

E-learning trends: what to expect in 2013

 By [Kirsty Chadwick](#)

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E-learning is expected to be worth US\$107 billion globally by 2015. Experts predict that digital learning is going to be increasingly mobile in 2013, which will open it up to a wide audience in South Africa where 2.4 million people have access to the internet via their cellphones alone.

Just like interacting with technology every day has changed (and is changing) the way we work, the way we shop, the way we socialise, and other aspects of our lives, increasingly using technology in education is going to change the way we learn, too.

"Gamification" is the current buzzword in the digital sphere, and it's likely to be the biggest trend to affect digital learning in 2013. In 2011 gamers in the US spent \$17bn on video games and the average gamer in the US spends 10 hours a week gaming. E-learning designers and developers are starting to harness what it is that keeps gamers coming back for more to design more effective training material.

One of the things that's most compelling about playing video games is that you can't fail. If you don't succeed, you simply haven't won *yet* and you will, in most cases, keep trying until you do. This positive approach to learning boosts confidence and makes grasping new information a challenge rather than a chore. Adding a progress bar that gives physical form to a student's achievements, as in a video game, reinforces their sense of achievement as they progress.

Designed to be interactive

Like video games, e-learning should be designed to be as interactive as possible. Built-in games, video, audio and "virtual classrooms" where students can meet online to make subject matter come alive in a way that textbooks can't.

As teachers and trainers begin to increasingly use mobile devices in the classroom in a "blended" approach to learning that sees students meet in classrooms as well as virtually, multimedia will become a more accessible teaching tool. Some argue that the next generation, who have grown up in what's becoming known as a "screen culture", will demand this type of learning medium because they can no longer relate to the type of teaching that their parents had.

In my next piece I look at how social learning and learning on the go will influence learning in 2013.

ABOUT KIRSTY CHADWICK

As an educator, public speaker and leader, Kirsty Chadwick has spent almost two decades involved in the field of education. Founder of The Training Room Online, which designs and

develops innovative tailor-made e-learning material for the corporate, industrial and private sectors, Kirsty has trained, developed and inspired people across three continents.

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