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MOBILE LEARNING

What it is, why it matters, and how to incorporate it into your learning strategy

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Online Analytics Tools provided by:

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Visual Analysis for Databases

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The eLearning Guild Research Pledge

It is our goal to provide the best research based on the best data. Indeed, with well over 25,000 e-Learning professionals – designers, developers, managers, and executives who are passionate about the art and science of e-Learning – The Guild has an unmatched and enormously rich and varied pool from which to gather data.

But let us be very clear that this data represents one thing and one thing only: the preferences, opinions, loves, loathings, trials, and triumphs of eLearning Guild members. Does the information represent the e-Learning industry as a whole? Probably, but we cannot – and will not – make that claim.

And anyone else publishing articles or research that makes that claim – and makes it using a much smaller data set than we would ever consider using – is presumptuous at best.

Here are the five articles of practice that drive eLearning Guild Research:

1. **Live, interactive, always-up-to-date.** In addition to providing members with truly useful visual analytics tools, the underlying data is always up to date and displayed in real time.

2. **Number of respondents.** Our research reflects the opinions of thousands of e-Learning professionals. The Guild has more, and better, data than is available any place else. Indeed, we will never publish results from a survey unless we have received at least 750 fully-vetted responses.

3. **No reliance on outside sources that will bias our reports.** With thousands of members updating their profiles and completing surveys, the Guild does not need to rely on outside sources for contacts to complete surveys.

4. **Funding.** The eLearning Guild funds its own research. We do not accept any form of sponsorship from vendors and/or suppliers for public research activities.

5. **Guaranteed Fresh.** Every 90 days we remind members to update their profiles and survey information. If a member goes a year without updating information, that information is filtered out of our live reports.

For the Guild’s 360° Reports we carefully review respondents’ data for accuracy and consistency. If we detect an anomaly, we contact that respondent and ask that he/she clarify his/her responses. If any issue cannot be resolved, the data from this respondent is discarded and is not included in our report.

The Guild is truly an amazing organization and I feel privileged to be a part of it. It is my goal to leverage the depth, breadth, and spirit of the Guild’s members to produce the gold standard in e-Learning research.

Sincerely,

Steven S. Wexler
Director of Research and Emerging Technologies
Abstract

The eLearning Guild defines Mobile Learning (m-Learning) as follows:

Any activity that allows individuals to be more productive when consuming, interacting with, or creating information, mediated through a compact digital portable device that the individual carries on a regular basis, has reliable connectivity, and fits in a pocket or purse.

Mobile technologies are having a profound global impact on business, education, and culture. As an e-Learning professional you must consider the learning possibilities made available by mobile devices. Your e-Learning strategy may not require it now, or even soon, but m-Learning is quickly becoming a reality that business, government, and education cannot ignore.

In preparing the questions for our survey, the authors and Guild staff solicited feedback from other Guild members, as well as from vendors and solution providers. We tested the survey for several weeks before going live in June 2007, and at the time of its writing (late July, 2007), we’ve received 940 responses.

In addition to providing a full analysis of the survey data we’ve received, the Guild has tapped some of the industry’s most knowledgeable and passionate experts on m-Learning to share their expertise. In this report it is our goal to

- Help you see what you can do with m-Learning today
- Show you how to design m-Learning
- Show you where to find the tools and resources to build m-Learning
- Help you (and your organization) see the business potential for m-Learning
- Prepare you for the future of m-Learning
How the Report is Organized

Survey results

In this section we review and analyze responses we received to the Guild’s Mobile Learning survey. Key findings include:

- 66% of Guild members are at least researching m-Learning initiatives and 9% have actually implemented m-Learning in their organizations.
- 44.8% of Guild members plan to do more m-Learning in the next 12 months.
- The U.S. and Canada lag beyond other countries in both current implementation and plans for m-Learning. 24% of Guild members in other countries have either implemented or are designing m-Learning offerings vs. 14% in the U.S. and Canada. Plus 57% of International members plan to do more m-Learning in the next 12 months vs. 41% for the U.S. and Canada.
- The top three barriers to the adoption of m-Learning are concerns over content created for traditional media not working on the new devices, the lack of a standard for mobile delivery, and concern that screens are too small.
- The iPhone, and products coming out influenced by the iPhone, is expected to allay the concerns over compatibility and screen size and have a significant impact on the adoption of m-Learning, as many learning activities developed for the Web will work with little or no change on this new crop of portable devices.
- Members who have implemented m-Learning report a 52% improvement in user performance and an 85% increase in making learning available to users.
- Of members who have implemented m-Learning, and who are able to evaluate return on investment, 88% report a positive ROI.

Embracing m-Learning

Judy Brown, former director of the Academic ADL Co-Lab in Madison, WI, and a fervent believer in the benefits of m-Learning, presents a buffet of different m-Learning examples with the hopes that at least one will whet your appetite for what you and your organization can do with m-Learning.
Point-and-Shoot learning

Renowned learning researcher, analyst, and consultant David Metcalf shares some of the truly innovative approaches to m-Learning he’s seen in his travels among his clients and colleagues.

Don’t dream it, do it: m-Learning by design

At this point we believe that you will no longer be asking “Why should I do this?” but will instead be asking “How do I do this?” Clark Quinn, expert in immersive learning simulations and sought-after learning consultant, takes you through how to design effective m-Learning interactions.

Tools for m-Learning

With Clark Quinn having covered how to design m-Learning, Judy Brown returns to discuss where you can find tools and resources to build m-Learning.

The business-value proposition of mobile learning

David Metcalf explores business drivers for m-Learning and arms you with information to help you sell m-Learning into your organization.

iPhone: Is your e-Learning ready for m-Learning?

Recognizing that we could not do the subject of m-Learning justice without discussing Apple’s iPhone, Brent Schlenker, The eLearning Guild’s Research and Technology Evangelist explains why an iPhone (not the one he has, but either the next generation version or, perhaps, a similar device from another company) will truly bring an era of mobile learning.

The future of mobile learning

David Metcalf shares his insights as to why the U.S. and Canada lags behind other countries, and what we can expect in terms of connectivity, bandwidth, pricing, and availability in the near future.
Notes from the field—interviews with practitioners

In this section Angela van Barneveld, Program Manager at a global Business Intelligence and Corporate Performance Management solutions company, summarizes insights from various practitioners who have shared their trials and triumphs with m-Learning.

Case Study: Integrating m-Learning with a Learning Management System

Tristan Evans, president of Perago Learning Solutions, Inc., explains how his company integrated m-Learning with a Learning Management System, and how you can do the same.

Case Study: A Look at mobility within the walls of Tyco International, Ltd.

Tyco’s history with Mobile Learning tracks longer than many other organizations. Don McDougal, Director of Learning Technology at Tyco International shares a view into his company’s mobility strategy, and provides us with a unique opportunity to see their progression from pioneers to accomplished experts.

Resources

This section contains links to Web sites, books, examples, organizations, and conferences that will help you navigate the m-Learning world.
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