and provide feedback to the software developers. Members exchange useful methodological knowledge, test new functionalities and work together in formulating new product demands. They also share templates they develop for mobile devices and other Blaise applications they develop for their own use.' User feedback is indispensable, says Hunt: 'Input from the BCLUB ensures that Blaise continues to evolve and improve. Years of collaboration and user experience has resulted in a mature, stable and versatile product.'

Modern software tool

Development of Blaise is never finished, however, as the landscape is continually changing. More and more people are using smartphones and tablets and new interview techniques are emerging. Hunt: 'It is important to respond to these developments, and Blaise 5.2 is the response. For users and the BCLUB it is a challenge to make sure that it can continue its role as a modern software tool into the future.'

Gamification

Jane Shepherd attended the IBUC conference on behalf of one of the American heavy users, Westat, of which she is vice president. 'I suspect that everybody present was aware of the enormous amount of work that the Blaise technical team have done to raise the newest version to its present level. The development of Apps and the demonstration of an example of gamification in Blaise – the Haunted House – were very impressive. They also gave a good impression of what the future holds.'

For more information on Blaise® and related products

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