

## Data Quest

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# India Learning

Moving away from traditional classroom learning by rote, India is fast adopting a more cost-effective and interactive way of learning



**T**he CBT Systems seminar in Los Angeles, October 1999, witnessed the revelation of the term, 'e-learning'. However, its origin could be traced back a few decades.

During World War II, the US faced immense instructional problem as thousands of recruits had to be trained on sophisticated weapons, which demanded training manuals to be effective and time saving. Going with the old gnome, 'Necessity is the mother of invention', a new mode of instruction was tailored to suit the training needs based on Frederic Skinner's theory of operant

conditioning. This came to be known as ISD or instructional system design that aimed to optimize the learning experience—the precursor to today's e-learning.

### The Great Indian Adaptation

Indian market too has adapted to the need of imparting effective training and fulfilling educational goals. With growing Internet access, educational institutions and the corporate sector are moving towards e-learning modules because of their portability and cost-effectiveness. It is important to note that a considerable percentage

of Indian population comprises students and young professionals who need to be taught and trained.

For these sections, e-learning provides a cutting-edge solution that transcends the time-place barrier and at the same time provides a learning environment that does not require them to attend regular classes. For example, Gurukul Online Learning Solutions not only provides vocational education courses, but also offers live virtual classroom connectivity across the nation. Institutes like Indian Institute of Management, Indian Institute of Technology, and Indian Institute of Foreign Trade are presently offering e-learning courses. Not only education, but the corporate sector as well has been amalgamating e-learning with their knowledge management system and greater business strategies to improve performance.

In 2004 e-learning was the dominant form of employee training method. 50% of employees predicted that e-learning would become the standard method of training within the organization by 2010. We can conclude that more than 30% of the people predicted that their organization would also focus on the creation of e-learning content in the following years.

E-learning companies in India, majorly inclined towards custom courseware development, are part of the offshoring industry worth \$341 mn, by the end of 2008. In contrast to the recession impacting the growth of different industries, it is being estimated that the Indian e-learning offshoring industry will