ABCs OF e-LEARNING

Reaping the Benefits and Avoiding the Pitfalls

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MAIN IDEA

e-Learning (shorthand for "electronic learning") has largely been grouped in with the failed business models of the dot-com era. This is unfortunate because the concept of e-learning is truly revolutionary and far reaching. e-Learning has the genuine potential to change the way everyone instructs or upskills in the future. It is not too hard to conceive of a future where all training, education, coaching and information is delivered digitally resulting in impressive leaps in productivity.

More specifically, e-learning

• *Is non-linear* – meaning participants can skip material or specify the order in which the learning material is delivered.
• *Can be delivered anywhere* – at a lower cost than classroom-based instruction.
• *Is adaptable* – to every industry.
• *Provides maximum interactivity* – by incorporating an almost limitless variety of learning activities.
• *Combines the advantages of information technology with the advantages of face-to-face teaching.*
• *Is more cost effective than traditional learning* – because the costs of reproduction are virtually nil.
• *Is flexible* – so people with busy schedules can fit the learning in whenever it suits them.

As a result, e-learning is now catching on for enterprise training and education worldwide at all levels right across the spectrum.

"e-Learning is not just a trendy word. It is a new approach built on what we have learned from developing and instructing with thirty years of computer-based methods and on what we know about how to help people learn. Is e-learning another flavor-of-the-month approach to training and education? No. The concept of e-learning is changing the way we instruct and learn. At the same time, e-learning is evolving, and it is likely that what we call e-learning today will be different in a few years. For example, it may be delivered through wireless devices in the future. Could e-learning fade like videocassettes, audio cassettes and other training technology? I don't think so, but as the method is absorbed into conventional learning designs through so-called blended learning solutions, the term itself may become extinct."

– Brooke Broadbent

"Even if you are not facing an e-learning decision at the moment, it is likely you will soon need to get up to speed on the subject. A long litany of advantages for all types of organizations is driving training and education toward e-learning. You want to make and contribute to reasoned decisions."

– Brooke Broadbent

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1. An Overview of e Learning . . . . Pages 2 - 3

The term "e-learning" is frequently applied to a wide variety of training and educational programs which are delivered through a network, via the Internet, by CD-ROM, by satellite, by personal digital assistants, by wireless devices or through the telephone.

To generalize, however, e-learning comes in four basic types:

Four Main Types of e-learning		
	1	Informal e-learning
	2	Self-paced e-learning
	3	Leader-led e-learning
	4	Performance support e-learning and tools

2. How To Plan and Implement An Effective e-Learning Project . . . . Pages 4 - 8

The practical aspects of planning and implementing e-learning programs involve successfully negotiating eight key steps:

How To Plan and Implement An Effective e-learning Project		
	1	Know the lay of the land
	2	Plan your project intelligently
	3	Gauge your organization's readiness
	4	Develop a good project framework
	5	Select courses & vendors astutely
	6	Build attractive virtual classrooms
	7	Recruit your project champions
	8	Develop good metrics to show success

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