

E-learning trends for 2014

 By [Kirsty Chadwick](#)

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E-learning has been around for quite some time now, and as its popularity continues to grow within the corporate and educational sectors, so does its capabilities. Computers are becoming increasingly essential as educational tools, while technologies are becoming more portable and cost-effective - mobile learning is a perfect example of this.

It has become imperative in recent years to look critically at the learning outcomes of training and to adapt those outcomes accordingly. Organisations no longer require an endless accumulation of general knowledge, but the focus is now rather on skills that help them to save money, decrease downtime and increase effectiveness.

According to research firm, Ambient Insight, the global market for self-paced e-learning products and services reached US\$ 27.1 billion by 2009 and is likely to double by 2014. With that said, let's have a quick look at the e-learning trends for 2014.

1. From textbook to tablet

In March 2013, Sunward Park High School in Johannesburg, South Africa, successfully made the transition from physical textbook to tablet when the tablet project initiative was officially launched by the Basic Education Deputy Minister, in partnership with Modern Information Business (MIB).

Pupils at the school were overjoyed at no longer having to carry heavy suitcases around with them from classroom to classroom because they could now access their e-textbooks, a digital library and video tutorials via their tablets on the schools' open Wi-Fi Network. In 2014, 88,000 Huawei tablets will be distributed to 2200 public schools in Gauteng as part of a new e-learning initiative.

2. The shift to mobile

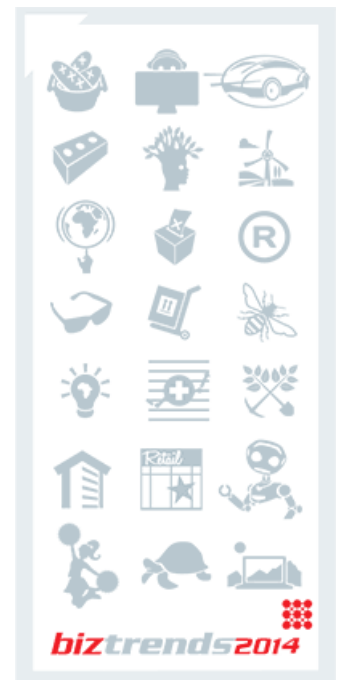
Mobile is thriving in Africa and local e-learning developers are increasingly focusing on apps as the most effective way to deliver learning content. According to UNICEF, South Africa houses the third-largest number of mobile subscribers on the continent, with around 20% of the population owning a smartphone. Smartphone growth in Africa has increased by 43% annually since 2000, and experts predict that 69% of mobiles in Africa will have internet access by 2014.

3. More gaming

In recent years, gamification, the process of using game thinking and game dynamics in order to engage audiences and solve problems, has taken the world by storm. According to the analyst company, Gartner, more than 50% of businesses that manage innovation processes will gamify those processes by 2015 and more than 70% of the world's largest companies are expected to have at least one gamified app by then end of 2014.

4. MOOCs

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) have become increasingly popular over the last two years, mainly due to their accessibility, as well as the fact that the courses are generally offered free of charge. While MOOCs currently



don't have standardised quality assurance in place, this will likely change in the near future.

5. Social media

Social media offers an array of opportunities to learn and interact. If used correctly, it can enhance the efficiency and standard of work that is produced by learners. The realisation of the advantage of having these social networking tools at their fingertips is spreading amongst learners. Dr. Richard J. Light from the Harvard School of Education believes that students' success is very reliant on their ability to participate in study groups and that those who engage in these groups learn significantly more than students who don't.

6. Classes online

The shift to online training, particularly within the corporate world, is happening rapidly, and 2014 is likely to see a large number of businesses moving over to online training. Since 2000, the global e-learning market has grown by 900%, and recent studies have projected that by 2019, 50% of all classes taught, will be delivered online.

7. Trading desktop for mobile

According to Comscore, a digital analytics company, 2014 will be the year in which the number of mobile users will exceed the number of desktop users. The technology for mobile phones and devices has become so advanced over the past couple of years that it only makes sense that desktops will eventually be used only by designers.

8. More learning for everyone

Recent statistics show that 47% of online learners are over the age of 26, compared to a significantly lower age group a few years ago. While older learners initially require more technical support than younger ones, they tend to perform on par or even better than their younger counterparts once they're up to speed.

9. HTML5

HTML5 supports scalable vector graphics, which means that e-learning content can be responsive to the learner. According to a recent 2014 prediction by Gartner, improved JavaScript performance will begin to push HTML5 and the browser as a mainstream enterprise application development environment.

10. Increase in interactivity

Moving forward, courseware is likely to be more immersive and interactive as more companies begin to realise the importance thereof. The use of animations and games within learning environments keeps the tech-savvy generation engaged and entertained, leading to increased knowledge retention.

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ABOUT KIRSTY CHADWICK

As an educator, public speaker and leader, Kirsty Chadwick has spent almost two decades involved in the field of education. Founder of The Training RoomOnline, which designs and

develops innovative tailor-made e-learning material for the corporate, industrial and private sectors, Kirsty has trained, developed and inspired people across three continents.

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