

**2<sup>nd</sup> ANNUAL** Learning & Development  
Technology Report



*2014 Learning & Development Technology  
Trends are Changing the Way We Learn.*

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[www.impactinstruction.com](http://www.impactinstruction.com)

## Introduction

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Technology is not only changing the way the world operates; it's changing the way we learn, and the way we offer learning. Mobile learning, social learning, virtual conferences, gamification, and simulations are just a few of the terms used in today's L&D environment.



Impact Instruction Group conducted its 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Learning & Development Technology survey to get a pulse on the changes in L&D technology behaviors and trends, specifically in mobile learning, as we head into 2014. This report shows the trend is moving in the mobile direction, and not as slowly as some may think.

In our report, we tracked learning technology trends in five areas:

1. Categories of learning technologies that companies plan to invest in for 2014
2. Leadership interest in implementing new technologies
3. Maturity of corporate mobile learning strategies
4. Staffing plans for mobile initiatives
5. Which business units are being considered for mobile learning implementations

We also compared the data from our 2013 technology report to determine the changes in trends over last year. As technology offerings continue to become more robust, so do our capabilities to offer learning in a way that makes it interesting and convenient for our learners. This report offers trends data on learning and development technologies, particularly in the mobile arena.

## Survey Highlights

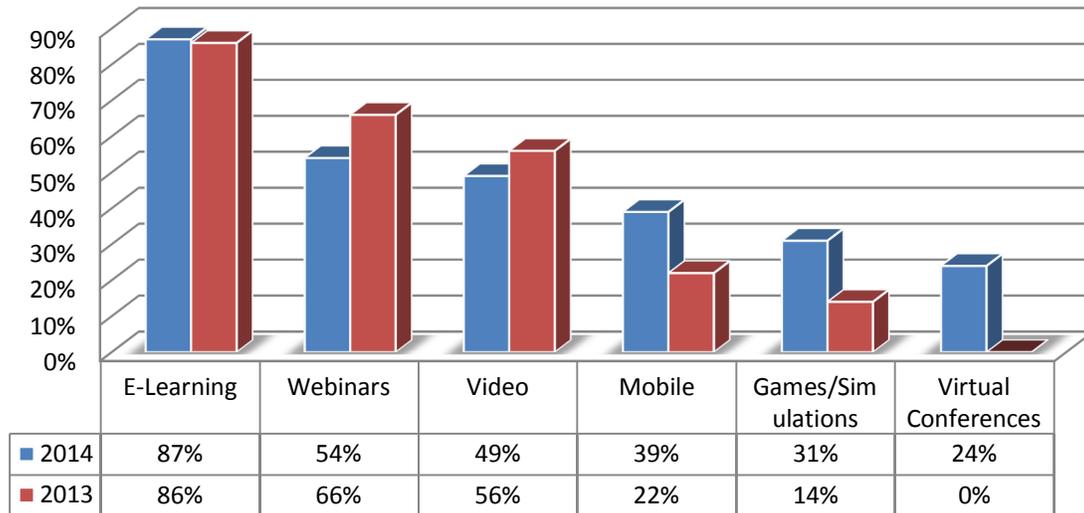
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- Investment:** Still ranking #1 in technology investment is E-learning at 87%; however, investments in mobile learning, games, and simulations both increased by 17%. Webinars and videos decreased by 12% and 7% respectively, although half of our respondents are still investing in them next year. Virtual conferences made the list this year with 24% of our respondents planning 2014 investments in that category.
- Leadership:** In 2014, we are seeing a decrease in leadership-level interest with implementing technology-based solutions. A combined 66% said their leadership team's interest is increasing, 25% have the same interest as last year, and 9% are reluctant. Compared with 2013, where 75% of leadership interest was increasing, 20% remained the same as the previous year, and only 4% were reluctant.
- Strategy:** The majority of respondents (44%) said that they have new mobile devices in their organizations, and now a learning strategy is needed to address it. 6% have fully-adopted strategies; another 6% have strategies and plan to implement them in the coming year. 17% are planning to explore mobile learning in 2014.
- Staffing:** When asked how their staff is going to address mobile trends, the majority of respondents (38%) stated that they are going to train their current staff, and 21% already have the staff in place for mobile learning. Many respondents also shared that they have budget constraints that do not allow them to hire staff or outsourced vendors.
- Implementation across lines of business:** Survey respondents' plans to implement mobile technology ranked highest in field organizations (41%) and operations (34%), with IT and customer service trailing at 23% and 20% respectively.



## Technology-Based L&D Investments

### In which technology-based learning and performance support methods will your organization invest in 2014?



When asked in which technology-based learning and performance support methods organizations will invest in 2014, e-learning still ranked the highest. However, we saw 17% increases in mobile learning and games/simulations over the 2013 data. Virtual conferences are gaining in popularity, while webinars and video have decreased.

- E-Learning is here to stay in 2014, increasing by 1% over last year to 87%.
- The largest investment increases are in mobile learning (39%) and games/simulations (31%), each increasing 17% over last year.
- 39% of our respondents are planning to invest in mobile learning this year. Only 22% planned the investment in 2013.
- 24% of organizations plan on investing in virtual conferences.
- Although half of our respondents reported that they plan to invest in webinars and videos, both areas decreased when compared with 2013 data. . Investment in webinars decreased by 12% and in video by 7%.

## Technology-Based L&D Trends

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When it comes to design and delivery methods, we weren't surprised to see e-learning atop the list. However, the rise in mobile, games and simulations and virtual conferences are changing the way we are delivering our learning content.

### 14 Trends We are Seeing

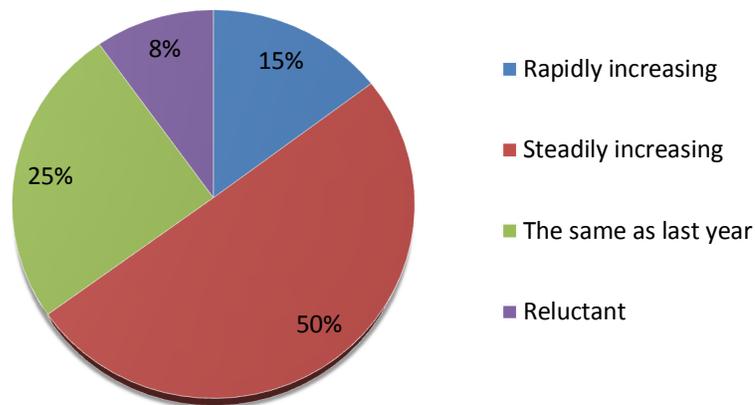
1. Increasing sophistication of interaction in e-learning, allowing learners to use higher-level critical thinking skills
2. Ever-shorter and more focused e-learning courses
3. Native HTML5 programming
4. More value placed upon higher-end design and production
5. Further reductions in instructor-led seat time, pushing learning opportunities into more technology-based methods
6. 3-5 minute short video segments combined into an e-learning course
7. Video segments or short webinars combined with performance support tools and job aids
8. Video segments, designed by training, that are part of larger initiatives such as change management and marketing
9. Storytelling – teaching as a skill, using as a learning device
10. Web-based “learning resources” to meet people where they are: they're not courses or formal learning interactions (example: <http://handbook.zaarly.com/#introduction> )
11. Increasing requests for design and delivery optimized for mobile devices, especially with field organizations
12. Virtual conferences and symposiums increasing, as well as the need for the learning materials to support them
13. Usage of cloud-based tools to assemble, share, and track learning content
14. Continued implementation of games and simulations

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.

## Leadership Interest

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**I would characterize my leadership team's interest in implementing technology-based training solutions as:**



We saw a decrease this year in leadership teams' interest in implementing technology-based training solutions.

### **In 2014:**

- A combined 66% said their leadership team's interest in implementing technology-based solutions is increasing,
- 25% have the same interest as last year, and
- 9% are reluctant.

### **In 2013:**

- 75% of leadership teams' interest in implementing technology-based solutions was increasing,
- 20% remained the same as the previous year, and
- Only 4% were reluctant.

## Engaging Leadership

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Technology has bridged the communication gap, creating borderless business opportunities around the globe. Your leaders must understand that this new paradigm shift allows us to create a learning world with little limitations, providing access and resources not matter where your learners are. It's an opportunity to hardwire your ongoing learning plan within your culture and create a place where your learners are motivated to go for their learning advancement.

To be a competitive employer, and company in general, it's more important than ever to engage your leadership in leveraging technology in this ever-growing learning environment. This is a prime opportunity for learning professionals to position themselves as essential to the organization's success.

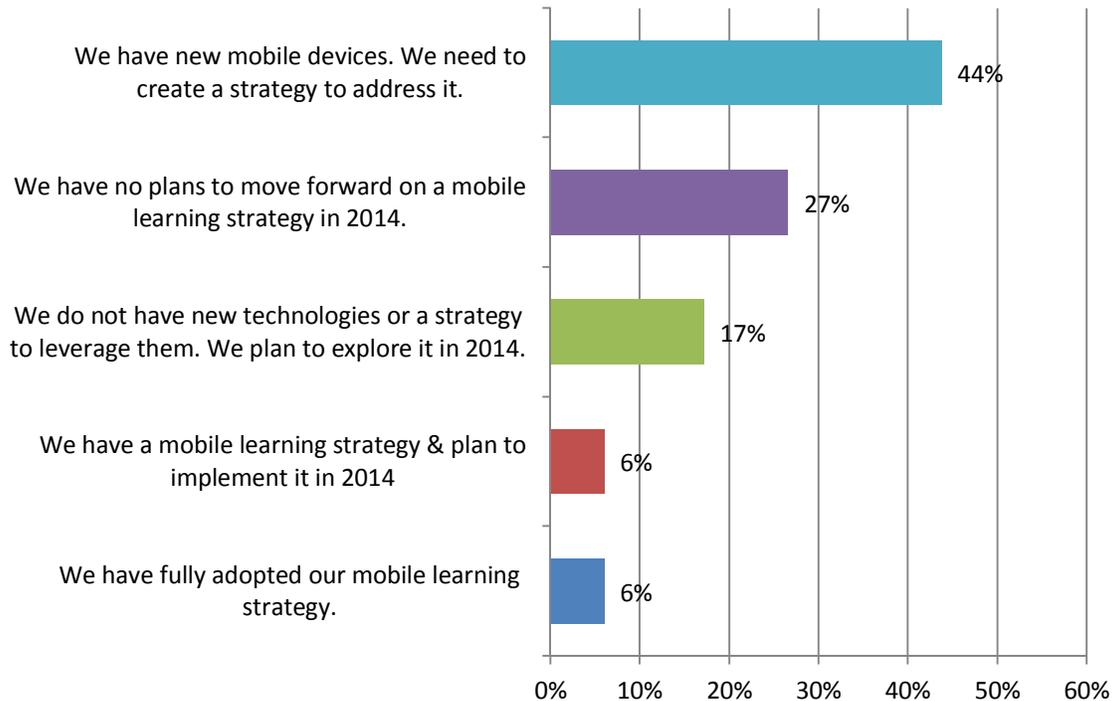
**When it comes to technology, what are some ways you can do this? Become an expert.**

- **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.** 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.
- By becoming an expert, you can best position the technical aspects of your learning plan to your leadership team.

## Mobile Learning Strategy

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### Where is your company in its mobile learning strategy?



This data shows where we are on the mobile continuum. Only a combined 12% of respondents have mobile learning strategies in place. Another 44% have new mobile technologies and now need to create a strategy to address it. 2014 will be a great opportunity to expand learning in the mobile arena.

- 44% of respondents said that they have mobile devices, and need to create a strategy to address it.
- 6% of respondents have a fully adopted mobile learning strategy and another 6% have a strategy with plans of implementing it in 2014.
- 17% are planning to explore mobile technologies and a strategy in 2014.

## Mobile Learning Strategy

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In our 2013 report, we discussed the growing BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) trend. This is still a growing trend, but we are seeing more and more companies now purchasing new corporate-owned mobile devices for business units. Almost half of our survey respondents stated that they have new mobile devices and need to create a strategy to address these devices in 2014.



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.

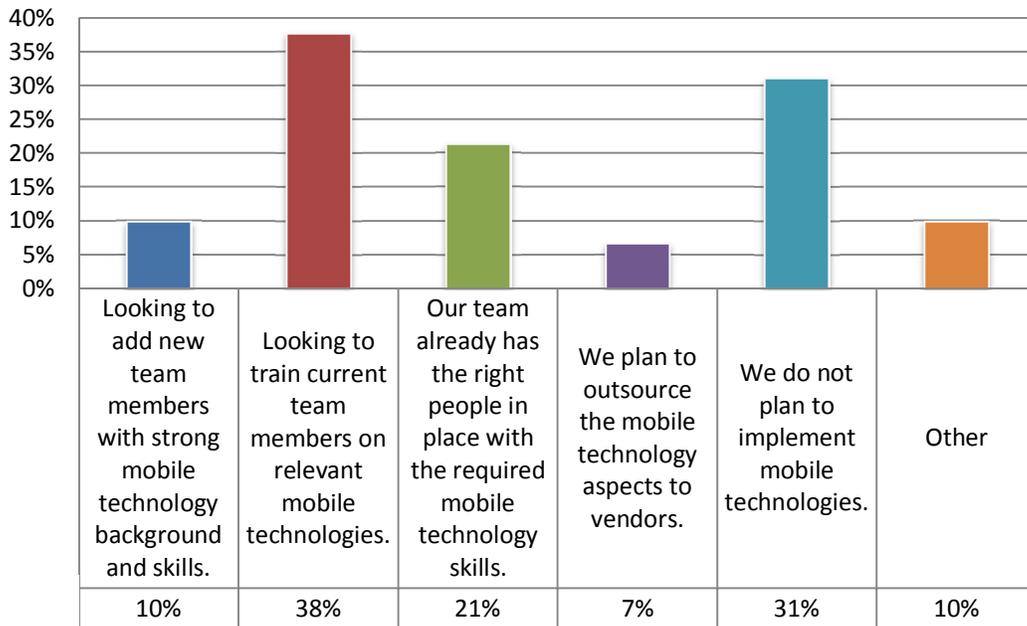
Because of the evolving nature of technology, strategy design and implementation needs to be ongoing for training and development teams. It should be revisited every 3-6 months to ensure it is relevant and supporting business priorities.

The organizations that embrace mobile 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 mobile technology adoption and learning opportunities 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? What do they expect to be able to do with their devices?

## Staffing

### In 2014, how will your organization's L&D teams be staffed to keep up with the growing mobile learning emphasis in training?



Many of our respondents stated that they either have the current staff in place or plan to train their staff for their mobile learning efforts. Many respondents noted budget constraints for hiring staff or outsourcing vendors for mobile learning initiatives.

- The majority of respondents (38%) stated that they are going to train their current staff to address mobile learning trends.
- 21% already have the staff in place for mobile learning.
- 10% are planning to add new team members, and 7% outsource it to vendors.

## Staffing

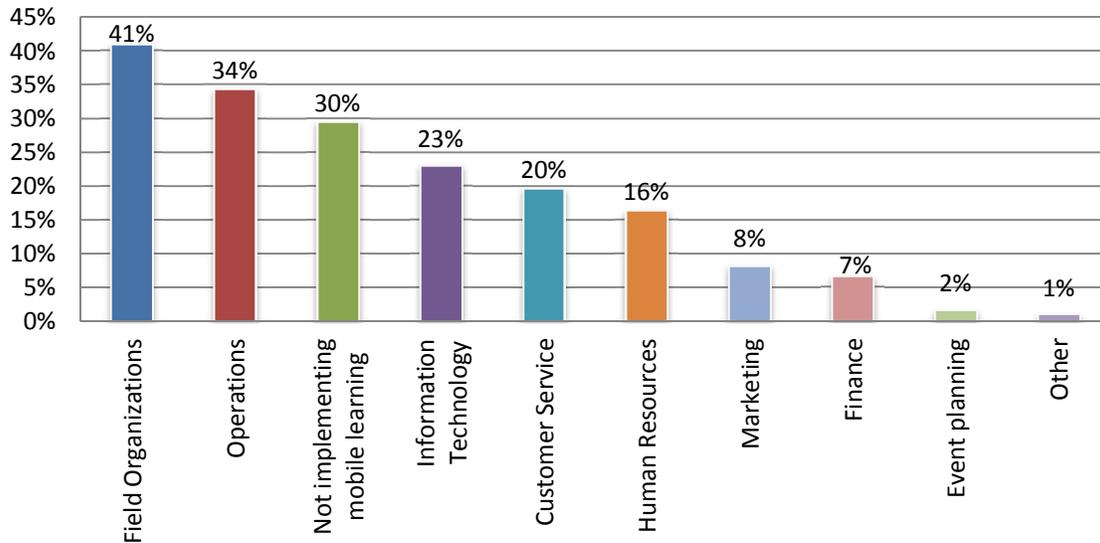
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As technology evolves, so do the relevant skills needed for organizations to be successful in the long-term. [The Institute for the Future and the University of Phoenix Research Institute](#) published their list of the top 10 skills needed for the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

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

## Implementation - Which business units to consider

### In which business units/functional areas are you implementing or exploring the implementation of mobile learning?



Business units that traditionally have higher mobility and travel requirements within their teams ranked highest in exploration and implementation of mobile learning.

- Plans to implement mobile technology ranked highest in field organizations (41%) and operations (34%).
- Information Technology and Customer Service trailed at 23% and 20% respectively.
- Human resources, marketing, finance, and event planning made the list, but exploration into mobile learning in these business units is not the highest priority.

## Mobile Implementation: What to consider

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The strategic importance of mobile technologies should not be underestimated. Mobile learning complements your current learning plan, makes learning more integrated, and can create a motivating environment. For example, mobile technology has become an indispensable tool for sales teams that should also be leveraged for learning. In operations, such as with field technicians, it can provide on-demand access to both diagnostic tools and training while they are out in the field.

Regardless of which business units you choose to explore for mobile implementation, it's important to fully understand your goals for the technology. In an excerpt from a paper released by [McGraw-Hill Research Foundation](#), titled *mLearning: A Practical Approach to Mobile Technology for Workforce Training*,<sup>1</sup> Dr. Alex Heiphetz, Ph.D. recommends considering the following when starting an mLearning program:

### ***mLearning: A Practical Approach to Mobile Technology for Workforce Training***

- A company should start by identifying its learning and organizational goals and the criteria by which success or failure are to be measured. Have the first few mobile learning initiatives been successful? Is learning retention the only goal? Or is the goal to support field employees?
- Think about content. It is highly unlikely that your organization will be replacing all types of learning with mLearning delivery. Make sure mLearning works in concert with already existing programs.
- Consider already existing content. By blindly copy eLearning materials to the company's new platform, you should not expect good results. However, existing content can be modified so that it is suitable for the specifics of learning on mobile devices.
- Think about format options. Your choice among formats depends on the suitability or availability of that format on your mLearning platform as well as the context of the program.
- Think about delivery options. A company can create a mobile application, specific to mobile platforms, or base its program on in-browser delivery. An app would have a clean, more functional user interface. A blended approach—in which some content is available via apps and some via a browser—may work best.
- Create a pilot project. When choosing a pilot group, a company should create a representative cross-section of its potential learners: novice and advanced smart-phone users, executives and technical personnel, enthusiasts and skeptics.

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<sup>1</sup> McGraw-Hill: <http://mcgraw-hillresearchfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Mobile-Learning.pdf>

## About Impact Instruction Group

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Founded in 2007, Impact Instruction Group is a leading corporate training and development firm. Impact Instruction focuses on custom training design and development for organizations' key strategic initiatives. The firm's core practice areas include:

- Mobile Learning
- E-Learning & Video
- Blended Learning
- Visual Design

Impact Instruction Group works with large enterprises on blended learning solutions. 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 a nationally-recognized speaker on the topic of women in leadership. Impact Instruction Group is based in Columbus, Ohio.

## How to Contact Us

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