

Highlights and Trends from the ASTD State of the Industry Report



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ASTD State of the Industry Report Highlights and Trends

The [ASTD State of the Industry report](#) is an annual review of workplace learning and development trends. It reviews how the profession performed as a whole, how companies are investing in T&D resources, as well as content and delivery trends.

This article highlights the major trends and investments from the current state of the industry and compares them with previous years.

- The report presents data in three groupings: consolidated (all organizations participating in the survey), ASTD BEST Award winners, and Global Fortune 500 companies. This article focuses on the consolidated figures.
- The data points used in this report are from 2011; they're reported by ASTD as the 2012 report.

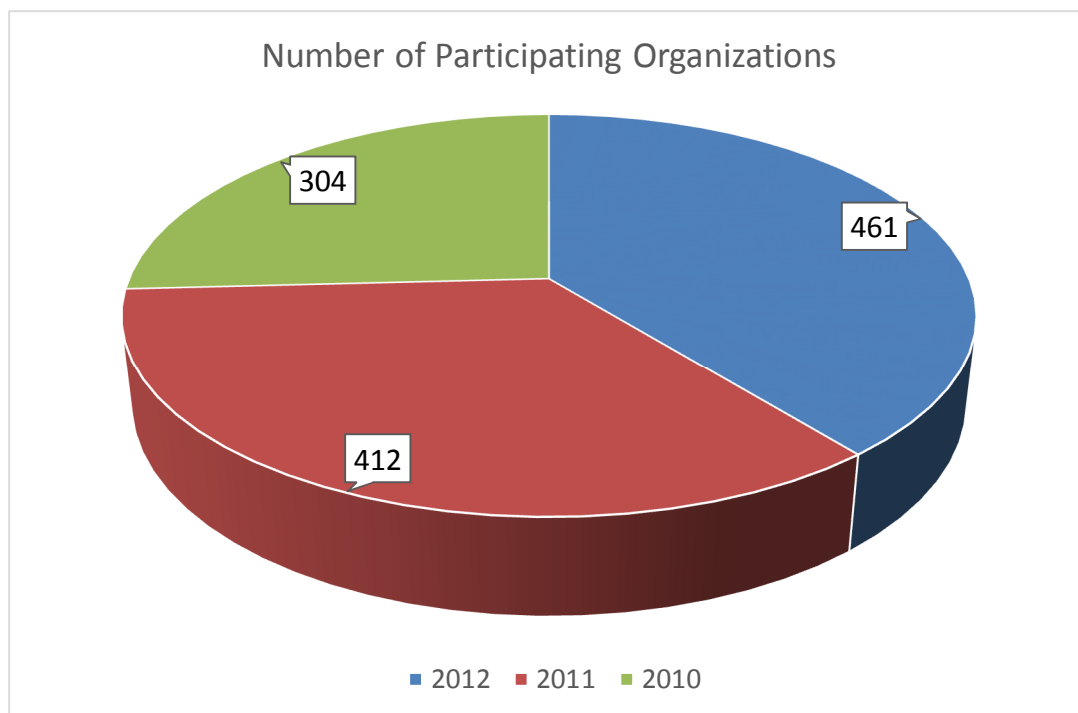
Trends in Overall Learning Investment

U.S. companies invested about \$156 billion in learning and development in 2011. The most notable difference in this overall investment from the previous year is the **decrease in spend on the internal learning function, which lowered the overall investment figures.**

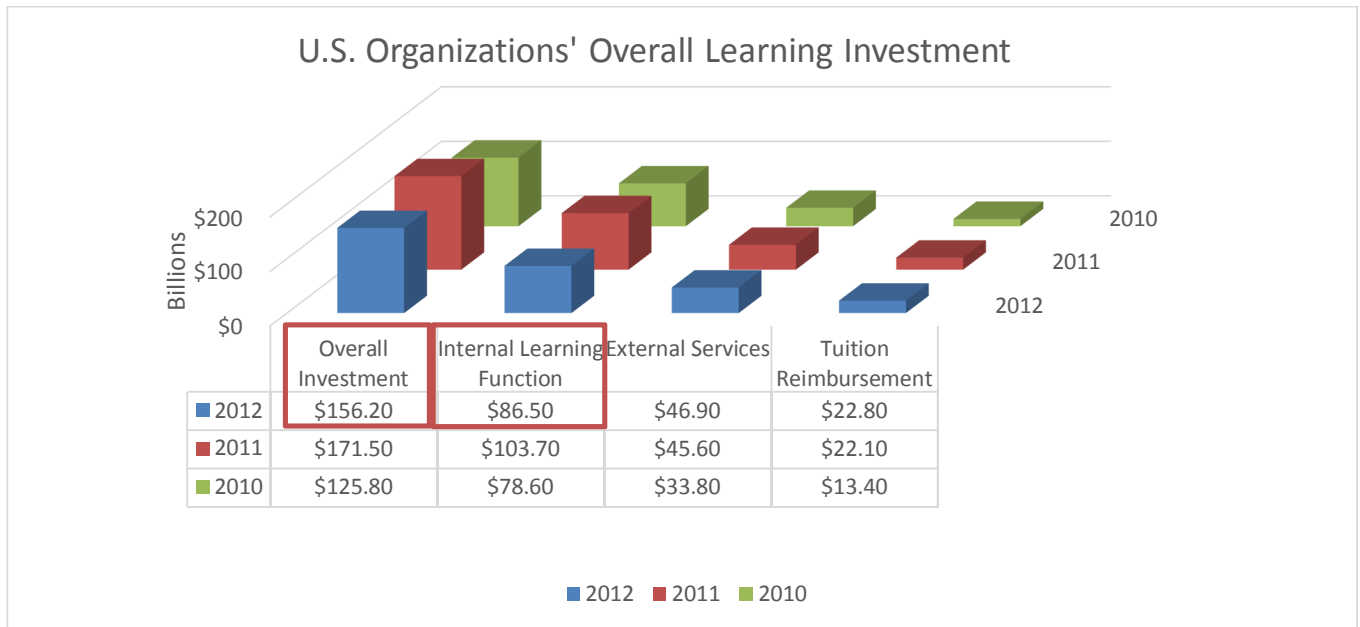
Of all three groups participating in the survey, **ASTD BEST organizations have the highest percentage spend on the internal learning function**, developing many of their L&D programs in house.

A consistent and positive trend is the **increasing number of organizations participating in the survey each year.**

- This increased participation shows the value in gathering meaningful data associated with training and development investments and outcomes.
- Those organizations that leverage this data are better able to align themselves with business objectives and performance.



U.S. Organizations' Overall Learning Investment Combined

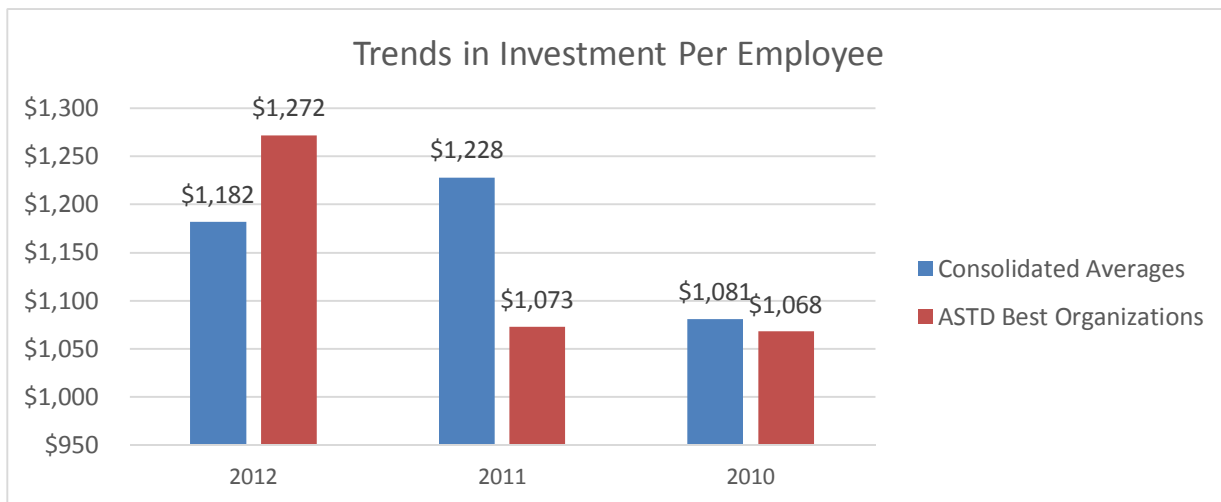


What we're seeing at Impact Instruction:

- **Companies continue to be selective in which initiatives and projects to pursue**, and greater attention is being paid to alignment with business outcomes. [Learn more about 5 critical questions to ask when making the business case for a project.](#) We're also seeing an increasing number of internal T&D staff tasked with initiatives that in previous years were on hold.
- **The most successful training organizations have a healthy balance to their internal and external spend.** It's important to have internal training teams that are in the business every day, as well as access to vetted external partners – whether the need is for design and development of priority projects, or for a specific area of expertise.
- **Hiring leaders are looking for T&D professionals with combination skill sets.** We're increasingly seeing hiring leaders that would like team members to have a combination of consultative, design, and development skill wherever possible. It's not an easy find – but those who are strong in more than one area, or show an adaptability to grow their skills beyond a single area are standing out to hiring leaders.

Trends in Investment per Employee

According to the ASTD report, several factors influence the actual amount invested per employee, from company size to the industry type. **In this year’s survey, the number of large companies participating nearly doubled. Notably, ASTD BEST organizations typically invest a higher amount per employee than the average.**



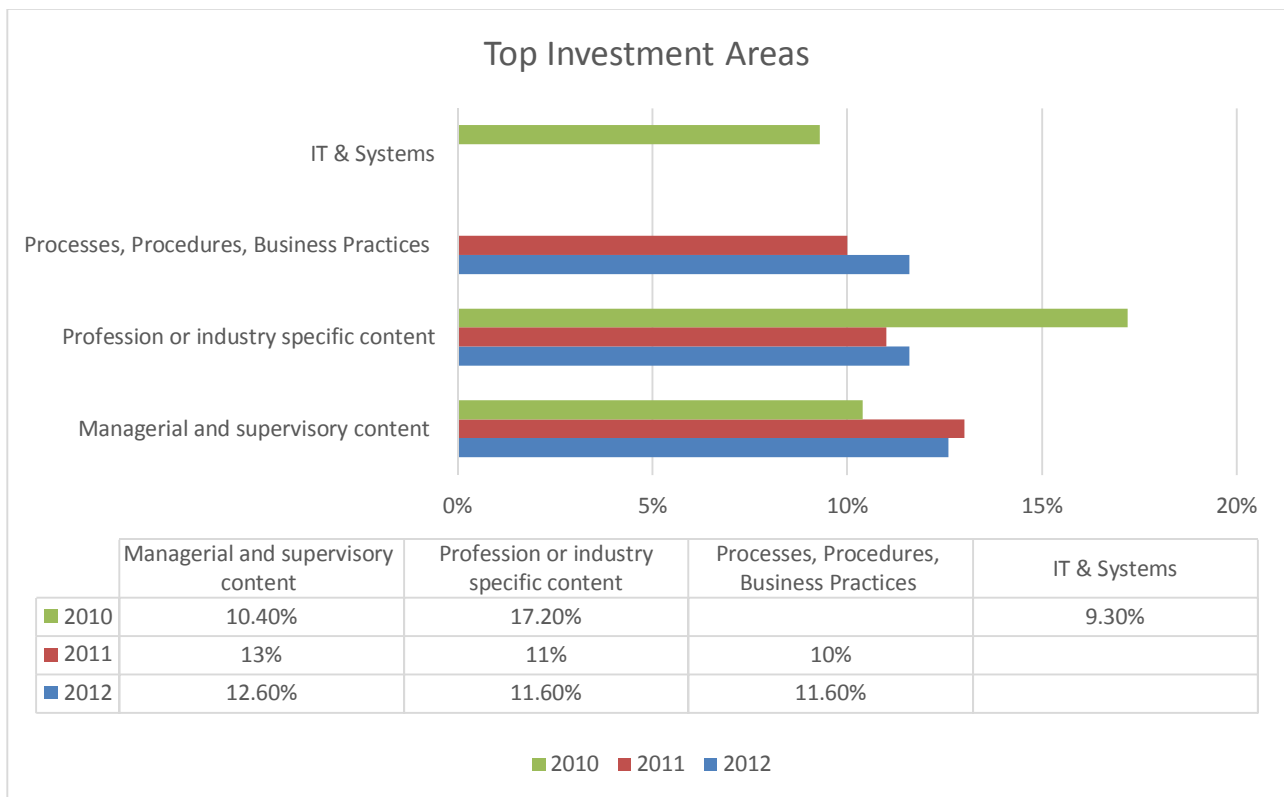
What we’re seeing at Impact Instruction:

- The most important element to the investment per employee is **aligning investments to the strategic goals of the organization**. For example, if you’re in a retail environment and your CEO announced a strategy to increase in-store product sales, it will likely affect where investments are made in training projects and employee groups.
- A focus on **making the translation between the investments made and effect across multiple business units**. This requires T&D professionals to take a bigger-picture view and cultivate working knowledge of the entire business, in addition to the business units they support.
- **Employees are increasingly looking for personalized learning experiences**, as well as investments in their development. One of our roles as T&D professionals and leaders is to [create an environment that fosters these attributes](#).

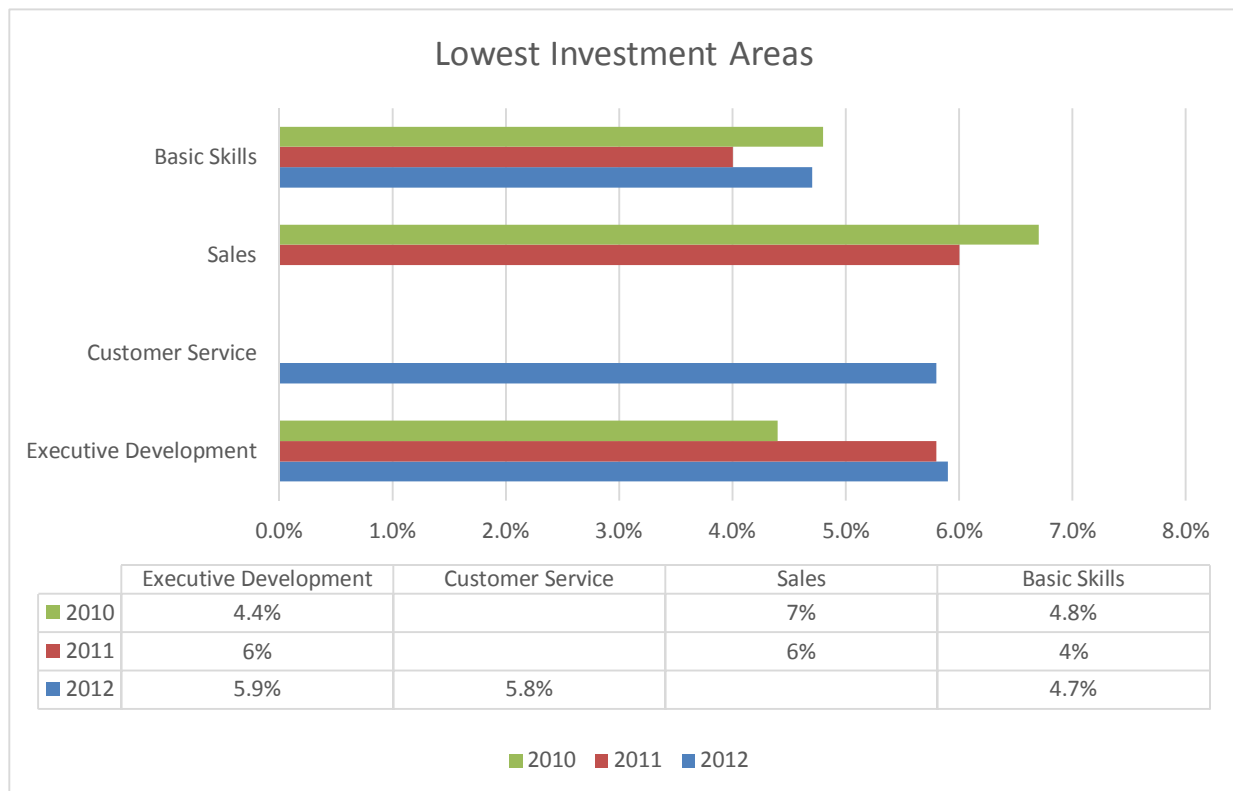
Trends in Content Areas

ASTD measures the distribution of content provided by employers, organized into 12 primary topics. Surveyed organizations report the content made available by percentage for each topic.

- The top investment areas tend to reach larger proportions of the employee population.
- The lowest investments percentage-wise tend to be for smaller, more specialized audiences.



Trends in Content Areas (continued)

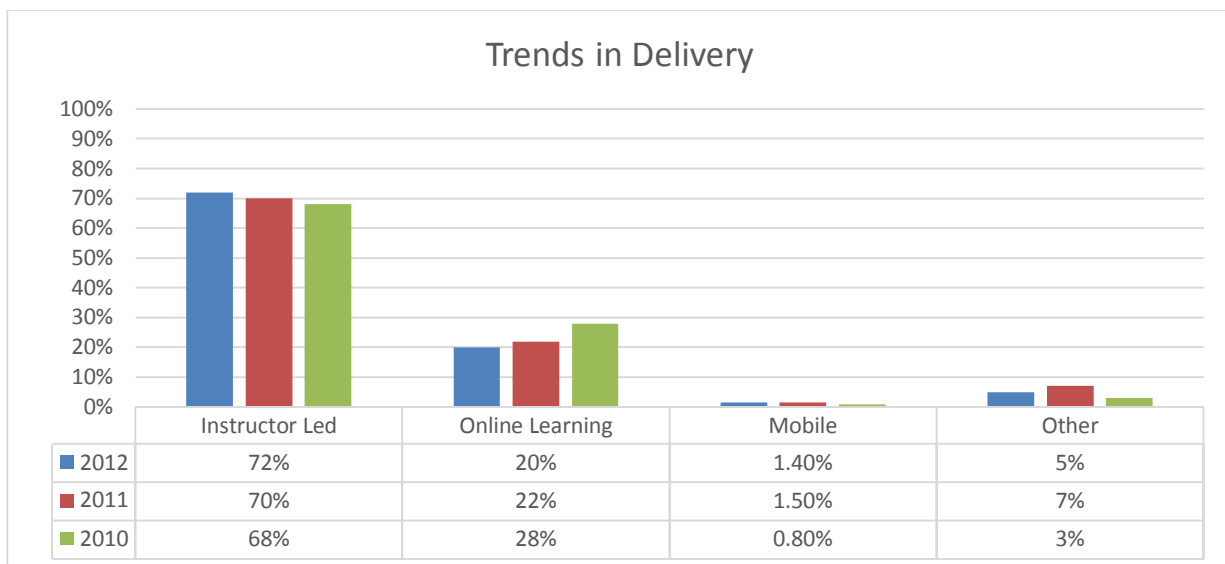


What we're seeing at Impact Instruction:

- The **importance of a given content area can change rapidly** within an organization, as it's often tied to priorities or industry issues.
- The top requests we receive are for **customizations in support of new product launches, enterprise-wide applications, and business processes** affecting a large groups of employees or clients.
- The biggest gap? **Ongoing support and results measurement** once the content is launched and trained. This continues to be an area of opportunity to plan for upfront in any initiative, so the investment can be maintained and measured once it's implemented.

Trends in Delivery

The trends in delivery have largely remained the same over the past three years. **Instructor-led delivery** continues to lead the way when it comes to formal learning, at **72.41% of formal learning hours**. (Of this percentage, 58.68% is in the live classroom setting.) Online learning encompasses a variety of methods, including virtual classroom, webinar, and self-paced e-learning.



What we're seeing at Impact Instruction:

Technology-based learning will continue to grow in demand and use. [In our recent survey of how technology trends are affecting corporate learning](#), we found that e-learning will continue to be the top investment area, at 86%.

- **Webinar investments** are top-of-mind as well. This means that an increasing number of projects will be optimized for virtual delivery, with trainers needing strong virtual facilitation skills.
- While **mobile learning** is a hot topic, in most training organizations, it's a very small percentage of what's available for learners in a formal environment. In the larger organizations we work with, it's being adopted in targeted groups or it's still in the research and strategy phases.

- Many organizations have more mobile maturity on the business side (example: client-facing apps). T&D organizations would be well-served to **understand how mobile strategy is working in other areas of the business**, so best practices can be leveraged within training.
- **Video-based design and delivery** continue to be a top request, whether as stand-alone pieces, or as part of a larger, blended delivery. This method will fit well with mobile as more organizations adopt mobile learning initiatives.

Learn more about the ASTD *State of the Industry Report* by visiting <http://www.astd.org/Publications/Research-Reports/2012/2012-State-of-the-Industry>.

Visit <http://www.impactinstruction.com> to learn more about our customized training and development services, and access our **exclusive 2013 Learning and Development Technology Report**.

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