

E-Learning Evolves into Mature Training Tool

THE USE OF E-LEARNING will increase in 2006, according to 80 percent of training and HR managers who responded to a recent survey. The Bersin & Associates survey of 526 companies in the United States and Canada showed that e-learning continued to grow in 2005, and it comprises 33 percent of all workplace training. That is up from 29 percent in 2004 and 24 percent in 2003.

According to Josh Bersin, president of Bersin & Associates, the significant growth of e-learning wasn't a surprise. What he didn't expect to see from the study are four distinct stages of e-learning maturity (see e-learning stages below). "We identified clear stages of evolution," said Bersin. "We found that these stages are common across all industries and company sizes, and that each stage has very specific characteristics and business drivers."

Bersin explains that training organizations can use the model to assess the maturity of their learning programs and to plan for the next stages. According to Bersin, most organizations' e-learning programs fall between stages 2 and 3. You can tell if your company is in or close to Stage 3 if the following statements are true:

- E-learning is no longer looked upon as a way to drive down training costs; it is a business performance improvement tool.
- E-learning is used to increase reach, efficiency, and impact—not as an end in itself.
- E-learning is measured by effectiveness, not adoption rates.

In Stage 4, all the digital learning assets (courses, references, help files, documents, and presentations) are made available on demand—when a worker needs them. The traditional course-driven approach to training is blended with online performance support. Companies in this stage show a dramatic adoption of online books and references, for example.

This maturity model has been developed through hundreds of surveys and interviews with training managers and executives. "It's not just an idea—it's based on what's really happening in the evolution of e-learning," Bersin says.

The report is available at www.bersin.com/stages.

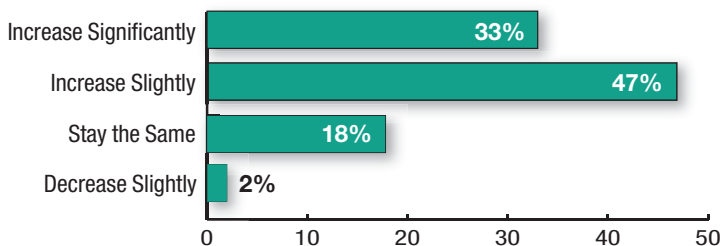
The BIG Number...



The percentage of training and HR managers who expect e-learning to increase in 2006.

E-learning growth rate continues

Over the next year, do you think your percentage of training delivered by e-learning will increase?



May 2005, 526 responses
Source: Bersin & Associates

E-learning stages

Stage 4: Learning on Demand

LCMS, performance support, search

Stage 3: Integration and Alignment

Governance, HR integration, performance management

Stage 2: Expansion

Blended learning, rapid e-learning, greater use of LMS, custom courses

Stage 1: Getting Started

Cost savings, off-the-shelf courses, LMS implementation