

Harness the Power of E-Learning¹

Arnie Dahlke
(March 15, 2011)



In today's rapidly evolving, technological world, businesses are faced with the urgent need to keep pace, to adjust, to change their old ways of doing things. The internet is no longer simply a tool for email and information exchange. It is the foundation for an entirely new realm of world-wide communication and collaboration. Work has become knowledge-based. Keeping up with the changes taking place in the required skills, knowledge, and abilities of workers has become a major challenge to businesses around the world.

Introducing E-Learning

An increasingly effective way for businesses to meet this challenge is *E-Learning*. E-Learning refers to the acquisition of skills and knowledge through internet-based technologies—Web meetings, computer-based courses, virtual classrooms, mobile learning, streaming video and audio presentations, text exchanges, animated presentations simulations, and digital collaboration. With the help of E-learning, organizations can keep up with the many changes taking place by providing timely and personalized training for everyone. And, it can be done at a reasonable cost.



When people see their company investing resources to provide them with the latest information and the development of their on-the-job skills, they not only will feel better about their jobs and more dedicated to the company, but also will take more responsible ownership of what they do.

In today's business milieu, E-Learning offers several advantages over traditional training:

- ◆ It offers a convenient way for organizations to provide the training needed for such things as familiarizing people with new products and services and providing them with necessary compliance information.
- ◆ It does away with the complications involved in the coordination of training schedules and making travel arrangements for attending training sessions, thereby saving the cost of travel and hours away from work.
- ◆ It offers global availability and collaboration. Learners can participate in training from any place in the world—even from home—individually or collectively.
- ◆ It is learner-focused, which means it can be tailored to individual trainees. Some are visual learners, while others are auditory learners. Some are more formal education than others. Some are more experienced at their jobs than others.
- ◆ It can be self-paced, allowing people to learn at their own speed. Some people cover materials quickly with no problem at all, while others are slower, more repetitive learners.



¹ From: http://www.arniedahlke.com/110315_Harness_the_Power_of_E-Learning.pdf

- ◆ It is particularly suited to the Millennial generation, which is rapidly becoming a larger portion of the workforce. Millennials are visual, fast-paced learners, experienced with computers and other digital technology. Raised with video games and cell phones, they are focused on solving problems and collaborating with others.



All of these advantages can help organizations keep up with the global pace of change.

Considerations For Implementing E-Learning

You have two main options when implementing E-Learning: you can develop the learning platform in-house or invest in a tailor-made or readymade product developed somewhere else. Which you choose depends on several considerations and underlying them all is the cost.

If you are developing E-Learning in-house, here are a few of the most important considerations:

- ◆ Do you already have the qualified, experienced personnel necessary for developing in-house learning or would it be more cost-effective to outsource the E-Learning?



- ◆ Be aware that developing an in-house E-Learning program involves hours of work. First comes determining elements of the program—learning objectives, subject content, graphics and/or animation, video content, and so on. Then comes hours of development and pilot testing. All of this may take many costly man-hours. In addition, it is possible that the development team may have to purchase additional software to make the program work.

- ◆ How urgent, time-wise, is the need for the E-Learning? Is it something you need to implement fast because of some radical product changes or important new regulations that must be brought to the attention of everyone?

If you decide to outsource your E-Learning program:

- ◆ How much will it cost to have an external source tailor-make your E-Learning program?
- ◆ If you are considering using an already developed E-Learning product, how well does it fit your needs and how much would be the cost of modifying it where necessary?
- ◆ Will there be any costs associated with such things as an annual vendor licensing fee or periodic maintenance of software updates?
- ◆ Will technical help be readily available from the vendor and how much will that cost?

E-Learning Sources

Whether you decide to develop E-Learning programs in-house or outsource them, a simple Google search will yield millions of helpful sites to explore. Just three examples illustrate the abundance of choices:



- ◆ **E-Learning Resources for Trainers** (<http://www.susan-boyd.com/online-training-resources.htm>), which lists books, articles, newsletters, instructor training programs, online tutorials, virtual classrooms, products, and online sources.
- ◆ **Skillsoft** (<http://www.skillsoft.com/products/default.asp>), focusing on products for global enterprises.
- ◆ **Online e-Learning Training Directory** (<http://www.customerservicetraining.com/elearning.htm>), which includes links to several online customer service training resources.

In addition, colleges and universities offer numerous online courses in addition to their classroom offerings. Some of them, such as **Touro Worldwide University** (<http://www.tourow.edu/>) are *exclusively online* degree resources.

No matter which of the many options you choose, *do* take steps to harness the power of E-Learning!

It Is The Wave Of The Future...



AND THE FUTURE IS ALREADY HERE!