

EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES

What Things Cost

Haidee Allerton, Sabrina Hicks,
Eva Kaplan-Leiserson,
and William Powell

It has been five years since *T+D* last surveyed the cost of training, and my how things have changed.

In the wake of September 11, companies have cut back on sending their employees out of office for training and instead have turned increasingly to videoconferencing and other virtual venues. The tech wave has crested; e-learning has moved from its infancy to its adolescence; and the well-stocked first-aid kit no longer contains just Band-Aids and aspirin, but also a chem-bio handbook.

Fortunately for you, the trainer and consumer, many prices have dropped considerably since 1996, most notably on software and computers.

That's just the beginning. *T+D*'s editorial staff has compiled a price list of some tools you need to do your job, from custom training simulations and LCMSs to cell phones and MP3 players. There's even a section on free e-learning—something that never goes out of style and is always priced just right.

For complete text, see page 29.

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Just Say No to Training Fads

Shari Caudron

Saying no is easy enough, but actually avoiding the pull of management fads can be a Herculean task. Ask employees about their experiences with such fads and you're likely to be met with a chuckle and a brief recollection of stuffed fish hanging from the ceiling or of solving the case of the missing cheese.

The problem is that sound management principles are being hijacked by consultants and then driven into absurdity. And the real victims are often the well-meaning trainers who adopt them.

So, how can training professionals avoid the latest fad when executives are chasing the bandwagon? Trainers must first begin to understand the problem from the executive's perspective and then determine the suggested solution's usefulness and sustainability within the company. You can do so by answering questions such as

- Is the program driven and sponsored by key senior leaders?
- Are the key lessons transferable into the organization?
- Can you measure what you're doing? Is it value-added?

Of course, once that's done, trainers are still left to overcome employees' cynicism and reluctance. Step 1, not surprisingly, is overcoming your own.

For complete text, see page 38.

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Canon Sales Training

Darin E. Hartley

Over the past five years, training at Canon USA changed drastically in order to address its increasingly complex product lines. Of the change from selling stand-alone copiers to selling advanced digital networked systems, Mitch Bardwell, director of sales training for Canon's Imaging Systems Group says, "We went from selling tennis shoes to space shuttles." Add that to Canon's rapid growth, and the company couldn't scale its sales training fast enough. Long waiting lists for sales classes only got longer. Sales reps often waited several months for training they needed immediately. Though Canon's leaders were squarely behind training and expansion of the training division, the methods no longer made fiscal sense. It was decided that e-learning was the direction of choice and that an LMS would be needed.

But to do so, challenges abounded. Particularly troublesome was delivering Web-based learning with streaming media to sales associates in the field, especially when most had only 28.8 kbps modems. Canon also recognized that for much of its salesforce this would be their first experience with Web-based training. The company didn't want it to be their last.

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The Just-in-Time Imperative

Robert S. Weintraub and
Jennifer W. Martineau

Second in the three-part *Future Trends* series, this article discusses and analyzes the increasing demand for just-in-time learning and the surprisingly slow response of workplace educators to address it.

It seems that as our training and development processes have aged, they've ceased to mature and diversify beyond their initial bounds. Just-in-time requires an extension of those boundaries, an expansion of the trainer's views, and a nurturing of responsive, innovative behaviors. More to the point, we must make the shift from product to knowledge if just-in-time is to work.

Unfortunately, once raw knowledge is captured, trainers often can't afford to put it through the design and development process that's required of instructionally sound courses. New methods of knowledge capture and delivery are needed. JIT demands modularization and personalization.

Included in this article is a careful look into the technologies that answer JIT's demands, the effective construct of communities of practice, the role of leaders and educators, and the importance of always maintaining a human touch.

For complete text, see page 50.

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Bang the IT Training Drum

Dave Murphy With
Eva Kaplan-Leiserson

For Dave Murphy, IT training isn't just about technology but about productivity and performance. As founder of the International Association of IT Trainers, he's drumming a wake-up call for the effect that stellar IT instructors can have on a company's overall business process.

So, what does Murphy look for in a standout IT trainer? "When I started hiring trainers, I looked for people who were active in theater and used a computer as a hobby," he says. "They have the ability to empathize with learners and make them feel comfortable." It's a bold statement coming from someone in an industry that bases competency on the number of certificates a trainer may hold instead of his or her people skills.

For more resounding insights on the state of the IT training industry, read the full text.

For complete text, see page 59.

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