

Next Generation Digital Learning Strategies

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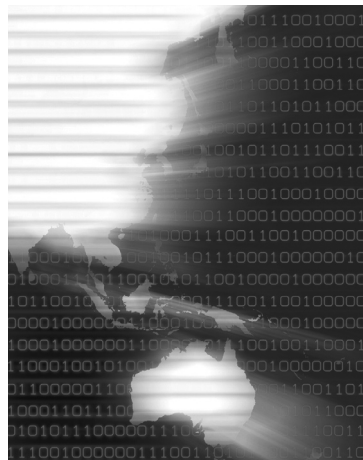
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Next Generation Digital Learning Strategies

CHARLES JENNINGS



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Executive summary

THE WORLD of organisational learning and development is undergoing radical transformation.

This report explores this changing landscape and contributing factors, as well as the impact this change is having on the practices used by learning professionals across all sectors, including in commercial enterprises, in government departments and agencies, and in non-profit third sector organisations.

Despite the common saying 'it's not all about the technology', digital technologies have swept every corner of the globe, creating disruptive change and transformation. The world of learning is an area that has been profoundly impacted. One of the early effects was the replacement of a significant amount of classroom-based training (often referred to as instructor-led-training or ITL) with eLearning programmes.

Beyond digitising courses and classroom re-enactments, the digital world offers a wide range of opportunities to 'take learning to the learner', rather than bringing the worker to a specific physical or virtual space for learning. The worlds of mobile and social learning are good examples where huge growth is occurring and likely to continue.

This report examines the positive effect of digital technologies on learning and development, and illustrates how the emerging new world of digital learning has huge potential for improving workforce agility and capability.

The impact of the global financial crisis is one driver that has led to organisations adopting digital learning technologies, initially to save costs, but also to enable learning across organisations at the 'speed of business', in a world where innovation and agility increasingly drive successful enterprises.

Every worker, manager and executive decision maker will be impacted by the growth of digital learning. Every organisation needs to develop a strategy to exploit it effectively.

This report will provide a clear framework for building an effective learning strategy for any organisation, with eLearning and new approaches to building workforce capability at its heart. It will also outline the key steps required to support and enable workplace learning within an organisation. Readers will get a clear sense of how eLearning has changed from one way, digitised computer-based page turning courses into well-supported, well-structured and self-directed learning.

Take home skills and tools

The growing market and versatility of digital learning technologies are explained, as well as the impact this is having on learning. Guidance on how organisations can develop best-practice digital learning strategies in order to remain competitive and effective is provided.

Fundamental changes in the landscape of learning include:

- New ways of working and the implications for learning;
- New learning models; and
- New learning technologies and their impact.

This report will address fundamental issues around the best use of digital learning to achieve impact and organisational improvement:

- Are eLearning and other digital learning methods as effective as face-to-face training and development approaches?
- Where is digital learning best used?
- What are the benefits?
- How is Web 2.0 (the read-write web) impacting digital learning?

Detailed recommendations for developing and implementing digital learning strategies are provided, including:

- Incorporating informal learning into digital learning strategy;
- New roles for learning management systems (LMSs);
- Exploiting user-generated content (UGC) and crowdsourcing approaches;
- Strategies for mobile learning;
- Strategies for social learning; and
- Strategies for electronic performance support.

Case studies

A variety of case studies from international organisations offer practical examples of successful digital learning strategies, processes, content and solutions, revealed through one of the following projects:

- Virtual worlds for medical training;
- Portals and kiosk-based training for manual workers;

- Financial advisor legislation training;
- Management development through virtual games;
- Use of engaging eLearning to achieve scale and cost savings;
- Government-sponsored womens leadership programme;
- Video-based social learning for sales staff;
- Experiential virtual learning for legal education; and
- Observational assessment using iPads.

Companies profiled include:

- Marks and Spencer Group plc;
- Covidien;
- The Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry;
- Belgacom;
- The Law Society of England and Wales;
- DSG Retail Limited;
- ASB Bank Limited;
- China Telecom Corporation Limited;
- Texas Industries, Inc., and others.

Who should read this report?

This report should be read by anyone involved in the development of a learning strategy including:

- HR directors;
- Chief learning officers;
- Organisation development specialists;
- Talent directors;
- Financial directors;
- Training directors; and
- Business managers.

About the author

CHARLES JENNINGS of Duntroon Associates and the Internet Time Alliance is a leading global learning and development expert with over 30 years' industry experience. As a university professor, he ran the UK national centre for network-based learning and was involved from the start of the digital learning revolution.

As chief learning officer for Reuters and Thomson Reuters from 2001 to 2008, Charles was responsible for developing the firm's global learning strategy, leading a 350-strong team of learning professionals for the firm's 55,000 employees.

Charles has written and spoken extensively on the role of technology and the future of learning. He can be contacted at: charles@duntroon.com and through: www.duntroon.com.

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Charles Jennings
Winchester, UK
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PART ONE

The new world of digital learning