

# Interview with Sentoso Budiyanto

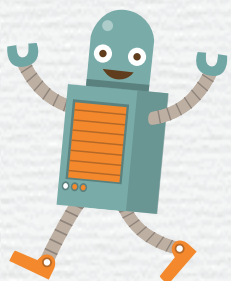
Koobits



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## Koobits



Sentoso Budiyanto started out teaching as private tutor at the age of 15. It was his family's economy that forced him to work for extra money. Soon after he grew passion in teaching, not only that but his skills and knowledge also sharpen over time.

Unlike most people who think math is a monster, he fell in love with it since the second grade of his elementary school. Kids are playful in their nature, and he understand that they should not be forced to learn math on their early age. They should learn by playing and that is one of the values that he believes in.

Chains of events lead to 2007 when he started off Koobits to pursue his passion, which is to make his country a life-long learner.

Although his entry to education world was not exactly what he wanted, he fell in love with that field and now he is the owner of Koobits franchise in Indonesia.

**Interviewer:** As a start, can you introduce KooBits to the readers - what it is and what it does?

**Sentoso Budiyanto:** Koobits is digital learning company that started off in 2007. Its first products were digital library and digital journal for kids. With that, kids can compose their own journal/diary with many interesting pictures, music, or narration.

Early 2014, Koobits launched its newest and flagship product, ProblemSums, which emphasize on helping Primary students to excel in Math word problems. ProblemSums is also a digital learning platform, web-based, and has many interactive and social features.

It motivates children by providing 10 daily challenges generated by Koobits system, peer challenges to create competitive atmosphere, and

homework that can be assigned by teachers or parents; all three features reward students with points that is constantly and digitally summarized, calculated, and displayed online in the leaderboard where all kids can monitor their ranks.

ProblemSums is designed to create a learning habit by giving off bite-size portion of Math problems, rather than assigning heavy assignment within a tense period of limited time.

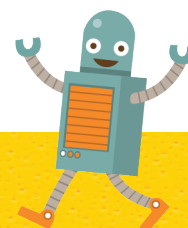
However, top students should worry of having overly easy Math problems because Koobits has also partnered with APMOPS that provides olympiad level questions - a collection over 19 years of experience in olympic competition.

**Interviewer:** Can you guide us through the process a little bit?

**Sentoso Budiyanto:** First of all, Koobits aim to work with schools, even though retail is also available. Why schools?

Because competition needs community to work, and school is the best environment to achieve such goal. When a school agrees to invest in Koobits, Koobits will register the names of the school's students in order to create a personal account for each student. Koobits will also endorse the Math teachers with teacher accounts which they can use to monitor the students' activities or to assign homeworks. When all the accounts are activated, then students can start practicing, playing, challenging for 1 year ahead before the accounts requires a renewal for the next level.

Students can log in anywhere, anytime, using any mean of smart gadget with internet connection. ProblemSums replaces the heavy and expensive books by compressing them into a tiny portable gadget in your kid's hand.



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**Interviewer:** KooBits is originally from Singapore and now expanding to neighboring countries like Malaysia and Philippines, and of course in Indonesia as well. The website stated that 1 in 4 Singapore primary school students are using KooBits ProblemSums to improve their maths. That's pretty impressive. What do you think is KooBits' greatest strength?

**Sentoso Budiyanto:** Its greatest strength is probably the ability to intrigues children to slowly but surely like Math. It has repackaged Math so nicely and fun that kids begin to learn Math without that negative feelings over it. This way, the overall performance of a school will improve evidently. Schools can not resist this. One by one they start incorporating Koobits as their extra curriculum ad-on.

**Interviewer:** Of all the things you mentioned, the gamification format is definitely an interesting way to learn Math. Can you give us an example of the games?

**Sentoso Budiyanto:** Yes, like I mentioned above, kids at that stage or age are very fond of competition and games. They often use their gadgets for non-learning activities, so Koobits intelligently bridges these two gaps. How about learning while playing?

So Koobits creates features that provoke competition and a leaderboard to further boost their pride whenever they see their names on it. Imagine playing online games and competing with your classmates, but somehow this is Math. You can also join special events like Boys vs Girls, School Wizards (school vs school), Hero of the Day, Zodiac Race, etc. All are carefully engineered to cater the kids enthusiasm in competition.

**Interviewer:** Based on your knowledge, is there a difference between Singapore and Indonesia in terms of the curriculum and syllabus in learning Math?

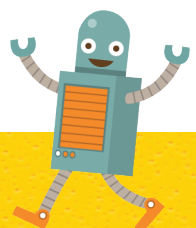
**Sentoso Budiyanto:** Definitely. Even the start of academic year is different too. That is why Koobits is committed to solve this issue. However, in term of curriculum, ID and SG are much different. For this time being, partner in ID focus on schools with singaporean curriculum first. It is indeed segmented, but still very promising. We dream of tweaking the system so that the curriculum and syllabus can also answer to the local/national schools in the near future.

**Interviewer:** KooBits enables children to be more social with the ability to interact with local and also international users through a series of challenges. Apart from the social interaction and the fun, the challenge can also spark a competition between the children.

What do you think the parents need to do to make sure the competition stays healthy for their own kid?

**Sentoso Budiyanto:** Parents need to understand that score is not everything. Score does not reflect hard work or intelligence. Thus, parents should never agree on spoonfeeding the kids with the final answer, just to get the kids to the top of leaderboard. Also, parents should encourage kids by accompanying them whenever they are playing Koobits.

**Interviewer:** Not only helping parents, KooBits can also be a part of a school's curriculum. According to you, what does the interested schools have to prepare before welcoming KooBits to help the children?



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**Sentoso Budiyanto:** Absolutely nothing. Hassle free, no training needed, no preps at all. Schools only need to give us the students' name who are going to use Koobits.

Please note this only works with Singaporean Schools because Koobits is already aligned with Singapore MOE syllabus.

**Interviewer:** KooBits allows parents and school transparency to keep the kid or student in track while using the software. Can you explain more about this?

**Sentoso Budiyanto:** Yes, since we are serving on a digital platform, everything is recorded digitally and live. Teachers have the teacher account, all statistics and reports are there. Parents can have their kids' username and password to login, so they can check their kids' activeness through the system dashboard or to assign HW manually.

**Interviewer:** We understand that KooBits use English as the main language. In the future, will it also be available in Indonesian language as well?

**Sentoso Budiyanto:** Let's cross our fingers and hope it will happen in not-so-distant future. I want it to happen.

**Interviewer:** As an addition, other than Math, is there another subject that you think will be less of a headache for the kids in Indonesia with the help of a service like KooBits?

**Sentoso Budiyanto:** I can not think of anything else but English study and Science. Maybe Geography can also add up.

