

Game devices become tools in education, business

By Andy Vuong, Denver Post

Elliott Anderson loves his Xbox and Nintendo, though it's not all fun and games.

Navigating a Professor Layton adventure on his Nintendo DSi recently helped the Denver sixth-grader breeze through a math problem in class.

In the game, Anderson had to divide a circle filled with numbers into three pieces so that each totaled the same amount.

"If I hadn't played that part of the game, I wouldn't have been able to do it as easily," he said. "It was pretty much the same as the math problem, except different numbers."

It is one example of the blurring line between gaming and education, as iPads and social media sites such as Facebook are now incorporated into classroom instruction. Beyond that, some experts say kids may be paving the way for education and business training by hammering away on those joysticks.

Termed "gamification," the trend refers to the application of elements typically tied to gaming, such as virtual role playing, for business and school use.

More than 70 percent of top 2,000 publicly traded companies worldwide will have at least one gamified application by 2014, according to a study released last year by research firm Gartner.

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