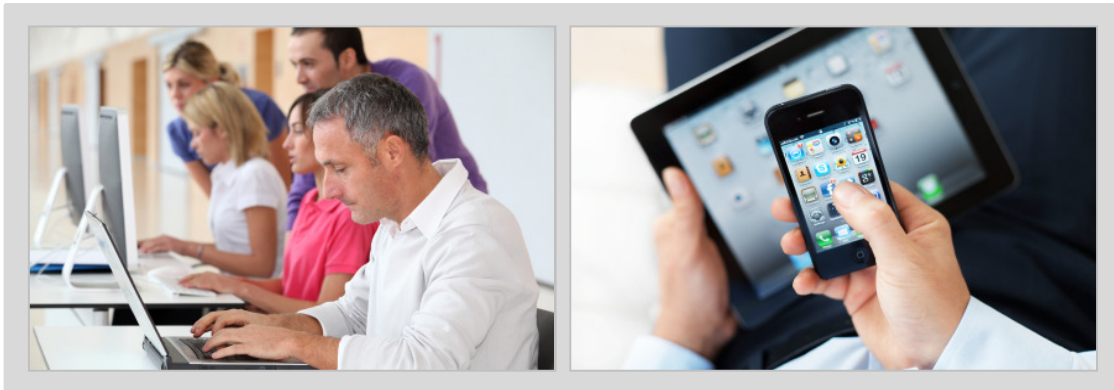# IMPACT
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2013 | # LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT TECHNOLOGY REPORT

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Introduction

As of October 2012, the number of active smartphone users around the world has topped 1 billion[1], according to global research and consulting firm, Strategy Analytics. This has major implications for learning and development.

Technology is an absolute necessity and a differentiator, especially with many of us working on widely distributed teams and using a broad array of devices. Our personal and professional uses of technology are coming together more and more. Data confirms what we're all seeing: our learners are increasingly savvy in how they use technology to access, consume, and create content.

Employees increasingly *expect* technology to be there – they will work and stay at those companies who embrace technology for business and learning. Adoption of technology solutions by learning and development teams must be *both current and forward-thinking* to adequately support the organization's overall goals.

Impact Instruction Group conducted a survey of learning and development professionals across the nation to get a pulse on technology strategies as we head into 2013. The survey covers topics including design/delivery methods, leadership support, strategy implementation, and skill requirements in the coming year.

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[1] Statistic source: http://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20121017005479/en/Strategy-Analytics-Worldwide-Smartphone-Population-Tops-1

Survey Highlights

- Ranking #1 in investments in 2013, at **86%,** is e-Learning, with the majority of respondents also focusing on investing in webinars and video for their learning delivery initiatives. Investments for mobile applications and games / simulations still remain relatively low, but according to the survey, interest in using these technologies as a learning method is growing.

- A combined **75%** of survey respondents shared that their leadership team's interest in implementing technology-based training solutions is increasing.

- When asked about adoption of their L&D technology strategy, **19%** of respondents have fully designed and implemented an L&D technology strategy, along with the training that leverages it. That leaves **81%** of our respondents that still need to plan and / or execute on a technology strategy.

- Over half of the respondents **(58%)** plan to train their current staff on relevant technologies, rather than bringing on new staff or outsourcing to vendors.

1. In which technology-based learning and performance support methods will your organization invest in 2013? (Select all that apply.)
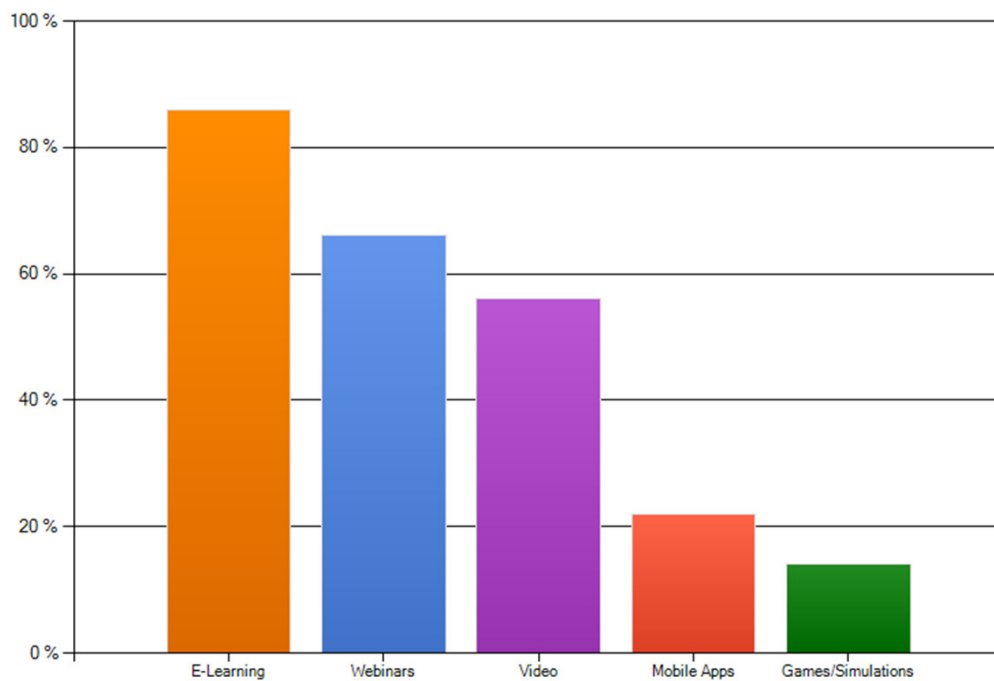
- The majority of respondents **(86%)** will invest in e-learning in 2013.

- **66%** will invest in webinars

- **56%** of survey respondents will invest in video

- **22%** will invest in mobile applications

- **14%** will invest in games and simulations

- Other investments include LMS and embedded performance support.

Learning & Delivery Methods

When it comes to design and delivery methods, we weren't surprised to see e-learning atop the list. However, the results further point to the need for a balanced and blended learning strategy.

Some of the trends we're seeing:

- Ever-shorter and more focused e-learning courses

- Increasing sophistication of activities in e-learning, allowing learners to use higher-level critical thinking skills

- 3-5 minute short video segments combined into an e-learning course

- Video segments or short webinars combined with performance support tools and job aids

- Video segments, designed by training, that are part of larger initiatives such as change management and marketing

- Increasing requests for design and delivery optimized for tablet devices

- Usage of cloud-based tools to assemble, share, and track learning content

- The use of games and simulations as a delivery method

In the large enterprises we work with, it's still a blended world out there – as it should be. Every design and delivery method has its place. It's up to us as training professionals to determine the approach that will yield the best learning and business results.

2. I would characterize my leadership team's interest in implementing technology-based training solutions as:
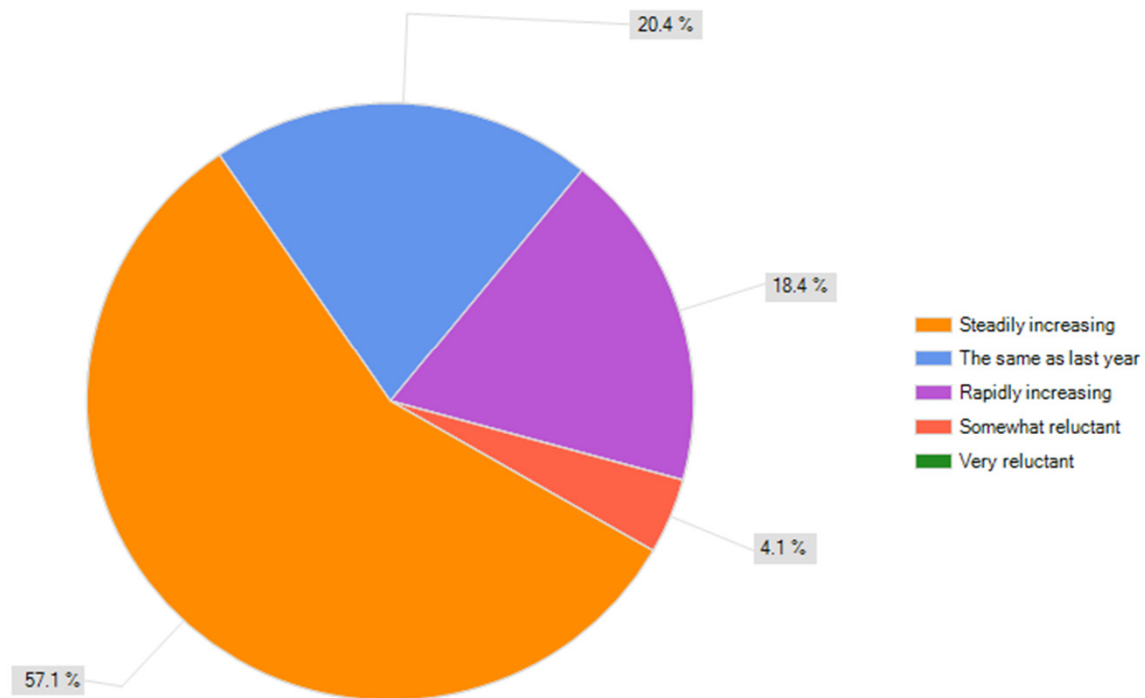
- **57%** of survey respondents stated that their leadership team's interest in implementing technology-based training solutions as steadily increasing.

- **20%** stated that the interest will remain the same

- **18%** said interest is rapidly increasing.

- Only **4%** reported that their leadership team is somewhat reluctant.

Overall, a combined **75%** of survey respondents shared that their leadership team's interest is increasing. With that being the case, it's important that your training team has a strategy and the plans in place to support this growing interest.

Engaging Your Leadership Team

With so many survey respondents confirming their leadership has a vested interest in leveraging technology in the learning environment, this is a prime opportunity for learning professionals to position themselves as essential to the organization's success.

When it comes to technology, what are some ways you can do this?

- **Develop relationships with the IT group** within your organization, to understand what technologies the business as a whole is pursuing. For example, if your organization is pursuing client-facing mobile apps, discover if there are technologies already in place within the organization that you can leverage in learning and development.

- **Stay in tune with technology trends** that directly affect learning. For example, according to Bottom Line Performance, two key trends are the use of cloud computing and the integration of the Experience API (aka Tin Can) into eLearning authoring tools and LMS offerings[2]. Present your findings to leadership and lines of business you support, along with potential solutions for how these technologies can be used for learning in ways that drive business results.

- When you **attend learning conferences**, make it a point to **participate in the technology sessions**. Summarize your findings, along with how it affects your business, and share this information with your leaders. Technology-centric conferences we recommend include DevLearn and ASTD's TechKnowledge conference.[3]

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[2] http://www.bottomlineperformance.com/6-mobile-learning-trends-that-grew-in-2012/

[3] eLearning Guild DevLearn: http://www.elearningguild.com/content.cfm?selection=doc.24
   ASTD TechKnowledge: http://www.tkconference.org/

3. Where is your company in its L&D technology adoption strategy?
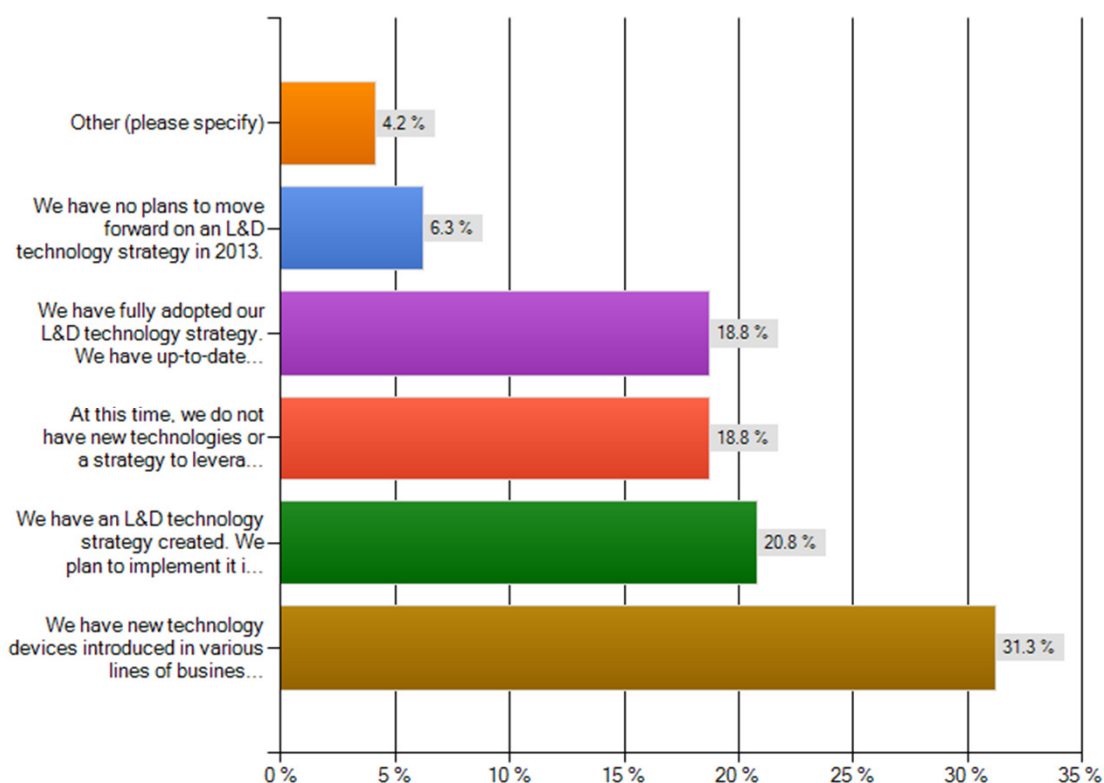
- **19%** have fully adopted their L&D technology strategy. They have up-to-date technology in place across lines of business, and their training programs are fully developed to leverage it.

- **21%** have an L&D technology strategy created. They plan to implement it in 2013, and begin designing training that leverages their technology.

- **31%** have new technology devices introduced in various lines of business. They need to create an L&D strategy to address it.

- **19%** do not have new technologies or a strategy to leverage them. They plan to explore it in 2013.

- **6%** have no plans to move forward on an L&D technology strategy in 2013.

Technology Adoption Strategy

Creating big buzz in technology right now is BYOD, Bring Your Own Device. According to Gartner, this is "the single most radical shift in the economics of client computing for business since PCs invaded the workplace." [4]

It involves allowing employees to personally purchase their computing device and use it on the enterprise network to access applications and data. For many companies this is limited to smartphones and tablets, but may also apply to laptops and other devices.

Employees increasingly expect to have available to them at work the same state-of-the-art devices and access to content that they have at home. This has major implications for training and development from many standpoints – budgets, design strategies and development tools, LMS tracking, styles and standards, and overall learner experience.

About 20% of our respondents have fully designed and implemented an L&D technology strategy, along with the training that leverages it. That leaves 80% of our respondents at some other point on the continuum. Because of the evolving nature of technology, strategy design and implementation needs to be ongoing for training and development teams. It should be visited every 3-6 months to ensure it is relevant and supporting business priorities.

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[4] http://www.gartner.com/it/page.jsp?id=2136615

Technology Adoption Strategy (continued)

The organizations that embrace technology, plan for it, and implement the right learning with it will be the winners. What are some ways you begin to do that?

- **Find the organizations that are doing it well** today, and learn from them.

- **Develop partnerships with outside providers** with expertise in creating a comprehensive strategy or an initiative-specific strategy. These providers should also be able to help you in the design and development of the deliverables that fit the strategy.

- **Partner with internal teams** (marketing, sales, IT, operations, etc.) to get their perspective on technology adoption within your organization.

- **Ask your employees.** What devices are they using inside and outside of work? How are they using them to learn? What are their likes and dislikes when compared to your organization's current strategies?

4. In 2013, how will your organization's L&D teams be staffed to keep up with the growing technology emphasis in training?
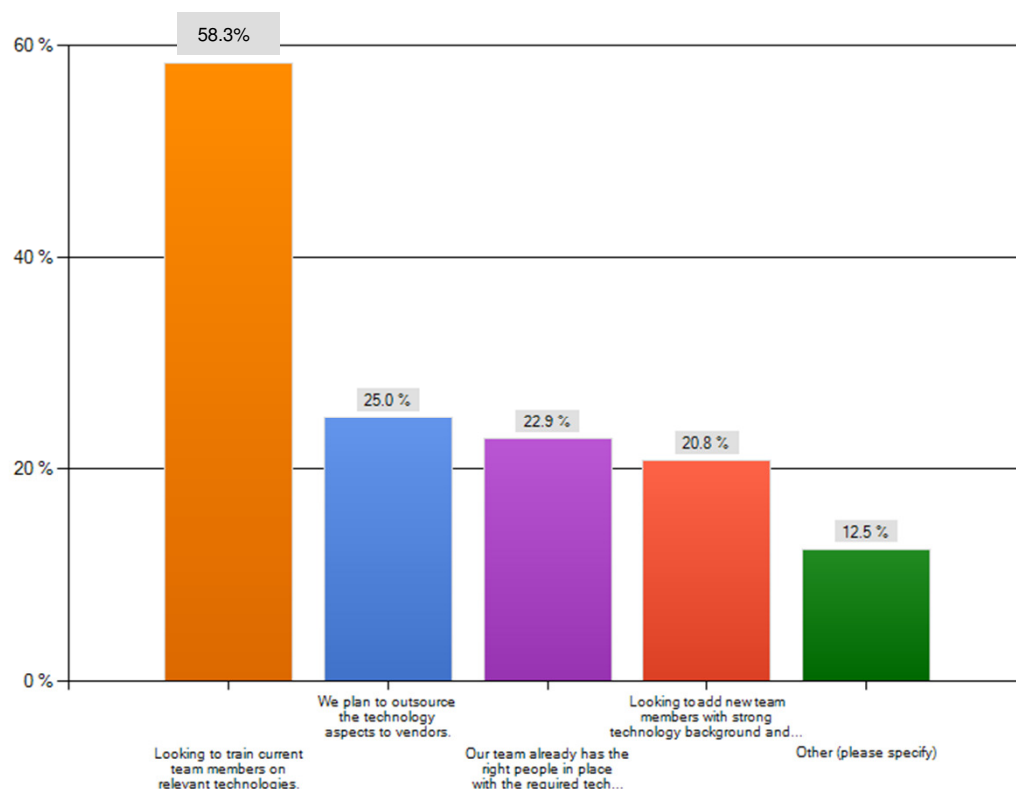
- **58%** are looking to train current team members on relevant technologies

- **25%** plan to outsource the technology aspects to vendors.

- **23%** of respondent's teams already have the right people in place with the required technology skills.

- **21%** are looking to add new team members with strong technology background and skills.

- **13%** are either planning to utilize a team of business unit and IT staff to implement their training strategies, or they are unsure of upcoming staffing changes.

Staffing for Technology
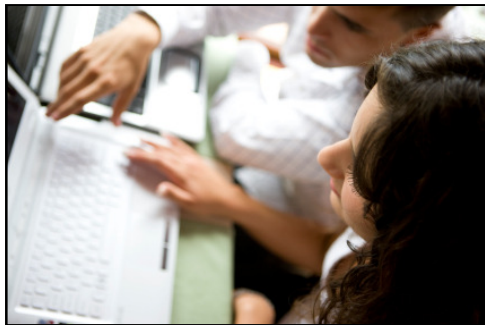
 As technology evolves, so do the relevant skills needed for organizations to be successful in the long-term. The Institute for the Future and the University of Phoenix Research Institute published their list of the top 10 skills needed for the future workforce [5].

Each one of the skills found on the next page touches on technology in some way. Because learning is becoming increasingly technology-based, it's critical that training professionals demonstrate these skills regardless of role (instructional designer, developer, curriculum manager, facilitator, etc.).

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[5] http://cdn.theatlantic.com/static/front/docs/sponsored/phoenix/future_work_skills_2020.pdf

Staffing for Technology (continued)

These are skills you'll want to look for when interviewing a new team member, or building the skills of your current team.

Skill	Definition
Sense-making	Being able to determine deeper meaning and significance
Social intelligence	Our ability to connect with others, especially in our virtual workplaces
Novel and adaptive thinking	Problem-solving that goes beyond what is rules-based
Cross-cultural competency	Operating in different cultures
Computational thinking	Interpreting vast amounts of data in decision-making
New-media literacy	Assess and develop content that uses new media forms (such as video, gaming, blogs, podcasts, apps) for persuasive communication
Trans-disciplinary thinking and application	Using several disciplines to solve a problem
Design mindset	Discerning the kind of thinking a task requires, and planning our environments accordingly
Cognitive load management	Filtering information for what's important versus what's noise
Virtual collaboration	Being a productive and engaged member of a virtual team

About Impact Instruction Group

Founded in 2007, Impact Instruction Group is a leading corporate training and development firm. The firm's business units include:

- **Custom Corporate Training & Development**
- **Strategic Leadership Excellence for Emerging Women Leaders**
- **Amy Franko, Speaker on Professional Development for Women in Business**

Impact Instruction Group works with large enterprises on blended learning solutions as well as development initiatives for emerging women leaders. The firm has won the APEX Award of Excellence in the categories of training design and one-of-a-kind education & training publications. In addition, Amy Franko, Founder & CEO, is one of a select few authorized by author Lois Frankel (of *Nice Girls Don't Get the Corner Office* fame) to create and deliver programs specific to her best-selling books. She is a nationally-recognized speaker on the topic of women in leadership. Impact Instruction Group is based in Columbus, Ohio. (**www.impactinstruction.com**)

How to Contact Us

To learn more about custom corporate training and development services, professional development programs designed for emerging women leaders, or to book Amy Franko for an event, contact Sarah Steele: **sarah.steele@impactinstruction.com**