



Chapter 11

Managing the Business of Web-Enabled Education and Training: A Framework and Case Studies for Replacing Blackboards with Browsers for Distance Learning

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Very few men are wise by their own counsel; or learned by their own teaching. For he that was only taught by himself, had a fool for his master.

— Ben Johnson

Abstract

Studies have shown that people remember 20 percent of what they see, 40 percent of what they see and hear, and 70 percent of what they see, hear, and do. Interactive learning applications provide a multi-sensory learning environment that maximizes the way people retain information. This accelerates learning and permits novices to perform like experts while they learn new skills. Powerful authoring systems enable vast amounts of information to be compiled quickly and presented in compelling and meaningful ways. In addition, these applications are easy and inexpensive to update. With interactive multimedia, everyone sees the same information and is exposed

to identical learning environments. The reliability of instruction, quality of information, and presentation of material is consistent from user to user and from session to session. This chapter discusses a framework for distance learning and distributed learning and two case studies of a web-based synchronous learning environment in two organizations with different corporate cultures. Current challenges and implications for management are discussed.

Introduction

With the Web-based training market in U.S. growing at 150 percent a year, it is expected to expand from \$92 million in 1996 to more than \$1.75 billion by the year 2000, according to recently completed research from International Data Corporation. According to Montgomery Securities analyst Ellen Julian, the \$16 billion world market for technical training will hit \$28 billion in the year 2001. Web-based training is growing rapidly, fueled by the emergence of the intranet as a major training medium, the increase in Internet and intranet access, advancements in Web technology, and an increasing demand for technical skills in everything from Web design to Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) implementation. From the student/learner standpoint, the web-based training offers convenience, flexibility and savings in dollars and in time. This has led to an enormous amount of confidence in the growth of web-based training. A case in point is the CBT Group; an Irish company with sales of \$118 million that trades at a price so speculative it makes private school tuition look cheap—13 times sales.

The worldwide information technology training market is large and growing as illustrated in table 1. Although classroom-based training continued to be the delivery medium of choice, it lost significant ground in 1997 to high technology-based delivery vehicles such as CD-ROM, the Internet, and corporate intranets (IDC, 1997).

The purpose of this chapter is to move beyond hypertext/multimedia documents that are archives of an instructor's course notes or supporting

Table 1: Worldwide Information Technology Training Market Revenues

| | 1996 | 2001 | 1996-2001 CAGR |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| World Total | \$16.4 billion | \$27.9 billion | 11.2% |
| United States | \$7.1 billion | 12.9 billion | 12.7% |
| U.S. Web-based | 74.0 million | 3.4 billion | 109.7% |

Source: International Data Corporation, 1997.

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