

White Paper



STAM
Interactive
Learning Simplified
(Formerly STAM Multimedia)

eLearning Overview and Trends

Introduction

eLearning, Online Learning or Web Based Training are different names which signifies the use of the Internet to deliver education and training to the community. The growing availability of broadband networks like T1, DSL and cable modems, allows the delivery of video, animations and interactivity, which are all that is critical in the development of web based learning programs.

eLearning

Advantages of using eLearning for corporate training

- Once the online or web-based courses have been developed, the training can be done any where, at anytime and at any pace.
- It is available 24/7 Web Based Training provides 'Just in Time' training, it is available when the need is the most. This enhances productivity.
- There will be no need to send people to attend scheduled training courses. The savings are in training cost, travel cost, and staff revenue and time lost. These can be quite significant.
- Specialized training and knowledge is available to anyone and everyone. In classroom training, the training is available in major metro areas and remote locations do not receive any training
- The training can be done any where but the test results for each student can be tracked from a central location, allowing proper follow up decision-making. The major negative aspect of online learning is the lack of human interaction. Video conferencing, 'live' classrooms, online chat rooms and discussion forums are some ways to reduce this. Classroom training has served any corporations very well in the past, but in the current environment it has the following limitations. These days, people do not have time to attend training classes. People are so busy finding long periods of time to devote to training is very difficult and the training keeps getting postponed

Classroom Training

Classroom Training

- Class room training is usually not available when the learner actually needs it has to fit into the training schedule. This delay can means the training is not available when the need is the most. This hampers the productivity of employee who maybe without any training
- How many classes will you need to train your internal staff, channel partners its dealers. The company could offer training to only 10 people at a time. Investigation revealed that they 700 such classes were needed to train their dealer base. An impossible mission right from the start
- Regular product updates and new introductions make the job even more difficulty.

Return on Investment

"The first question you may ask is: What is my return on investment? This is not easy to answer as there are many variables that vary from course to course. However, to give you some idea and feel, the table below shows the ROI of online training programs as compared to traditional classroom training. Initial Development cost is higher – but running cost is very low."

	Classroom	WBT	Notes
Course length	8 Hours	4 Hours	Usually WBT= ½ Classroom Duration
Development time	400 Hours	800 Hours	Depends on material preparedness
Total cost per course	\$20,000	\$60,000	If offshore development
Total class cost	\$28,000	Nil	For 10 classes
Learners travel cost	\$1500	Nil	---
Learners Salary	\$800	\$400	If done during bench time
Total Learner cost	\$460,000	\$80,000	No. of Students=200
TOTAL COST	\$508,000	\$140,000	ROI = 262.8%



$$\text{ROI} = \frac{\text{Total cost (Classroom - Online)}}{\text{Development Cost (Online-Classroom)}} = \text{ROI} = \frac{(508,000 - 140,000)}{(60,000 - 20,000)} = 262.8$$

"This is indeed a very good return on investment in anyone's language. Usually the upfront development cost for any online course is higher, but once ready; the running cost is very low".

eLearning Trends

- **Content Development**
- **Content Delivery**
- **Content Standardization**



Content Development

Online Power Presentation

Many organizations have a power point presentation which they use in the classroom. They rework on this and in some cases add some audio files to it and put it online. This becomes the web based training course for the product. It is definitely a cost effective solution, but it fails to impart the required knowledge. It is also not able to hold the attention of the students.

Talking Head Presentation

The classroom session is video recorded in parts or in full; this is then streamed and made available online for product training. Sometimes the talking head is also synchronized with a power point presentation. A talking head can be good in short bursts, but listening to a person over long periods can be counter productive and loses its effectiveness. From the point of view of product training, a talking head cannot give a 'hands on feel' to the product.

Talking Head + Slides

There many authoring tools which allow the talking head to be synchronized with slides of a power point presentation. This way as the person is talking, the relevant slides come up. This methodology may have applications in soft training courses, but it is not a very effective way for Product Training.

One Way Simulation

In One Way Simulation, an animation of the functions of the required product is created, packaged and put up online. The student watches the mouse hand clicking, and dragging things as part of nonstop animation. This is definitely a step forward but it is only one way. The student is only watching and is not involved, there by minimizing its effectiveness. In most cases, the animation moves too quickly for the student to comprehend the movements. This can cause lack of interest in the training course.

Two Way Simulations or with Interactivity

Two Way Simulation is the most effective way to develop product specific Web Based Training. It should be interactive, where the student is involved with the simulation of he product or concept, by moving/dragging objects or clicking on product buttons/parts to get a 'Hands On' learning experience. Developing interactive content with simulations is the key to a successful Web Based Training course.

The STAM development strategy uses the concept of Simulation with Interactivity extensively. We have done over 300 projects in the past few years.

Content Delivery

Asynchronous Delivery

The content is hosted on the Internet. The user, after registration, can access the course anytime. This type of delivery is self directed and allows the user to complete the training at his/her own time and own pace. The negative aspect could be no human interaction, but this could be overcome by community contact through discussion forums, email and chat rooms.



Synchronous Delivery

This style is instructor led, where a virtual classroom is setup and the training course is completed. There is interaction and feedback between teacher and students, but needs proper scheduling, limit in the reach of the training.



Blended Delivery

The training can be delivered using a combination of Asynchronous, Synchronous and Classroom methods.



Content Standardization

A number of standards are being introduced in the eLearning industry to improve compatibility, reusability and repeatability of e-learning content.



AICC (Aviation Industry CBT Committee)

Passing of results and communication of the course with the LMS is one key part of this standard.



IMS (Instructional Management Systems)

For better tracking of the student's movement through the course, the course needs to be tagged. This standardization will allow it to communicate with any LMS system.



SCORM (Shareable Courseware Object Reference Model)

This is an initiative by the Association of Distributive Learning (ADL), which is promoting the concept of learning objects. A learning object is the smallest piece of the course, which is self-sufficient and has hooks that be re-used and shared with other objects to form a larger training course. By choosing the objects, the course can be personalized to the needs of the individual or the corporation.



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