



# The Business Impact of Next-Generation e-Learning

*How Today's e-Learning Drives  
Business Results*

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# Introduction

## Who Should Read This Report

This report is intended for leaders in learning, leadership development and talent management functions, as well as business leaders who:

- Seek foundational knowledge on what is meant by next-generation e-learning<sup>1</sup>;
- Wish to understand a recommended set of metrics<sup>2</sup> to assess the impact of next-generation e-learning solutions; and,
- Seek to understand the business benefits of next-generation e-learning.

## Initial Thoughts



### KEY POINT

e-Learning can be a cost-effective and efficient training delivery method.

e-Learning can be a cost-effective and efficient training delivery method. Recent advances in learning and talent technology, as well as changes in how our diverse workforces prefer to learn, have led to the formation of new standards of measure (e.g., scalability, learning agility<sup>3</sup> and organizational learning culture) for today's next generation of e-learning solutions. These new metrics enable learning and business leaders to better understand and assess the benefits that the next generation of e-learning solutions is having on bottom-line corporate results.

<sup>1</sup> For more information, *The High-Impact Learning Organization: WhatWorks® in the Management, Governance and Operations of Modern Corporate Training*, Bersin & Associates / Josh Bersin, May 2008. Available to research members at [www.bersin.com/library](http://www.bersin.com/library) or for purchase at [www.bersin.com/highimpact](http://www.bersin.com/highimpact).

<sup>2</sup> For more information, *High-Impact Learning Culture: The 40 Best Practices for Creating an Empowered Enterprise*, Bersin & Associates / David Mallon, June 2010. Available to research members at [www.bersin.com/library](http://www.bersin.com/library) or for purchase at [www.bersin.com/hilc](http://www.bersin.com/hilc).

<sup>3</sup> For more information, *High-Impact Learning Practices: The Guide to Modernizing Your Corporate Training Strategy through Social and Informal Learning*, Bersin & Associates / David Mallon, July 2009. Available to research members at [www.bersin.com/library](http://www.bersin.com/library) or for purchase at [www.bersin.com/hilp](http://www.bersin.com/hilp).

Through several case studies, this report examines the business benefits (and business-driven features) of the next generation of e-learning platforms. To better understand how we have evolved to these new measurement standards, first, we need to understand how e-learning has evolved. Second, we provide a recommended set of metrics to measure the business benefit of next-generation e-learning. Third, we also provide an overview of requisite features and functionality of next-generation e-learning. Fourth, we discuss in more detail the business goals and benefits, and the business case of next-generation e-learning solutions. Finally, we share recommendations on how to move your organization toward adopting and embracing next-generation e-learning.

Specifically, we examine:

- How the measurement standards of next-generation e-learning solutions contribute to business results through evidence-based case studies;
- The features and functionality of next-generation e-learning that drive business results;
- How organization-level business goals can be met with next-generation e-learning solutions; and,
- The business case for utilizing the new standards of measurement (e.g., scalability, learning agility and organizational learning culture) for next-generation e-learning.

In addition, we offer insights and analysis, as well as client success stories, to demonstrate the real-time business benefits of next-generation e-learning. Throughout this report, we make several references and / or footnotes to other related research. Accordingly, for more discussion and detailed insights on next-generation e-learning, we invite you to read the following Bersin & Associates research documents.

- *The Next Generation of e-Learning: A Primer*
- *High-Impact Learning Organization: WhatWorks® in the Management, Governance and Operations of Modern Corporate Training*
- *High-Impact Learning Culture: The 40 Best Practices for Creating an Empowered Enterprise*

- *The Enterprise Learning Framework: A Modern Approach to Corporate Training*
- *High-Impact Learning Practices: The Guide to Modernizing Your Corporate Training Strategy through Social and Informal Learning*

**Please Note:** While technology solutions, and specifically Adobe® Connect™<sup>4</sup> (a next-generation e-learning solution) may be referenced throughout this report and in client success examples, this research is not intended to recommend Adobe Connect or to serve as a buyer's guide to next-generation e-learning technology. With that said, Adobe Systems is a reputable provider of next-generation e-learning solutions. Any organization that pursues a next-generation e-learning technology solution should consider Adobe Connect, along with other competitive solutions, in deciding on the technology offering which best aligns with the company's learning and business needs.

## Terminology Used in This Report

To facilitate the understanding of messages in this report, key terms are defined here as follows.

### **Next-Generation e-Learning**

This term is best-defined by what it is not – first-generation, self-paced e-learning. As this definition continues to evolve, today's e-learning is typically characterized by:

- **Shorter** – Averaging in length of time from two to 15 minutes (versus 30 to 120 minutes);
- **Media-Driven** – Incorporating increased used of rich audio and video;
- **Social** – Explicitly leveraging learning through online collaboration, as well as learner generation and sharing of ideas and content with other learners;
- **On-Demand** – Available at the learner's direction in support of a learner-defined need;

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<sup>4</sup> Source: <http://www.adobe.com/products/adobeconnect.html>.

- **Environmental** – Delivered via multimodal learning environments, today’s Web 2.0<sup>5</sup>, learning-centric take on the notion of the learning portal;
- **Mobile** – Available to the learner wherever needed, via mobile devices (e.g., smart phones, e-book readers, tablets, et al); and, in some cases,
- **High-Fidelity** – Taking advantage of intrinsic motivation<sup>6</sup>, which is possible when simulations and games are used to present learners with realistic situations that force navigation through realistic business-driven situations with multiple competing demands.

### **Web 2.0<sup>7</sup>**

This term describes the shift from the web being a “read” platform to a “read-write” platform. Much of the content in a read-write platform is user-created, interactive and shared through social networking tools.

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<sup>5</sup> “Web 2.0” refers to a second generation of web-based communities and hosted services (such as social-networking sites, wikis, folksonomies, weblogs / blogs, social bookmarking, podcasts, RSS feeds, social software, web application programming interfaces / APIs, and online web services), that aim to facilitate creativity, collaboration and sharing between users. Although the term suggests a new version of the World Wide Web, it does not refer to an update to any technical specifications, but to changes in the ways in which software developers and end-users use the web.

<sup>6</sup> “Intrinsic motivation” is when people engage in an activity for its own sake, without some obvious external incentive present.

<sup>7</sup> The term “web 2.0” was explained by Stephen Downes, National Research Council of Canada, in an October 2005 article “e-Learning 2.0” in *eLearn Magazine*.



Examples of this include blogs<sup>8</sup>, wikis<sup>9</sup>, RSS feeds<sup>10</sup>, podcasts<sup>11</sup> and virtual events.

### **Asynchronous Learning**

Asynchronous learning occurs when an individual learns via online at his / her own pace at any time. A learner advances through a series of materials, including text and video screens, which can sometimes be followed with test questions. For example, digital content libraries provide a centralized location to host organizational-relevant learning material in a variety of formats, including magazine and journal articles, full books or summaries, factsheets, summary notes, or videos (e.g., lectures, podcasts, video vignettes, et al). The learner can access these content libraries at his / her convenience to seek information, as well as collaborate on this information with peers and others for the purposes of sharing best practices and lessons learned.

### **Synchronous Learning**

Synchronous learning occurs when learners participate online at the same time, often using tools that enable real-time collaboration, and involve other learners or instructors. For example, in virtual classrooms, learners can interact with instructors or other learners through web cameras (e.g., video-conferencing), participate in virtual breakout rooms to discuss or work on projects together, or participate in online lab exercises.

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<sup>8</sup> "Blog" is a shortened form of the phrase "web log," which is a form of personal publishing that readers can discuss.

<sup>9</sup> "Wiki" is from the Hawaiian word for "fast" – and stands for web pages that can be collectively and collaboratively edited on the fly by readers.

<sup>10</sup> "RSS" (or "really simple syndication") is a web format, referred to as a "feed," that is used for receiving updates to frequently changing web content.

<sup>11</sup> "Podcasts" are simply the publishing of audio or video files online, and then using syndication technologies, such as RSS (really simple syndication), to make them available to interested audiences by subscription access. Although the term "podcasting" was originally derived from Apple's iPod, you can listen to or view a podcast from other portable electronic devices (or from your PC). Through syndication technologies, users can download new podcasts automatically and access the content offline, whenever and wherever it is convenient for them. This subscription feed concept is the broadCASTing part of the word "podCAST," and is what distinguishes a podcast from a simple download or real-time streaming. Traditionally, people think of podcasting in terms of audio files but, now that iPods and other devices support additional media types, video podcasting is becoming more popular.

**Formal e-Learning<sup>12</sup>**

“Formal e-learning” program elements are designed, have a formal structure and have specific, well-defined learning objectives. Examples include presentations, webinars and traditional in-person courses, as well as e-learning courses led by an instructor.

**Informal e-Learning<sup>13</sup>**

“Informal e-learning” includes online learning opportunities that are either accidental, ad-hoc or unplanned – and which happen without the disciplines of instructional design. Furthermore, these are often without defined start and stop times. Examples include online reference materials, simulations, prerecorded presentations and e-learning courses available to learners anytime.

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<sup>12</sup> For more information, *The Enterprise Learning Framework: A Modern Approach to Corporate Training*, Bersin & Associates / Josh Bersin and David Mallon, April 2009. Available to research members at [www.bersin.com/library](http://www.bersin.com/library).

<sup>13</sup> For more information, *The Enterprise Learning Framework: A Modern Approach to Corporate Training*, Bersin & Associates / Josh Bersin and David Mallon, April 2009.

## Evolution to Next-Generation e-Learning



### KEY POINT

This evolution to next-generation e-learning has created a fundamental shift to informal e-learning delivered in an interactive, business-driven format.

*e-Learning* is considered to be the use of Internet technologies for the delivery and management of training.<sup>14</sup> It involves a wide set of applications and processes, such as web-based learning, computer-based learning (CBT), virtual classrooms<sup>15</sup> and digital collaboration (e.g., video-conferencing).<sup>16</sup> Effective e-learning platforms bundle these technologies together in a single solution (e.g., Adobe Connect, Microsoft Office Live Meeting, GoToMeeting and WebEx).

Much has been written about the value of e-learning in providing engaging training in a 24x7 fashion to audiences across the globe. Recently, e-learning content and delivery platforms have gone through an evolution, similar to that of the Internet, to include more learner interaction, and greater use of collaborative and social technologies (e.g., video-conferencing, social networking).<sup>17</sup>

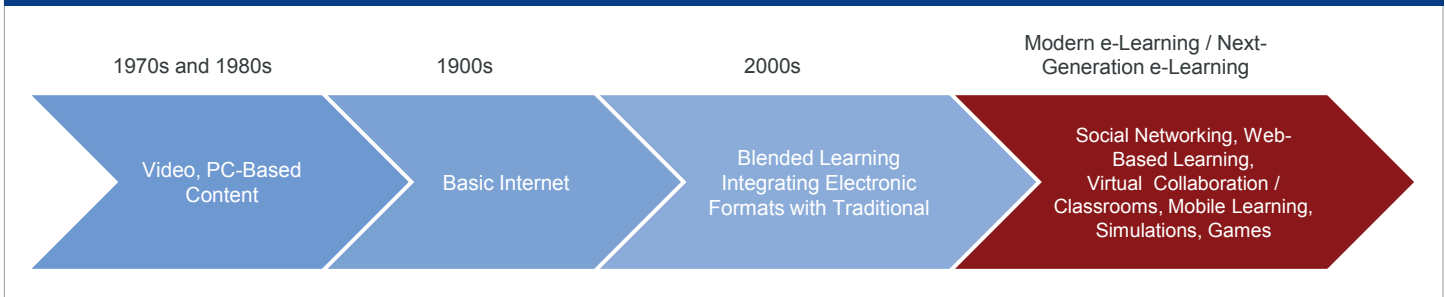
Figure 1, the “Evolution of e-Learning,” displays the transformation of e-learning that has taken place since its beginning some 40-plus years ago.

<sup>14</sup> For more information, *The Next Generation of e-Learning: A Primer*, Bersin & Associates / David Mallon and Janet Clarey, February 2011. Available to research members and for purchase at [www.bersin.com/library](http://www.bersin.com/library).

<sup>15</sup> For more information, *Virtual Classrooms: Facts, Practical Analysis, Trends and Provider Comparisons*, Bersin & Associates / David Mallon, November 2010. Available to research members at [www.bersin.com/library](http://www.bersin.com/library) or for purchase at [www.bersin.com](http://www.bersin.com).

<sup>16</sup> For more information, *The Next Generation of e-Learning: A Primer*, Bersin & Associates / David Mallon and Janet Clarey, February 2011.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

**Figure 1:** Evolution of e-Learning

Source: Bersin & Associates, 2011.

The evolution of the web to Web 2.0 has influenced today's e-learning design.<sup>18</sup> As a result, e-learning can take on a much more interactive and social-oriented format that is embedded in the context of the learner's work. We call this "next-generation e-learning."<sup>19</sup>

#### KEY POINT

Next-generation e-learning offers user-friendly tools that enable rapid, user-generated content to align with learning needs and business goals.

Next-generation e-learning is a trend toward:

- Small pieces of learning content (often created by learners<sup>20</sup> and other subject-matter experts);
- Learning framed in the context of the learner's daily work;
- Content and knowledge made available when and how the learner needs it; and,
- Content and knowledge accessible anytime, anywhere, synchronously and asynchronously – to create learning as a continuous process, not as an event.

This evolution to next-generation e-learning has created a fundamental shift from formal e-learning delivered primarily in a page-turner format to informal e-learning delivered in an interactive, business-driven format. Next-generation e-learning (both formal and informal) utilizes video, video-conferencing, simulations / games, virtual classrooms and digital content libraries – all of which is centered and tailored to the learners' business-driven learning needs, social networks, learning style

<sup>18</sup> Source: <http://elearningtech.blogspot.com/2006/02/what-is-elearning-20.html#ixzz1UZRpNDkE>.

<sup>19</sup> For more information, *The Next Generation of e-Learning: A Primer*, Bersin & Associates / David Mallon and Janet Clarey, February 2011.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

preferences and 24x7 knowledge needs. Furthermore, next-generation e-learning offers user-friendly tools that enable rapid, user-generated content to align with learning needs and business goals.

## The Business Impact of Next-Generation e-Learning

The recent advances in technology have enhanced the social functioning and interactivity of e-learning. These developments, combined with marketplace changes, have led next-generation e-learning to take on a much greater role in organizational learning.



### KEY POINT

The recent advances in technology have enhanced the social functioning and interactivity of e-learning.

Recent discussions with clients indicate that next-generation e-learning has resulted in having a positive business impact and improving organizational performance. This is due to several factors. First, clients indicated that next-generation e-learning increased the speed of information disseminated across the organization. Next, the convenience of next-generation e-learning accommodated many user needs and preferences, while providing greater access and availability to information. Finally, next-generation e-learning accomplished all that at a reduced cost.

We have captured the essence of next-generation e-learning business benefits in three broad themes, based in part on the Bersin & Associates Modern Enterprise Learning Index<sup>21</sup>.

- **Scalability** – Refers to the ability of next-generation e-learning to easily adapt to increased demands by reaching more learners, and enabling learner-generated content with minimal effort and cost;
- **Learning Agility** – Represents how next-generation e-learning can facilitate an organization's ability to respond to change, by preparing employees with knowledge and skills when and as needed to proactively respond to the requirements of their work responsibilities; and,

<sup>21</sup> For more information, *High-Impact Learning Practices: The Guide to Modernizing Your Corporate Training Strategy through Social and Informal Learning*, Bersin & Associates / David Mallon, July 2009.

- **Organizational Learning Culture** – Signifies the ability of next-generation e-learning to support and reinforce learning continuously – as a process, not as an event.

## Three New Measurement Standards for Next-Generation e-Learning

Recent changes in e-learning technologies and in the marketplace have evolved the standards by which we measure the effectiveness of e-learning. Until this point, e-learning has been measured by traditional standards, such as “classical” impact measurement methods<sup>22</sup> including obtaining learner satisfaction (e.g., how well the training elements were absorbed and received), learning objectives, utility, efficiency, alignment, and various other adoption- and performance-related outcomes.

While these traditional measures are still critical foundations for evaluation, the new standards expand beyond this to highlight next-generation e-learning’s ability to:

- Reach a broader audience;
- Make learning available as needed in support of one’s work responsibilities; and,
- Transform learning into a continuous process, not an event.

These new standards not only clearly demonstrate the business benefits of next-generation e-learning over other delivery methods, but can also provide a way to differentiate next-generation e-learning platforms.

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<sup>22</sup> For more information, *High-Impact Learning Practices: The Guide to Modernizing Your Corporate Training Strategy through Social and Informal Learning*, Bersin & Associates / David Mallon, July 2009.

### **New Measurement Standards for Next-Generation e-Learning**

**Scalable** – The ability of e-learning platforms to easily adapt to increased demands

**Learning Agility** – The degree to which e-learning facilitates an organization’s ability to respond to change

**Organizational Learning Culture** – The degree to which e-learning facilitates continuous learning in organizations

## **Scalable**



### **KEY POINT**

For scalability, next-generation e-learning can be used to quickly and efficiently reach a broader audience and more learners, at all organizational levels across the globe.

A learning solution must easily respond and adapt to increased demands from a variety of sources (e.g., markets, learners, senior leaders, et al). Whether to respond to market conditions, develop learners, educate on new product offerings, deliver sales training or to replicate a success, training may need to reach a broader, often global audience quickly and efficiently (including cost). Scalability reflects the degree to which next-generation e-learning supports the organization’s ability to reach a broader audience quickly and efficiently. This is achieved by a number of different mechanisms, as described in the following sections.

### **Reaching a Broader Audience**

Without the limitations of the traditional classroom (e.g., classroom space / seating, scheduling conflicts and availability, instructors), next-generation e-learning can reach a broader audience at a fraction of the cost. This includes reaching a greater number of learners who may be spread across regions and have diverse learning preferences. Next-generation e-learning permits organizations to make learning more accessible to employees and leaders at all levels.

In the past, e-learning consisted of mainly “page turners” or presentations of material for learners to progress through one page at a time. Today, given the variety of interactive formats (e.g., simulations, group collaboration, virtual classrooms, tools for user-generated content, et al) and content presented in the context of one’s work, more complex material suitable for advanced and targeted audiences can be presented.

These engaging formats allow for materials and lessons that enable active participation and group work, often in a collaborative fashion – mimicking how work gets done in our organizations.

User-created content, a key characteristic of next-generation e-learning, also provides a mechanism to reach a broader audience. Organizations can rely on SMEs, rather than on dedicated instructional designers, to create and share material with the larger organization. This can be immensely impactful as it provides learning through the perspective of those who are actually doing the work. These subject-matter experts can offer unique insights into specific skills, tasks and ways of accomplishing their work. For example, leaders can create blogs sharing their insights into the marketplace, current trends or even their own leadership perspective. Wikis can be created by organizational members as “how-to” guides or for common business challenges. Discussion boards can be used to solve matrix issues of pulling knowledge from and sharing among numerous employees and leaders across the organization.

### Case In Point: FranklinCovey Reaches a Broader Audience<sup>23</sup>

FranklinCovey is a global provider of training and consulting services in the areas of leadership, productivity, strategy execution, customer loyalty, trust, sales performance, government, education and individual effectiveness. The company’s training workshops are delivered to the general public, as well to organizational clients.

**Industry:** Personal and organizational training

**Employees:** 600

**Global Presence:** Yes

#### Challenges

FranklinCovey was looking for ways to help more people experience its training anytime, anywhere. An e-learning model

<sup>23</sup> Source: <http://www.adobe.com/showcase/casestudies/franklincovey/casestudy.pdf>.



*Case in Point: Reaches a Broader Audience (cont'd)*


was desired because of its ability to reach a broader audience, increase user convenience and provide cost-effective training. The company did not want to stray from its prerequisite of being able to deliver its industry-best, high-quality, live-training workshops, with some of the most sophisticated video productions in the industry. Furthermore, it sought to monetize the online training content and track its trainer certification processes across multiple continents in multiple languages.

**Solution**

The company implemented Adobe Connect for e-learning, webinars and web meetings. FranklinCovey built a global e-learning business model based on Adobe Connect software. Working with third-party provider InteSolv, FranklinCovey built the LiveClicks custom portal platform.

The LiveClicks platform ensures that trainers watch specific videos, download required resources and guidebooks, and accomplish all of the correct courses and tests to become certified to teach webinars in their own customized virtual meeting rooms. In addition, these meeting rooms are preloaded with content and include a reporting structure that enables FranklinCovey to track how many people are trained by each facilitator.

**Impact**

This solution has doubled attendance for webinar-based training over the previous year when the company was not using Adobe Connect. This is due, in part, to the fact that Adobe Connect is built on the Adobe Flash Platform and, therefore, is now available to groups of people who previously were not able to attend. 

Self-paced materials can be used to accommodate employees' and leaders' busy schedules. Consider, for example, the process of onboarding leaders. Traditionally, this can be a complex scheduling and implementation process requiring the involvement of learning leaders, business leaders, HR leaders and hiring managers. Yet, onboarding is

**KEY POINT**

Next-generation e-learning can facilitate leader onboarding through the availability of on-demand materials and networking opportunities.

essential because, before leaders can take an active role in projects and start contributing to organizational business goals, they must have a complete understanding of the organization's vision and strategic plan, as well as the role their positions will play, and an understanding of the responsibilities of colleagues and stakeholders.

Next-generation e-learning can facilitate leader onboarding through the availability of on-demand materials and networking opportunities. Such online resources facilitate and enable the onboarding process in an as-needed fashion. Leaders can access information, connect with peers at their convenience and focus on key relevant information. This allows leaders to navigate through onboarding lessons and materials at a much quicker pace. The better prepared new leaders are, the greater the impact they will have on business. Furthermore, the faster employees are onboarded, the faster they can contribute to the organization – and the faster the results they drive can be recognized.

## Reduction of Administrative Time

Next-generation e-learning also reduces administrative burden by having features that automate the scheduling and tracking of the learners. Since next-generation e-learning does not include physical in-person meetings, this alleviates the need to schedule rooms, provide meals, schedule travel or coordinate / plan events, thus enhancing the efficiency of next-generation e-learning initiatives.

Next-generation e-learning systems have the capability to monitor who completed training and when. This permits organizations to track employee progress, as well as determine how long ago a learner completed training, which learners has been waiting the longest for training, and determine who has not yet completed certain required and / or elective development opportunities. This automation enhances the scalability of next-generation e-learning initiatives by allowing organizations to reach more people with fewer administrative burdens.

## Distribution and Generation of Materials

Next-generation e-learning materials are distributed and generated electronically, allowing a broader reach to more learners, more quickly. Furthermore, in traditional classroom-based training, the cost of material development and duplication (e.g., handouts, books, tests) can quickly

add up. But for next-generation e-learning, content creation and distribution are significantly less costly and, therefore, more scalable because materials are delivered electronically – thus, only one copy of instructor and participant materials are needed, regardless of the number and physical locations of learners.

## Providing Feedback

Next-generation e-learning also allows for immediate learner feedback. With traditional face-to-face classroom instruction, instructors are limited to when they can offer immediate feedback and how in-depth they can be. Through simulations, assessments or other online activities and tools, next-generation e-learning allows feedback to be given to an unlimited number of learners without constraint, thus contributing to scalability.

## Reducing Travel Expenses


Companies can significantly reduce travel expenses for meeting and training opportunities by utilizing next-generation e-learning and web-hosting meetings. Gas, transportation, lodging and time are significant expenses, as exemplified by the following cases in point.



### KEY POINT

Next-generation e-learning enables companies to significantly reduce travel expenses for meeting and training opportunities.

### Case in Point: The Utah Department of Transportation Reduces Its Travel Expenses<sup>24</sup>

Consider, for example, the Utah Department of Transportation, which has realized savings of hundreds of thousands of dollars in travel costs by using Adobe Connect. The alleviation of travel costs contributes to the scalability by permitting organizations to offer next-generation e-learning training solutions to more learners. 

<sup>24</sup> Source: <http://www.adobe.com/showcase/casestudies/udot/casestudy.pdf>.

## Case In Point: Shiawassee Regional Education Service District Reduces Travel Expenses<sup>25</sup>

**Industry:** Education

**Coordination with:** 55 education districts

**Global Presence:** No

### Challenges

School districts in Michigan started to see a downward trend of attendance in training events over the last few years. Location may have played a part in this, as some of the rural participants would need to travel eight or more hours. The Shiawassee Regional Education Service District (SRES D) wanted to provide convenient and novel professional teacher development activities in a cost-effective way, while reducing travel costs.

### Solution


By adopting Adobe Connect for e-learning and web meetings, colleagues statewide circumvented logistical and financial concerns about in-person meetings and training. Educators across the state experienced a rich, intuitive virtual learning environment that features live chat, polling, integrated audio and video, screen-sharing, and other interactive elements.

Furthermore, because Adobe Connect is built on the Adobe Flash Platform, users need only the free Adobe Flash Player to access the sessions. This was critical because users are often prohibited from downloading and installing software on their "school" computers.

<sup>25</sup> Source: <http://www.adobe.com/showcase/casestudies/shiawassee2010/casestudy.pdf>.

### Case in Point: Shiawassee Regional Education Service District Reduces Travel Expenses (cont'd)

#### Impact

This e-learning solution significantly reduced travel costs, while saving valuable time for teachers by enabling them to attend sessions at their own convenience. SRESA estimated that, for just four colleagues, districts can save as much as 335 miles and \$170 per person, just by conducting meetings virtually. 

## Learning Agility

Learning agility is the second measurement metric of next-generation e-learning. High-impact organizations must accurately read the environment, and react quickly, efficiently and effectively to a rapidly changing marketplace to meet emerging and urgent business needs.<sup>26</sup>

The fundamental role of the learning function, therefore, must be to facilitate an organization's ability to respond to change through the acquisition and application of just-in-time knowledge and skills.<sup>27</sup> Having a well-prepared and skilled workforce, with instant access to up-to-date materials, enhances the ability of the organization to quickly and proactively react to changes in the marketplace.

A critical component of how next-generation e-learning greatly enhances learning agility is the ease by which it permits the organization to quickly disseminate and share information among its employees and leaders. Next-generation e-learning achieves this through enabling the rapid development and delivery of learning materials and critical knowledge – and by creating and providing that information and knowledge in an on-demand fashion. Today's next-generation e-learning solutions accomplish this better, and in more ways, than former e-learning approaches. Let us take a look at how the next-generation e-learning platforms contribute to enhanced learning agility in organizations.



#### KEY POINT

A critical component of next-generation e-learning is the ease by which it permits the organization to quickly disseminate and share information among its employees and leaders.

<sup>26</sup> For more information, *High-Impact Learning Culture: The 40 Best Practices for Creating an Empowered Enterprise*, Bersin & Associates / David Mallon, June 2010.

<sup>27</sup> For more information, *Organizational Learning Agility: The Learning Organization at Infosys is the Engine Powering Its Business Success*, Bersin & Associates / David Mallon, August 2010. Available to research members at [www.bersin.com/library](http://www.bersin.com/library).

### **Next-Generation e-Learning Can Enhance an Organization's Learning Agility**

Using next-generation e-learning can greatly enable organizations to efficiently and effectively prepare learners to proactively respond to change by giving them access to the knowledge and skills aligned with their job responsibilities.

## **Rapid User-Generated Development and Delivery**

To maximize an organization's return on investment (ROI), organizational learning needs to be as efficient as possible, while still maintaining its effectiveness. Reducing the time spent in preparing for the delivery of materials, as well as the time invested in the instruction, is essential to enhancing an organization's learning agility.

Today's next-generation e-learning solutions contribute greatly to an organization's learning agility by supporting the ability to rapidly develop and deliver training content to a learner (e.g., just-in-time learning). The time spent in preparing for traditional delivery (e.g., scheduling rooms, instructors, registering participants, prepping and reviewing content, et al) is eliminated and / or significantly reduced. As soon as materials are developed, they can be delivered.

Content in next-generation e-learning systems can be developed using simple tools and without any programming experience (i.e., PowerPoint). Additionally, materials can easily be repurposed and reused, and / or combined with existing materials, to align with the business needs of each department or function within an organization.

In the past, organizations relied on, at least in part, the synchronous nature of traditional face-to-face classroom delivery. Such large-scale instructions often required a massive undertaking of resources, including rooms and instructors and, typically, a phased rollout over time to accommodate the inclusion of all targeted learners. Consequently, there is often a delay in getting information to the targeted employee or leader population. Next-generation e-learning platforms give organizations the ability to quickly and easily present material to large groups of learners via live video-conferencing (e.g., virtual classrooms) or through recorded presentations.



#### **KEY POINT**

Next-generation e-learning platforms give organizations the ability to quickly and easily present material to large groups of learners via live video-conferencing or through recorded presentations.

Asynchronous types of next-generation e-learning (e.g., self-paced materials) also optimize the time invested by a learner. Self-paced materials allow learners to focus on what is pertinent to them and permit them to skip content with which they are already familiar. This allows learners to review materials in a more time-efficient manner.

Learning materials can also be designed more closely to the learners' specific learning needs and aptitude. The ability to present materials targeted to specific audiences in a self-paced way, as well as aligned with learners' development and knowledge needs, is an efficient approach to reducing the amount of time that employees and leaders need to invest in training.

### Case In Point: Toshiba Reduces Training Time<sup>28</sup>

Toshiba America Business Solutions, Inc. (TABS) is a division of Toshiba America, Inc., and is responsible for the planning, distribution, marketing, sales and support of copiers, facsimiles, multifunction printers, toner products and network controllers in the U.S., Mexico, Latin America and the Caribbean.

**Industry:** Manufacturing

**Employees:** 3,259

**Global:** Yes

#### Challenges

With sales representatives and dealers around the world, TABS needed a way to deliver high-quality, cost-effective Six Sigma<sup>29</sup> methodology training with minimum operational disruption.

<sup>28</sup> Source: <http://www.adobe.com/showcase/casestudies/toshiba/casestudy.pdf>.

<sup>29</sup> "Six Sigma" is a rigorous, focused, high-impact process that uses proven quality principles and techniques to reduce process variance. For more information on Six Sigma, please visit <http://www.isixsigma.com>, which offers articles and easy-to-read examples of how to apply Six Sigma to any business process.

*Case in Point: Toshiba Reduces Training Time (cont'd)***Solution**

TABS utilized Adobe Connect for e-learning and for web meetings to train sales representatives and dealers worldwide. Material was delivered through self-paced and live online delivery.

**Impact**

This solution reduced compliance training time by one-third and cut down Six Sigma training from seven hours onsite to three 45-minute online modules. [↗](#)

**KEY POINT**

Over time, organizations can develop a virtual library of hundreds of company-specific courses, references, FAQ databases, videos and other business goal-specific learning materials.

**On-Demand Materials**

Next-generation e-learning also provides employees with access to on-demand, archived information and materials, which further supports an organization's ability to respond and even proactively address challenges and change.

The ability to record and, therefore, archive training and supplemental materials (e.g., courses, references, help files, documents, presentations, et al), and make these materials available on-demand, represents a key advantage of next-generation e-learning. During presentations, learners can focus more on and be more engaged in the presentation than in taking notes. Furthermore, the often rich and fruitful interactions between learners and facilitators, or between meeting participants, can be recorded and archived. Over time, organizations can develop a virtual library of hundreds of company-specific courses, references, FAQ databases, videos and other business goal-specific learning materials. Organizations can archive materials and make them available to learners across the global enterprise for access when needed.



## Case in Point: Michigan Office of Public Health Preparedness Creates On-Demand Resources

Michigan Office of Public Health Preparedness<sup>30</sup> (OPHP) protects residents against chemical, biological and radiological threats. OPHP collaborates with local, state, tribal and federal authorities to minimize threats to the general public's health from attacks, accidents or other type of incidents.

**Industry:** Government

**Employees:** 4,400

**Global Presence:** No

### Challenges

OPHP is challenged to provide timely, accessible training to Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) employees statewide. Decreases in funding made traditional in-person training inefficient and expensive, with the large number of geographically dispersed employees.

### Solution

OPHP implemented Adobe Connect for e-learning and web meetings. It also used Adobe Connect to deliver live and on-demand ongoing education about developing health concerns and strategic initiatives to the more than 4,400 MDCH employees.

### Impact

MDCH is now conducting weekly training sessions for up to 50 people, featuring guest presenters and covering a variety of public

<sup>30</sup> Source:

<http://www.adobe.com/showcase/casestudies/michcommhealth/casestudy.pdf>.

### Case in Point: Michigan Office of Public Health Preparedness Creates On-Demand Resources (cont'd)

health topics. These training sessions are recorded and made available for replay via MDCH's on-demand library of educational materials. [↗](#)

## Organizational Learning Culture

### KEY POINT

Next-generation e-learning can be leveraged to greatly impact an organization's learning culture through learner collaboration and knowledge-sharing.

Organizational learning does not occur in a single learning event or instance. Once the training initiative is complete, the knowledge, skills and behaviors must be supported, facilitated, refined and reinforced through the organization's culture.

A learning culture represents a collective set of values, processes and practices that influence and encourage self-sustaining and continuous learning in the organization.<sup>31</sup> Next-generation e-learning can be leveraged to greatly impact an organization's learning culture through learner collaboration and knowledge-sharing, and by the empowering, engaging and continuous nature of the next-generation e-learning environment. Several characteristics of next-generation e-learning systems that contribute to an organization's learning culture are explained in the following sections.

### **Next-Generation e-Learning Can Enhance an Organization's Learning Culture**

Using next-generation e-learning can induce and reinforce a culture of continuous learning through engaging learning activities, collaboration and the sharing of information.

## Collaboration and Knowledge-Sharing

A key aspect of a strong learning culture is that critical information is easily shared among individuals. Next-generation e-learning systems provide organizational members with the flexibility to quickly gather in

<sup>31</sup> For more information, *High-Impact Learning Culture: The 40 Best Practices for Creating an Empowered Enterprise*, Bersin & Associates / David Mallon, June 2010.

a central meeting space, regardless of their physical locations, through virtual meetings (e.g., web / video-conferencing). Learners who are joined together in virtual classrooms can share ideas, best practices, lessons learned, and other knowledge and information in a real-time fashion. Having the ability to quickly collaborate greatly enhances learning agility – the ability to know, respond and adapt to situations by having relevant information and knowledge in real-time.

Next-generation e-learning can also be used to facilitate meetings with colleagues, managers, leaders, peers, coaches, mentors and experts through video-conferencing. Next-generation e-learning can create virtual places for workers to congregate and learn – though peer networks, communities of practice, FAQ knowledge bases and other online groups in which members can share key learnings, and have discussions on one another’s successes and lessons learned.



#### KEY POINT

A culture of learning encourages employees and leaders to seek out and share information with others.

As previously mentioned, next-generation e-learning systems also allow organizations to archive and store information and materials. Learners can access an on-demand resource library for referential and / or discovery purposes. These materials are easily shared among employees and leveraged for use in various tasks and projects. The continuous sharing of information helps to create a strong organizational learning culture. By having information readily accessible and easily shared among employees, an atmosphere of knowledge-sharing and learning is created. A culture of learning encourages employees and leaders to seek out and share information with others. Next-generation e-learning solutions provide a centralized knowledge repository, along with multiple ways to share knowledge and information throughout the organization.

## Increased Participant Engagement and Empowerment in Learning

Learners welcome next-generation e-learning as an efficient way to receive the information they need and to collaborate actively with their colleagues. Training exercises in next-generation e-learning systems are often cited by learners as being much more engaging than what might occur in typical classroom-based training. Simulations, integrated and interactive streaming videos, real-time polling, live chat, emotional icons, and whiteboards not only simulate the in-person experience but enhance it, as well.

The features of next-generation e-learning encourage collaboration and participation – fueling engagement, empowerment and commitment to the learning process. Learners can feel empowered by the activities in next-generation e-learning initiatives. For example, employees have the freedom to access information in the on-demand libraries, or through their success and failures in simulations. This learning approach results in improved knowledge transfer and retention, and thus improved business results.

Next-generation e-learning's convenience, coupled with engaging, collaborative interactions, contributes to a positive response from those who participate in next-generation e-learning. For example, Shiawassee created a survey to gauge user satisfaction, through which many comments praised the intuitiveness and time- saving characteristics of the Adobe Connect next-generation e-learning platform. For Sales Readiness Group, client evaluations were positive and repeat business was strong due to its implementation of the Adobe Connect platform.

### Case in Point: Sales Readiness Group's Adoption of Next-Generation e-Learning Improves Learner Engagement and Revenue<sup>32</sup>

Sales Readiness Group (SRG) develops and facilitates training courses to help businesses improve sales performance, develop sales leaders and increase sales results.

**Industry:** Corporate training

**Global:** No

#### Challenges

Previously, SRG was focused on technology and salesforce automation. As the economy slowed, its clients began to focus more on their sales teams' selling skills. Furthermore, as the economy shrank, so did corporate budgets. Therefore, the

<sup>32</sup> Source: <http://www.adobe.com/showcase/casestudies/salesreadiness/casestudy.pdf>.


*Case in Point: Sales Readiness Group's Adoption of Next-Generation e-Learning Improves Learner Engagement and Revenue (cont'd)*

challenge became to help clients develop better, more effective sales teams, without exceeding budgets or pulling the sales teams out of the field.

**Solution**

SRG implemented Adobe Connect for e-learning, creating real-time, interactive and engaging online learning experiences for clients.

**Impact**

The company realized increased revenues due to a larger number of repeat customers. In addition, SRG expanded the number of online training classes by 50 percent in one year, while achieving high satisfaction ratings from customers that also reported high levels of engagement, focus, participation and enjoyment. 

Through web meetings, next-generation e-learning technologies allow organizations to bring together select groups of people (e.g., executive committees, project teams, committees, et al) more frequently, without incurring travel costs or forcing attendees to invest time traveling to a learning event. Learners and participants often report that these web meetings are more engaging than conference calls, and provide for dynamic and interactive conversations – thus resulting in more effective sharing of information with the potential to lead to more innovative ideas. This is due to the interactive and engaging nature of the web meeting interface (e.g., Adobe Connect's web meeting tool allows for polling, screen-sharing, file-sharing, virtual whiteboards, et al), as well as the functionality allowing for a greater number of diverse and distributed people to participate. The effective sharing of ideas between attendees not only sparks innovation, but also leads to better productivity during meetings and for the learning community as a whole. These meetings are more productive because the ideas are fully fleshed out and developed among participants as they dialogue and share willingly.

# The Features and Functionality of Next-Generation e-Learning That Drive Business Results

A variety of next-generation e-learning platforms currently exist in the marketplace, each with its unique strengths and weaknesses. The following section examines how these features relate to each of the new standards of measurement. These features should provide a useful framework to help organizations understand how the features of next-generation e-learning can be leveraged through the new standards of measurement to drive business results.

## Features of Next-Generation e-Learning That Promote Scalability

A number of features promote the scalability of next-generation e-learning platforms. These features contribute to facilitating the ability to reach a broader and more diverse set of learners, while reducing costs and administrative burden. Figure 2 describes several of the key features that are included in some of the most effective next-generation e-learning platforms.

**Figure 2:** Features That Enhance Scalability

Feature	Description
Rich media sharing	Share rich media and video, without forcing downloads of players or codecs for learners.
Lack of barriers to entry	Few download requirements, cross-platform and browser support.
Access	Meetings can be joined from the web on any Internet-enabled computer or device, inside and out of the organization.
Support for low-bandwidth environments	Ability of e-Learning program to be used in low-bandwidth environments.

Source: Bersin & Associates, 2011.

**Figure 2: Features That Enhance Scalability (cont'd)**

Feature	Description
Ease of system setup	Ease of setup for email and other e-learning settings.
Instant collaboration	After joining a meeting, no additional steps or downloads are required to use any of the features.
Learner tracking systems	Functions that automate the scheduling and tracking of learners.
Reuse of materials and configurations	Users can save all configurations and content for reuse.

Source: Bersin & Associates, 2011.

## Features of Next-Generation e-Learning That Promote Learning Agility

Several features of next-generation e-learning platforms promote the ability of an organization to respond to change. These features prepare employees with needed knowledge and skills to proactively respond to anticipated marketplace and organizational changes. Figure 3 describes several of the key features that are included in some of the most prominent next-generation e-learning platforms that enhance learning agility.

**Figure 3: Features That Enhance Learning Agility**

Feature	Description
Video conferencing / virtual classrooms	Conferencing audio / video / presentation materials through small groups or large broadcasts. This can be between or among participants.
Asynchronous e-learning delivery	Self-paced learning material that can be taken by learners alone at a time that is convenient.
Recording of presentations	Recording of the audio / visual presentation.

Source: Bersin & Associates, 2011.

**Figure 3: Features That Enhance Learning Agility (cont'd)**

Feature	Description
Recorded presentations include interactive components	Recorded presentations also include interactivity such as quizzes, simulations, links, et al.
Enhanced collaboration software development kit (SDK)	Developers can make own applications for use inside meetings to handle specialized needs or customizations.
Screen-sharing	Facilitator and learner can share screens.
Application-sharing	Facilitators and learners can share applications without having the applications installed on their own computers.
File- / document-sharing and support	For example, drag and drop from desktop to share.
Ease in creating materials	Designers can use templates and tools to quickly add voice, quizzes and interactivity to an existing library of content, such as PowerPoint files.

Source: Bersin & Associates, 2011.

## Features of Next-Generation e-Learning That Promote Organizational Learning Culture

Several features of next-generation e-learning platforms promote the enhancement of organizational learning culture. These features contribute to self-sustaining and continuous learning in the organization. Figure 4 describes several of the key features that are included in some of the most prominent next-generation e-learning platforms that enhance organizational learning culture.



**Figure 4:** Features That Promote Organizational Learning Culture

Feature	Description
Group collaboration / social learning	Group collaboration can occur in a variety of ways (e.g., audio, video, sharing materials).
Whiteboards, notes, markup tools	Groups can collaborate using virtual whiteboards, and comment and mark up documents.
Breakout rooms	Learners can break into groups for activities separate from the larger group.
Q&A	Question-and-answer builder for learner / facilitator / subject-matter expert interaction and knowledge checks.
Support for learners during events	Ability to "raise hands," as well as interact through audio and video.
Survey and assessment	Tool to build surveys, quizzes, assessments; you can survey in live environment.
Instant messaging / multiuser text chat	Text chat in software or integrate with existing instant-messaging infrastructure.
Use of rich media	Share rich media and high-quality video to demonstrate complex concepts most effectively.
Mobile application	Tablet and smartphones can download interface with collaboration capabilities, with much of the same functionality as desktop computers.
Branding	Can brand interface to match organizations brand / identity.

Source: Bersin & Associates, 2011.

## Adobe Connect: An Example of Next-Generation e-Learning Technology Solution

There are many technology solutions available that embody many of the next-generation e-learning features discussed in this report. Adobe Connect is an example of such a solution that addresses the needs and expectations of today's e-learners. Adobe Connect includes tools, functionality and features that address the following next-generation e-learning challenges:

- Ability for users to rapidly build engaging content;
- Tools that enable the creation of animation and games;
- Ability to accommodate high-bandwidth and mobile environments;
- Ability to deliver high-definition video;
- Implementation of searchable "learning on-demand" objects;
- Blending e-learning with managerial activities; and,
- Globalizing an entire e-learning program, including cultural and location-specific customization.<sup>33</sup>

With user-friendly authoring tools, real-time collaboration functionality, audio and video-conferencing capabilities, group collaboration, and sharing tools and more, Adobe Connect is an active technology contender in the next-generation e-learning space.

<sup>33</sup> For more information, *The High-Impact Learning Organization: WhatWorks® in the Management, Governance and Operations of Modern Corporate Training*, Bersin & Associates / Josh Bersin, May 2008.

# How Organizational Level Business Goals Can Be Met with Next-Generation e-Learning

## Next-Generation e-Learning Has Demonstrated Strong Business Impact

Using next-generation e-learning can greatly reduce travel expenses and administration, and can be more efficient in delivery. These factors contribute substantially to the ROI of e-learning.



### KEY POINT

Key considerations to make in the business impact of next-generation e-learning training solutions include the level of investment that is required, the total cost of ownership, and the financial return or savings.

When a next-generation e-learning platform is implemented, the scalability, along with the contributions it has to the organization's learning agility and learning culture, results in a number of positive measurable business outcomes through improved efficiency, productivity and effectiveness. It is also important to consider the financial implications of implementing a next-generation e-learning platform. Like any other learning initiative, companies want to see a measurable return of the money invested (ROI) in a next-generation e-learning solution.

Key considerations to make in the business impact of next-generation e-learning training solutions include the level of investment that is required, the total cost of ownership, and the financial return or savings. By comparing these factors, organizations can fully understand the total cost of the next-generation e-learning solution in comparison to the gains recognized through increased productivity, efficiency and effectiveness.

### Quantifiable Value Drivers for Next-Generation e-Learning:

1. Reduction in costs
  - a. Reduced travel expenses
  - b. Reduction in the costs associated with in-person events
  - c. Reduction in administrative costs
    - i. Less administration and preparation – automated tracking and reporting of attendance, grading, completion of curriculums, et al

2. Improvement in employee productivity
  - a. More efficient and effective learning opportunities
3. More efficient training content development and delivery
  - a. Enhanced ability for rapid user-generated content

## Case in Point: Xerox Achieves a High-Yield ROI

A world leader in document management technology, Xerox<sup>34</sup> offers a broad array of services including printing and publishing systems, online document archives, multifunction devices, laser and solid ink network printers, copiers, and fax machines.

**Industry:** Document management technology

**Employees:** 136,500

**Global Presence:** Yes

### Challenges


Xerox set out to transform its training model for its 130,000 sales, service and support personnel, to find more efficient and effective alternatives, specifically to reduce costs and loss in productivity related to travel.

### Solution

The company implemented Adobe Connect to enable global sales, service and support staff to participate in online training and customer support sessions aimed at improving customer engagement and reducing costs.

<sup>34</sup> Source: <http://www.adobe.com/showcase/casestudies/xerox2010/casestudy.pdf>.

*Case in Point: Xerox Achieves a High-Yield ROI (cont'd)***Impact**

Overall, Xerox achieved 100 percent ROI in one quarter. The company cut travel expenses in Europe by as much as 10 percent and by \$150,000 from a single event for a Canadian business unit. 

# The Business Case for the New Standards of Measurement for Next-Generation e-Learning

A goal of many organizations is to deliver high-quality, cost-effective training with minimum operational disruption. Next-generation e-learning represents an ideal solution to meet those demands, while also permitting the ability to deliver training across a global organization with virtual and geographically disbursed employees, leaders, and customer bases.



## KEY POINT

A goal of many organizations is to deliver high-quality, cost-effective training with minimum operational disruption.

The efficiency, effectiveness and convenience of next-generation e-learning has propelled next-generation e-learning into a position of gaining widespread acceptance and use. Many high-impact learning and leadership development organizations indicate that next-generation e-learning is a preferred method of learning delivery and management. Furthermore, the current and future diverse worker demographics and globalization will further increase the use of next-generation e-learning. As the younger generations (*whose members consider technology and the Internet to be an integral part of life*) replace retiring generations, organizations will have no choice but to adapt to the ways their employees and leaders prefer to learn. These generations are comfortable with technology, and expect to learn through highly engaging and interactive technologies in a “let me get it as I need it” fashion.

The globalization of the economy will also place increasing demands on companies to utilize next-generation e-learning as it is an economical and convenient way to deliver training to a decentralized workforce in which learners are spread around the globe.

## Preparing for Next-Generation e-Learning

From a learner's perspective, the next generation of e-learning entails a significantly different experience from traditional training. It requires learners to be comfortable and proficient with technology. As indicated, this is of little to no concern for some learners (e.g., younger generations of workers), but our organizations may still employ groups of less tech-savvy individuals (e.g., older generations of workers) who may need to be introduced and acclimated to some of the new technologies. In these instances, we see high-impact organizations leveraging reverse coaching.<sup>35</sup>

All learners, though, will have to be introduced to a new platform and be made aware of how to use it. Technical glitches, malfunctions and problems may also arise. To alleviate these concerns, we recommend that companies offer some type of introduction and / or tutorial to the technology, including its functions and features. Additionally, a support center could be made available to individuals for continuous support throughout their use of the e-learning platform. Learning aids, such as quick reference cards, made available online are also an invaluable resource to help new users understand and adopt the technology.

Lastly, another strategy that may also be beneficial is to appoint local experts who can assist individuals within their own units. This helps to lessen the burden on an organization's HR IT resources, while also providing more convenience to learners who can gain more personalized assistance.

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<sup>35</sup> "Reverse coaching" is the process by which younger, typically less experienced employees and / or leaders coach those who have more tenure and are typically more seasoned. With social learning tools and platforms, we are seeing entry-level practitioners who are well-versed in the tools of the trade being asked to provide solutions and strategic planning, and to serve as "reverse coaches" to the more seasoned senior leaders who may not be as comfortable with technology.

# Implementing Next-Generation e-Learning



## KEY POINT

The transformation to next-generation e-learning needs to be well-communicated to all stakeholders, who need to be aware of what the next-generation e-learning platform includes.

Successful implementation of a next-generation e-learning initiative requires careful planning and execution. When preparing learners for a next-generation e-learning platform, it is important to bear in mind the basic principles of change management. Most importantly, the transformation to next-generation e-learning needs to be well-communicated to all stakeholders. These stakeholders need to be aware of what the next-generation e-learning platform includes, as well as the intended outcomes. Furthermore, communication to the stakeholders should be continuous, taking place during the piloting phase, the initial and subsequent rollouts, along with during the maintenance of the program.

Finally, resistance should be expected. Those who are leading the effort should be aware of the phases people experience when involved in such a large change, such as moving toward the adoption of a next-generation e-learning platform.



# Getting the Organization to Embrace Next-Generation e-Learning



## KEY POINT

Having the next generation of e-learning embraced by the organization starts by obtaining user buy-in.

Making next-generation e-learning a fundamental aspect of how learning is delivered in an organization can be a challenge. Having the next generation of e-learning embraced by the organization starts by obtaining user buy-in. One way to achieve this is by having senior management publicly endorse the next-generation e-learning system. When senior executives show their enthusiasm and personal engagement with this learning approach, that passion and fervor will trickle down throughout all levels of the organization. For example, to introduce a new virtual meeting platform, a CEO could hold a town hall meeting with company employees using the platform to deliver the meeting.

Next, organizations should identify change champions at all organizational levels who can promote its use. When projects or initiatives are developed, these champions can innovate ways to utilize the platform and advocate for its use sharing success stories throughout the enterprise.

After buy-in is achieved from all employees, they can become the promoters of the system. These individuals will bring the technology to a standard way of doing things and facilitate the adoption of the technology for purposes of impacting business results.

## Closing Thoughts

Next-generation e-learning encompasses the use of Internet technologies for the delivery and management of training, including both formal (e.g., virtual classrooms) and informal learning (self-paced instruction). It includes a variety of applications, such as user-generated content, web- and computer-based learning and digital collaboration. While the next generation of e-learning consists of a number of different technologies, several next-generation e-learning platforms bundle these services and provide a packaged platform (e.g., Adobe Connect) to accommodate the functional and leader training needs prevalent in organizations today.



### KEY POINT

Today's next-generation e-learning has been recognized as a cost-effective, efficient and effective training delivery method.

Today's next-generation e-learning has been recognized as a cost-effective, efficient and effective training delivery method. The next generation of e-learning offers a multitude of business benefits and ways to improve the organizational learning function and environment. This report demonstrates how the evolution of e-learning and the market have created the need to measure this new, modern next-generation e-learning in terms of its scalability, influence on an organization's learning agility and organizational learning culture. These factors demonstrate how an e-learning solution can lead to increases in the efficiency, productivity and effectiveness of learning and leadership development initiatives.

Several cases in point in this report demonstrate how organizations use Adobe Connect as an e-learning solution and recognized substantial ROI. For example, Sales Readiness Group was able to increase the number of training classes being offered by 50 percent. Shiawassee Regional Education Service District saw a \$170.00 per person savings by conducting meetings virtually. The Michigan Office of Public Health Preparedness saw a \$7,000 savings in one quarter alone by holding training sessions online. Xerox experienced 100 percent ROI in one quarter and reported that \$150,000 was saved from a single event for a business unit in Canada.

In closing, this report has demonstrated the numerous positive business benefits of next-generation e-learning – of reducing training costs, and improving individual and organizational performance. Furthermore, it is important to think about the specific features and functionality of the next-generation e-learning platform, including user-generated content,

the video capabilities, and the collaborative features (e.g., chat, screen-sharing, file-sharing, polling, et al) to name a few as drivers of business goals.

The features and business benefits of today's next-generation e-learning platforms are the vehicles to improve business results at high-impact learning and leadership development organizations.

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## About Us

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