



eLearning Trends and Predictions for 2018

by Asha Pandey | Chief Learning Strategist, EI Design





Christopher Pappas
(Founder of The eLearning
Industry's Network)

Foreword

With an interesting year ahead, those of us into eLearning are excited by the prospects waiting to unfold. Viewing 2017 as an introduction and 2018 as a continuity, will surely spark expectations for the prevalence of dynamic trends and promising newcomers, all offering valuable aid in our common work—taking eLearning forward.

Sharing this enthusiasm, EI Design stays loyal to researching and providing us with its list of eLearning trends and predictions for the new year. Reading this eBook is like gazing at the future through the looking glass of experience: truly insightful, it can surely give you a head start on this annual struggle inside an ever-changing industry.

The eBook is helpfully divided in three sections, stating opinions on continuing trends—already big ones or those steadily emerging—and presenting the readers with practices and tools to keep their eyes on.

Asha Pandey, Chief Learning Strategist at EI Design, writes of progressions awaited on trends that already hold a respectable niche in the industry, notably mLearning, Gamification, Social Learning, and Rapid eLearning tools. She is also predicting that those who invested in Learning portals, Personalization, and Curation will start capitalizing.

Going even further, this eBook offers insight on concepts from the future to come. As stated here, 2018 is the year to offer us a fuller taste of mass deployment of Artificial Intelligence, Augmented Reality, and Virtual Reality. A little less intriguing, but useful all the same, is the utility of Big Data Reporting and Analytics in the determination of ROI Learner Analytics, and the deployment of the latter to enhance learning experiences.

Facing a pile of lists, New Year's resolutions, studies, and predictions, I strongly advise you to read with mindfulness all that Asha has summed up in this list of eLearning trends and predictions for 2018. Her practical experience in architecting eLearning and her proven instinct guarantee the accuracy of these predictions.

Witnessing over and over this phase of learning transformation, through the interactions with her customers, Asha sees “organisations moving beyond investment on only formal training to an ecosystem based approach that creates a superior learning culture. This approach promotes learning as a continuum”.

I believe that all of these serve as an appetizer not just for this eBook with the eLearning Trends And Predictions For 2018, but for the whole year that has just started to roll!

Join us for a closer look!



About the Author

Asha Pandey is the Chief Learning Strategist at EI Design. She heads the organisation's Solution Architecting and Innovation teams and brings her rich 15 years' experience into play to help EI Design customers transform their learning and keep pace with the changing dynamics in the Learning industry. A regular writer for various global Learning forums, Asha is one of the most recognised thought leaders in the industry. She also shares her insights regularly on a range of topics on her blog at www.eidesign.net/blog.

How will this eBook help you?

As the Chief Learning Strategist at EI Design, I have had the privilege of working with L&D teams across the world. Last 4-5 years have seen rapid changes in the way learners want to learn and how businesses want to see and measure the impact on training spend.

We at EI Design, have been partnering with our customers in this phase of “**learning transformation**”. The pointers shared by me in this eBook reflect insights from this close interaction and collaboration.

As you browse through the eBook, you will see how many of the aspects are interconnected and how one is fueling the growth of another aspect.

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For instance,

- ✓ mLearning or mobile learning is helping Microlearning (or vice-versa)
- ✓ Wider adoption Microlearning is enabling its usage not only for formal learning but also informal learning
- ✓ Usage of Video-based learning (including interactive videos) and Gamification has seen an increase in higher usage of Microlearning
- ✓ mLearning is also pushing Personalisation
- ✓ Personalisation, Curation and Social learning are pushing the adoption of Learning portals

At EI Design, we see organisations moving beyond investment on only formal training to an ecosystem-based approach that creates a superior learning culture. This approach promotes “learning as a continuum”.

So, my assessment is that this eBook will provide you with pointers that should help you create or enhance your **Learning and Performance Ecosystem** in 2018.

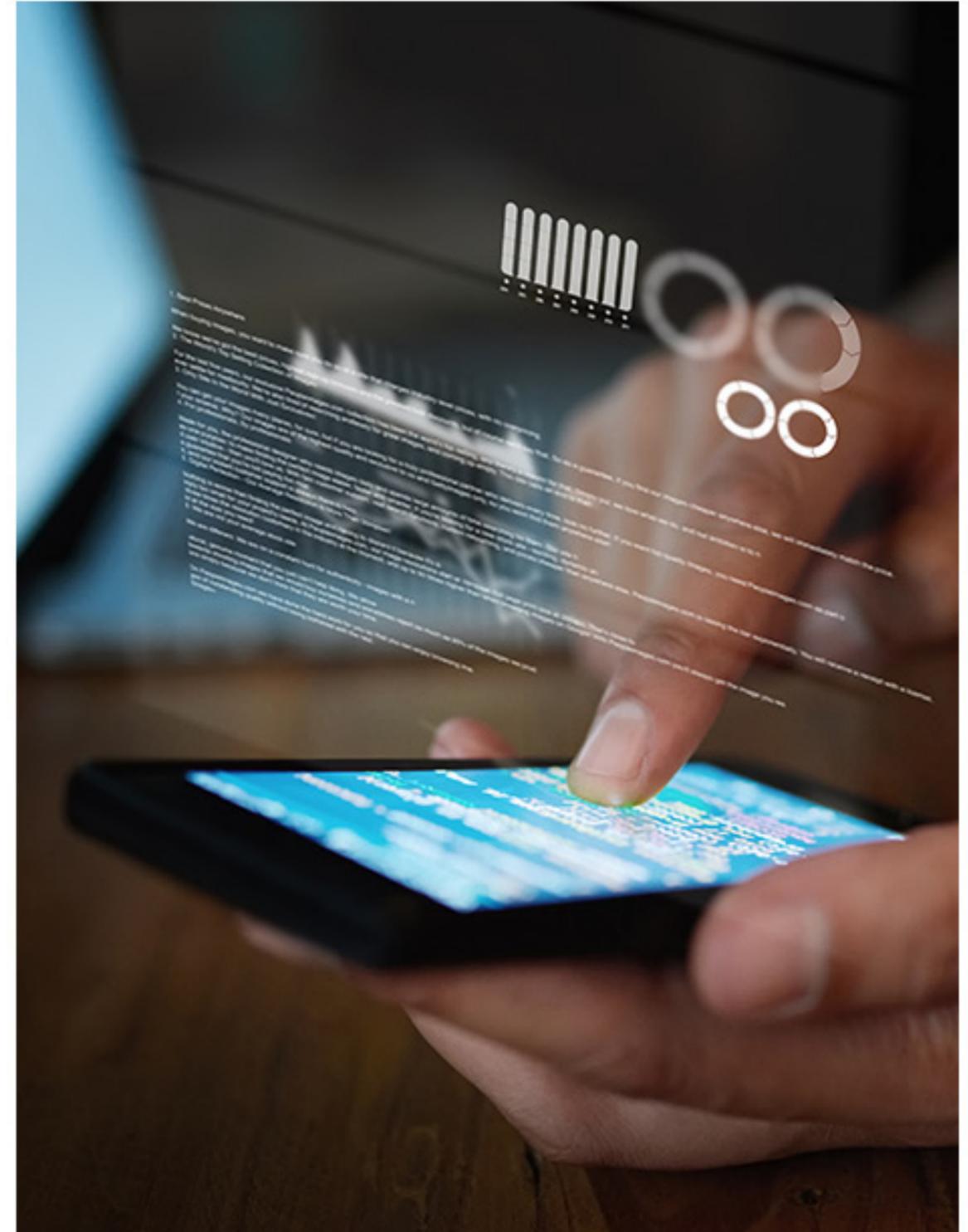


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Section 1

What will continue to offer value

Most entries in this section have been there for a while. However, they will see changes in 2018 while continuing to offer value.



mLearning or
Mobile learning



Technology is enabling our need to be mobile. We want to ensure that Learning matches our Lifestyle.

- Tony Bingham





mLearning or Mobile learning

Usage of mLearning or Mobile learning adoption in corporate training saw a significant increase in 2017 and this trend will continue. With maturing of authoring tools that are completely responsive, BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) flexibility in training policy will see an even more effective use of mLearning or Mobile learning in 2018.

What I see changing in 2018, would be its wider application across all corporate training needs as well as its increased use to support informal learning and digitisation of Instructor Led Training (ILT).

I also see increased usage of formats that learners use in their daily life (notably, Apps and Videos) to offer both formal and informal learning and more significantly reinforcements (through assessments supported by practice exercises leading to skill acquisition and mastery).



70% of on-the-go professionals will take care of business on their personal mobile devices by the year 2018.

Source - SailPoint



Digitisation of
ILT (to blended
or fully online)



Think out of the box and create a learning experience where the learner can interact with the content and their brains.

- Rosalie Ledda Valdez



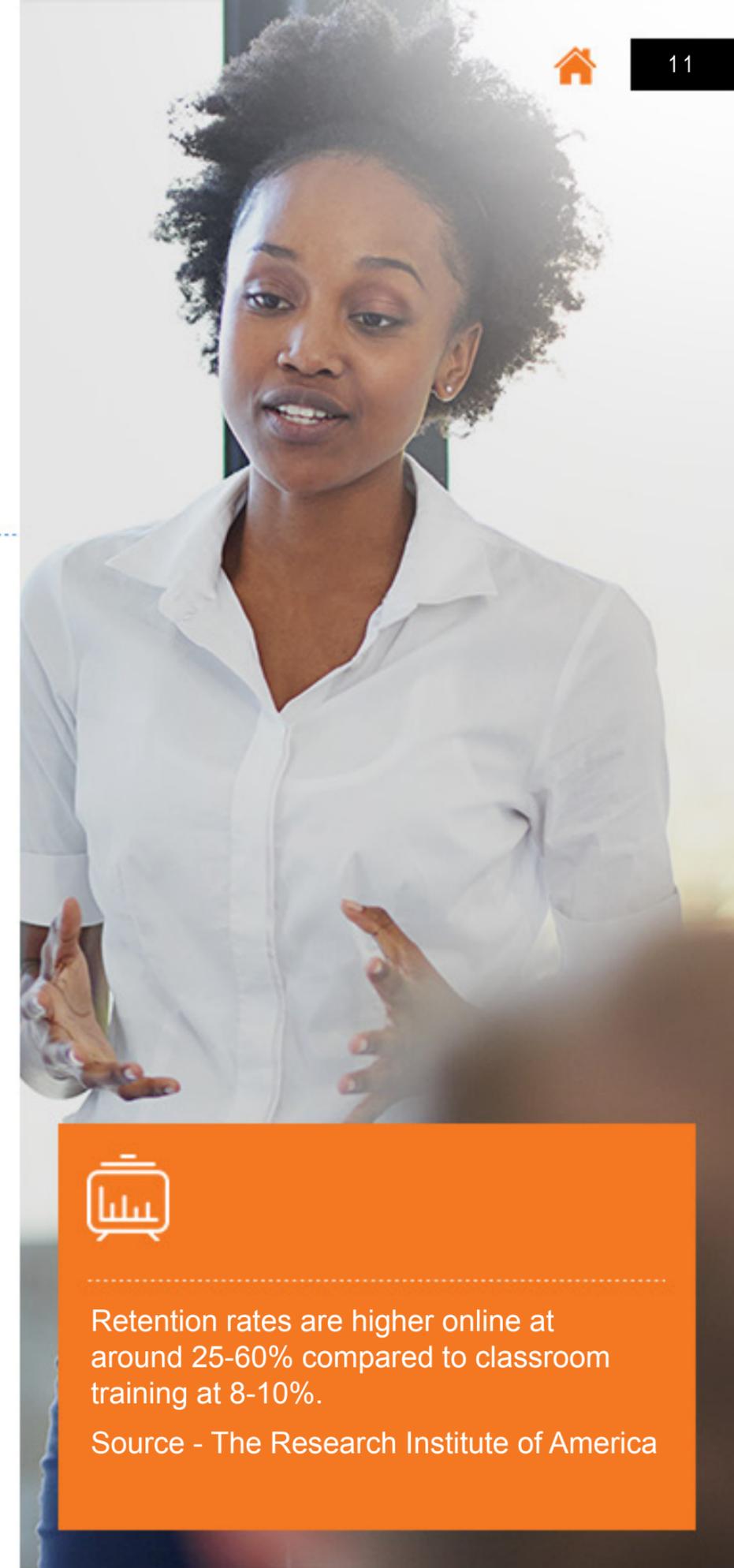
Digitisation of ILT (to blended or fully online)

In my assessment, the digitisation of ILT (particularly to blended rather than fully online) will see further acceleration.

With pressures on training budgets, shorter lead time to train learners and the push from learners to have the flexibility of training that they can take on the go, at their own pace, on the device of their choice; many more ILT programs will get digitised.

For instance, I see training programs like Induction and Onboarding evaluating a blended approach. Others like Application Simulation training programs opting for the fully online model (supported by practice sessions on the actual tool). Similarly, I see Soft skills training moving to largely online (for knowledge acquisition) but being supported by coaching and mentoring on one hand (to retain the human touch) and leverage on platforms for social learning and curation. I see training programs for Professional skills opting for predominantly online delivery supported by performance support tools over learning paths.

I see the usage of Microlearning for pre-workshop and post-workshop collateral will continue to support predominantly ILT programs.



Retention rates are higher online at around 25-60% compared to classroom training at 8-10%.

Source - The Research Institute of America

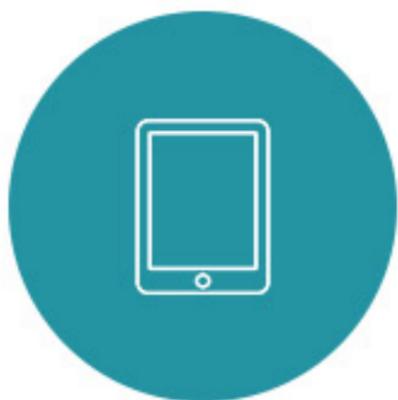


Microlearning



Personalize learning and deliver it in small chunks via microlearning to make the most of what neuroscience reveals about the brain.

- Ave Rio



Microlearning

The usage of Microlearning began as nuggets to support traditional eLearning courses a few years ago. 2017 saw an acceleration in its adoption across most corporate training programs.

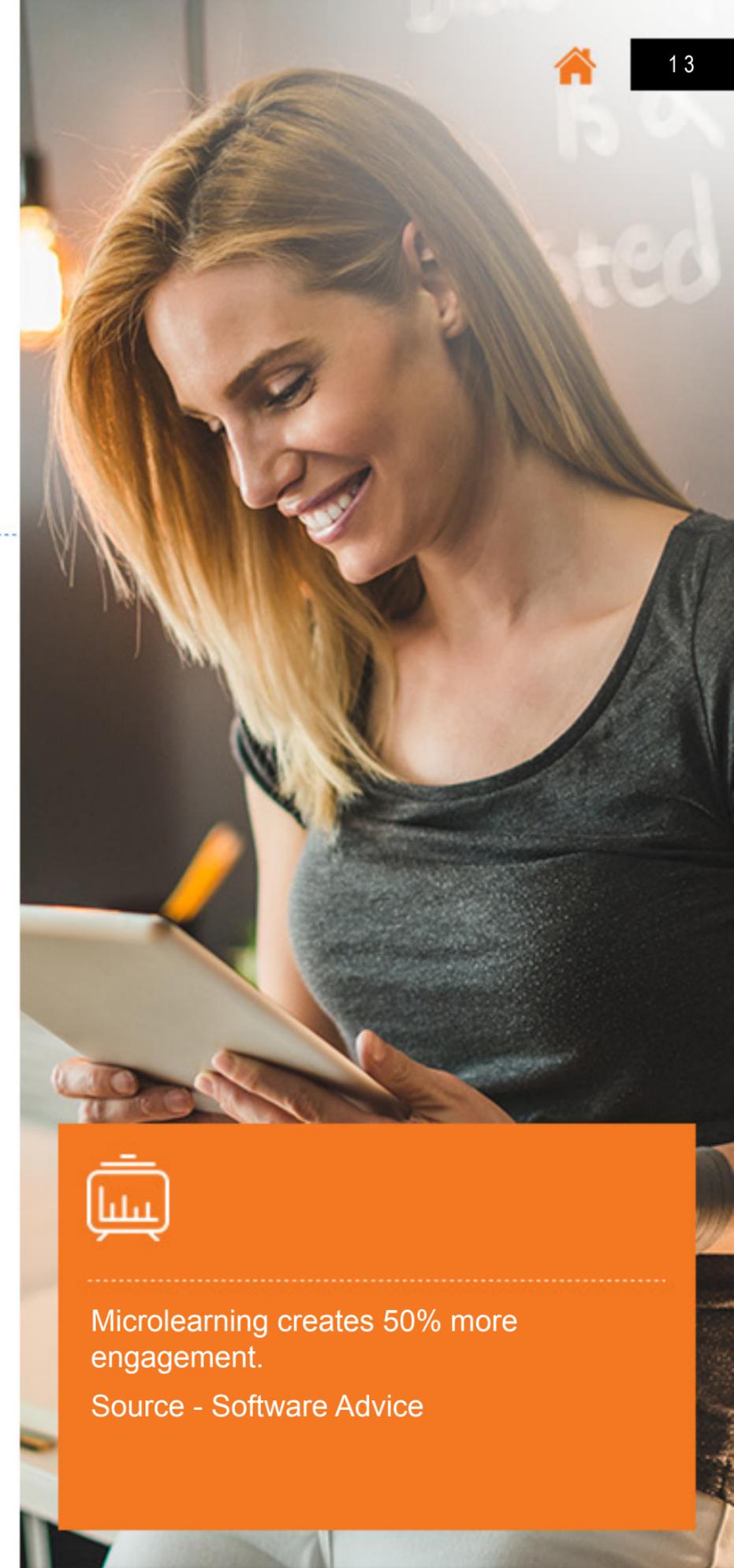
In 2018, I continue to see this momentum with more and more training programs using the power of Microlearning for primary (formal training) and as just-in-time performance support (learning aids or job aids).

I also see an increase in the richness of the formats to offer Microlearning. More significantly, I see leveraging on “learning paths” to not only offer a clear learning journey to the learners but also continuing the connect through the year (through a variety of nuggets).



Microlearning creates 50% more engagement.

Source - Software Advice





Performance Support Tools (PSTs)



“

There's no experience like on-the-job training.

- Hank Azaria

”



Performance Support Tools (PSTs)

Offering Performance Support Tools on smartphones so that these learning aids are within the learner's work-flow and available to them exactly at the moment of their learning need will see an acceleration in 2018.

Leveraging on the popularity of Microlearning, in 2018 too, PSTs will be used extensively to support primary formal training enabling organisations to see the application of the learning.

They will continue to support ILT training as well.



Only 12% of learners apply the skills received from training to their jobs.

Source - hrdrive





Gamification

“

Games are effective because they can be used for situated learning, where a player can be placed into a simulation of a real-world situation and see the impact of his or her actions over time.

- Scott Nicholson

”



Gamification

Till 5 years ago, usage of Gamification in corporate training was viewed with scepticism. From this perception to today's reality where Gamification (full or partial) is becoming increasingly a part of organisation's learning strategy.

I see further increase in Gamification for serious learning continue and extend to the programs that have traditionally not used it or used it rather sparingly (for instance Compliance and Application Simulations based trainings).



80% of learners claimed learning would be more productive if it were more game-oriented.

Source - Deloitte





Social Learning

Training often gives people solutions to problems already solved. Collaboration addresses challenges no one has overcome before.

- Marcia Conner



Social Learning

Although learning from others and with others is intrinsic to human beings, we have seen a recognition for using Social learning as an important part of corporate training only in last few years.

With options of platforms or portals, I see an increase in usage of Social learning to foster a spirit of collaborative learning in organisations.



In 2019, it is estimated that there will be around 2.77 billion social media users around the globe, up from 2.46 billion in 2017

Source - go-globe





Mobile Apps or Apps for learning

“

Technology is enabling our need to be mobile. We want to ensure that Learning matches our Lifestyle.

- Tony Bingham

”



Mobile Apps or Apps for learning

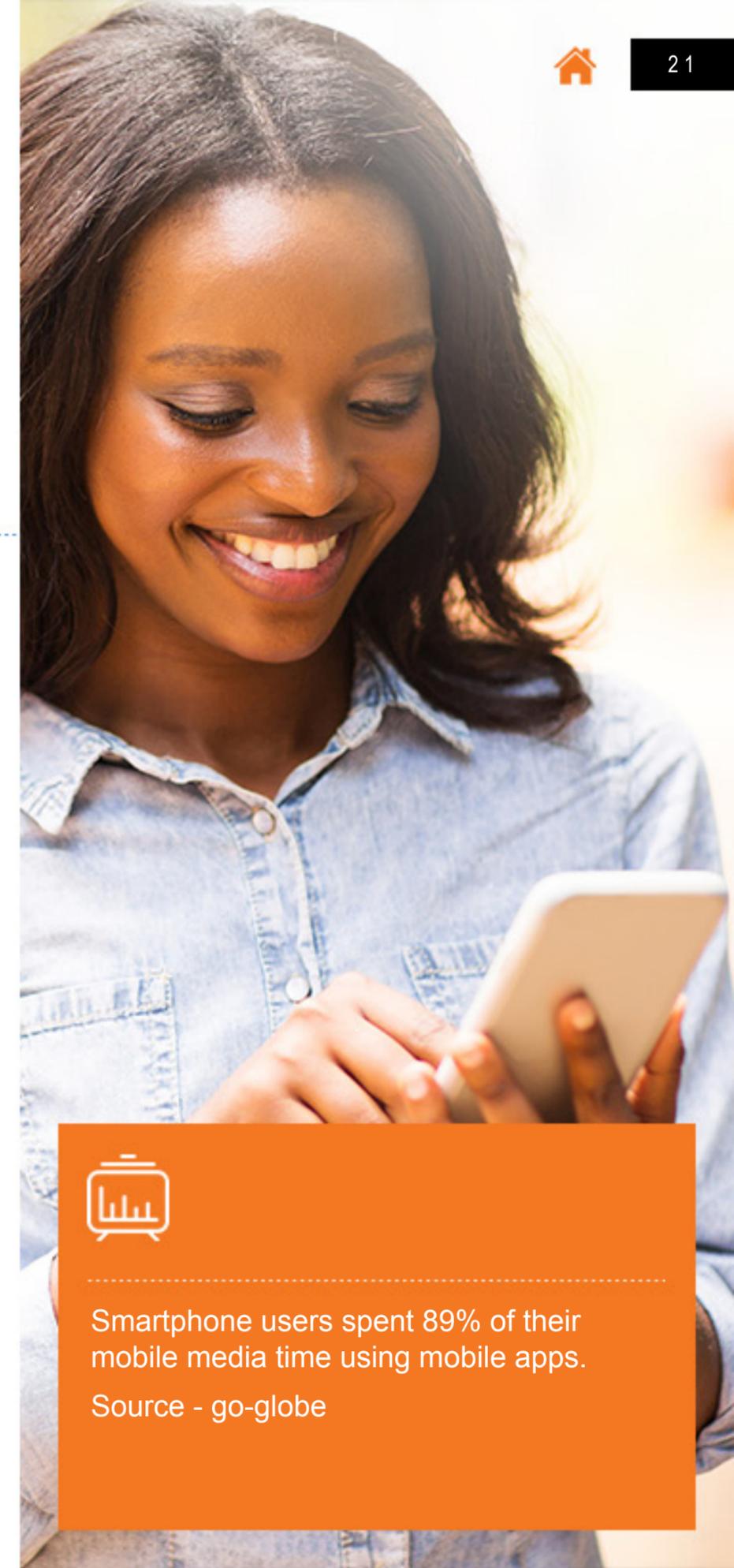
The total number of App downloads across the world in 2017 was a staggering 197 Billion. Given the fact, that we use Apps several times during our day, its usage for learning is a logical extension.

I see an increase in the usage of Mobile Apps for learning and this will become a significant part of corporate training in 2018. They too will leverage on Microlearning (including learning paths) as well as Gamification. The flexibility of personalisation and connect with learners through notifications (on updates) will continue to establish their value.



Smartphone users spent 89% of their mobile media time using mobile apps.

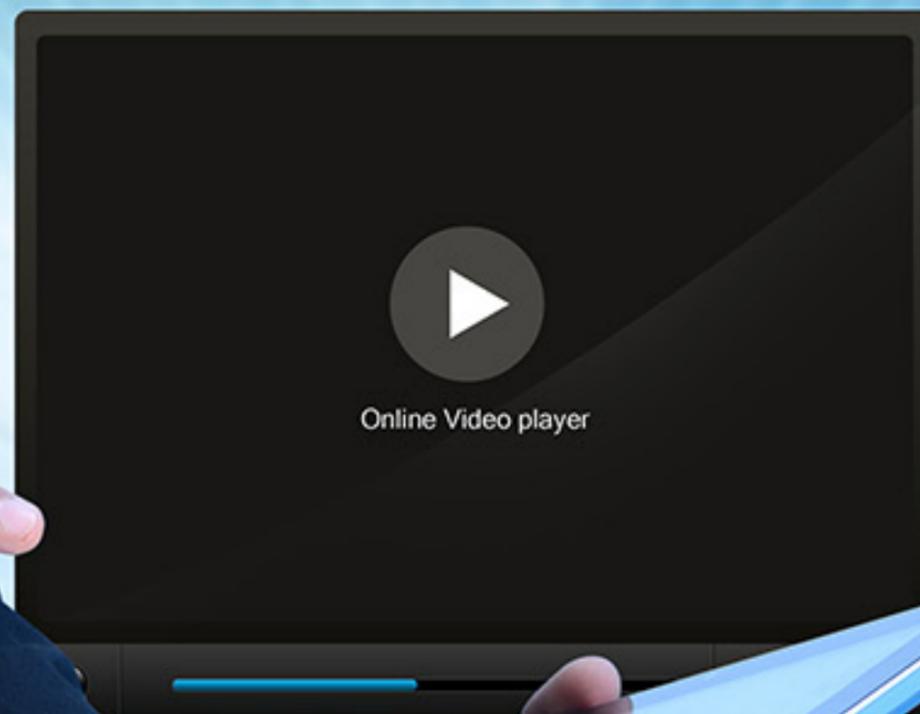
Source - go-globe





Video-based learning (Videos and Interactive Videos)

Search Videos



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Video details
Online video player, high speed Global video 5 min and 25 sec 125 Mb HD video 1240x720 resolution

For more videos visit



Video Name

Video details
Online video player, high speed Global video 5 min and 25 sec 125 Mb HD video 1240x720 resolution

For more videos visit



Video Name

Video details
Online video player, high speed Global video 5 min and 25 sec 125 Mb HD video 1240x720 resolution

For more videos visit

In addition to enhancing learning, video can also reduce training time. It's easier and takes less time to watch a well-made video than it does to read through pages of dense text or complicated diagrams to grasp a concept.

- Andy Cole



Video-based learning (Videos and Interactive Videos)

I don't even need to highlight the role of videos in learning. If you were to poll the learners, this would definitely be in their top 3 formats for learning. The only challenge with classic video-based learning is the passivity and most of us forget what we learnt after 60 seconds.

In 2018, I see more investment in Interactive videos that offer interactivities (similar to traditional eLearning), interim knowledge checks and branching based on the choices learners make as well as the end of program assessments. Today, you can integrate videos from YouTube to create a specific learning path (similar to topics in any other online course) and track learners' progress and performance.



By 2019, video will be responsible for 80% of the internet traffic in the world.

Source - Cisco





Next gen-LMS/ LCMS

The most important principle for designing lively eLearning is to see eLearning design not as information design but as designing an experience.

- Cathy Moore



Next gen-LMS/LCMS

In 2017 eLearning Trends and Predictions, I had highlighted how LMS/LCMS platforms need to align to the way the learners want to learn. I see the trend continuing in 2018, and corporate LMS platforms that “push” training programs to personalised learning paths that learners can “pull”. Flexibility to learn offline and sync back with the LMS once you are online are no more desirable but essential features.



The LMS market will grow from \$5.22 billion to \$15.72 billion by 2021.

Source - MarketsandMarkets

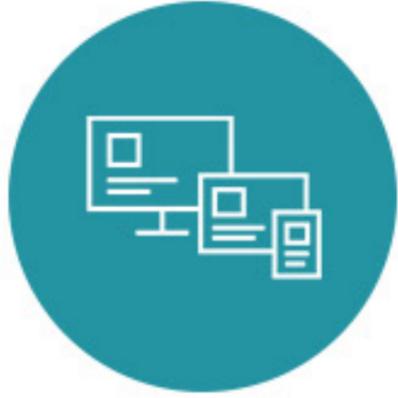


Rapid and
completely
responsive
eLearning tools

Design is not just what it looks like or
feels like, but how it works.

- Steve Jobs





Rapid and completely responsive eLearning tools

The next year will see further enhancements in ease of development (rapid and fully responsive designs) to keep pace with Microlearning needs as well as flexibility to incorporate trending learning strategies and high impact formats.





Informal learning

Formal education is a walk through the zoo, informal learning is a walk through the savannah.

- Stephen W Hart



Informal learning

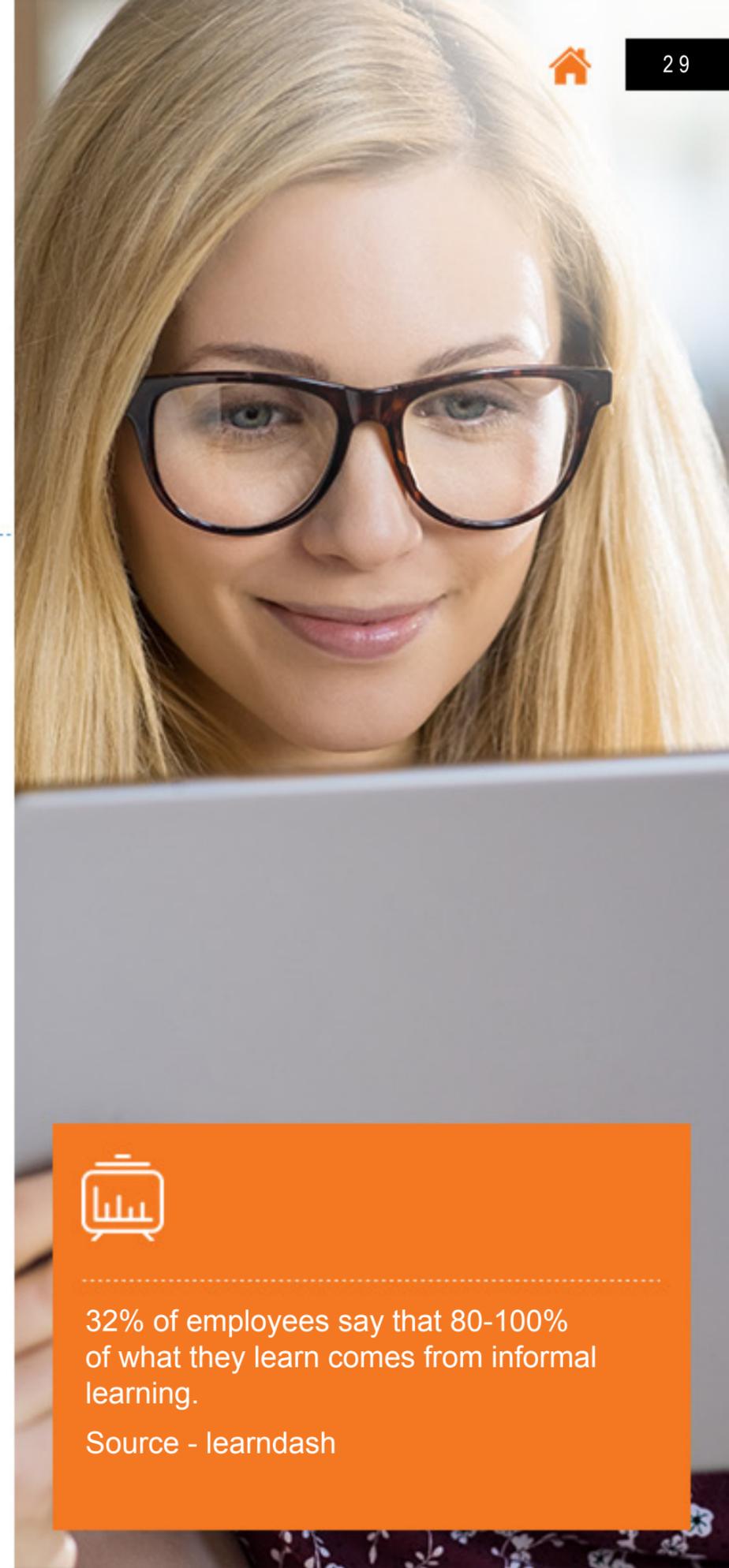
Organisations are realising that budget spend on only formal and structured training (that is only one of the many ways we learn) is not enough. Providing learners with more channels to learn from, having access to precise information they need when they have a challenge and foster collaborative learning are some key aspects that will see increased focus in 2018.

The usage of Performance Support Tools (PSTs) needs to be an integral part of the training to provide just-in-time learning aids to the learners and I see this trend certainly picking up momentum in 2018.



32% of employees say that 80-100% of what they learn comes from informal learning.

Source - learndash



Section 2

Coming of age-Increase in adoption



Learning portals



“

In contrast to the traditional mode of learning, learning portals offer flexibility to personalization and encourage “learning as a continuum”.

”



Learning portals

The Learning portals were initially conceptualised for certain key programs that needed a different degree of engagement for the learners (in contrast to traditional LMS platforms). Today, they can be designed as stand-alone platforms or to co-exist with the LMS.

They are learner-centric and provide a higher degree of control to the learners. The reason for their popularity is the niche and a definitive need they are often designed for. They typically feature a learning path (featuring resources in different formats) and features of collaboration (extending to curation). Most offer a highly personalised path to the learners. More significantly, they capture learner analytics at levels that traditional LMS do not.

In 2018, I see an increased adoption of learning portals as many of the legacy LMS platforms do not provide this capability. It would be interesting to see with similar features being available in next-gen LMSs, how do learning portals evolve in 2019.





Personalisation

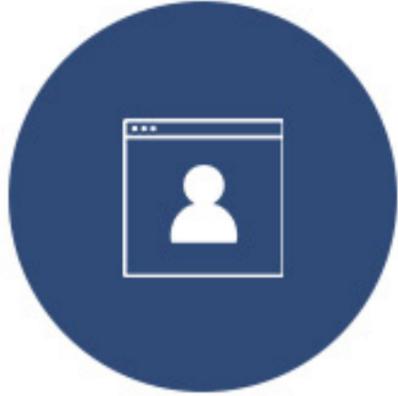


“

Personalized learning, when done correctly, can finally give unconventional students ownership of their own education.

- Cary Kelly

”



Personalisation

“One size does not fit all” and learning is no exception. Personalised learning will see an increase in 2018.

Using Assessments (Pre-Test) or Surveys (To determine learner’s interest and their assessment of proficiency) will help organisations create personalised learning paths for learners. Interim check-points (with formative feedback) can be used to redirect the learners to other aspects of the training that may not have been the path of the recommended path but would be useful. Looking at the way learner engages with various assets; other recommendations can be made.

I believe this is one trend that is worth a close look in 2018.



93% of education professionals agree that students would benefit from personalized pacing targeted at gaps in achievement or to accelerate learning.

Source - Dreambox



Curation

CONTENT CURATION



Identify



Organize



Share

Curation comes up when people realize that it isn't just about information seeking, it's also about synchronizing a community.

- Clay Shirky



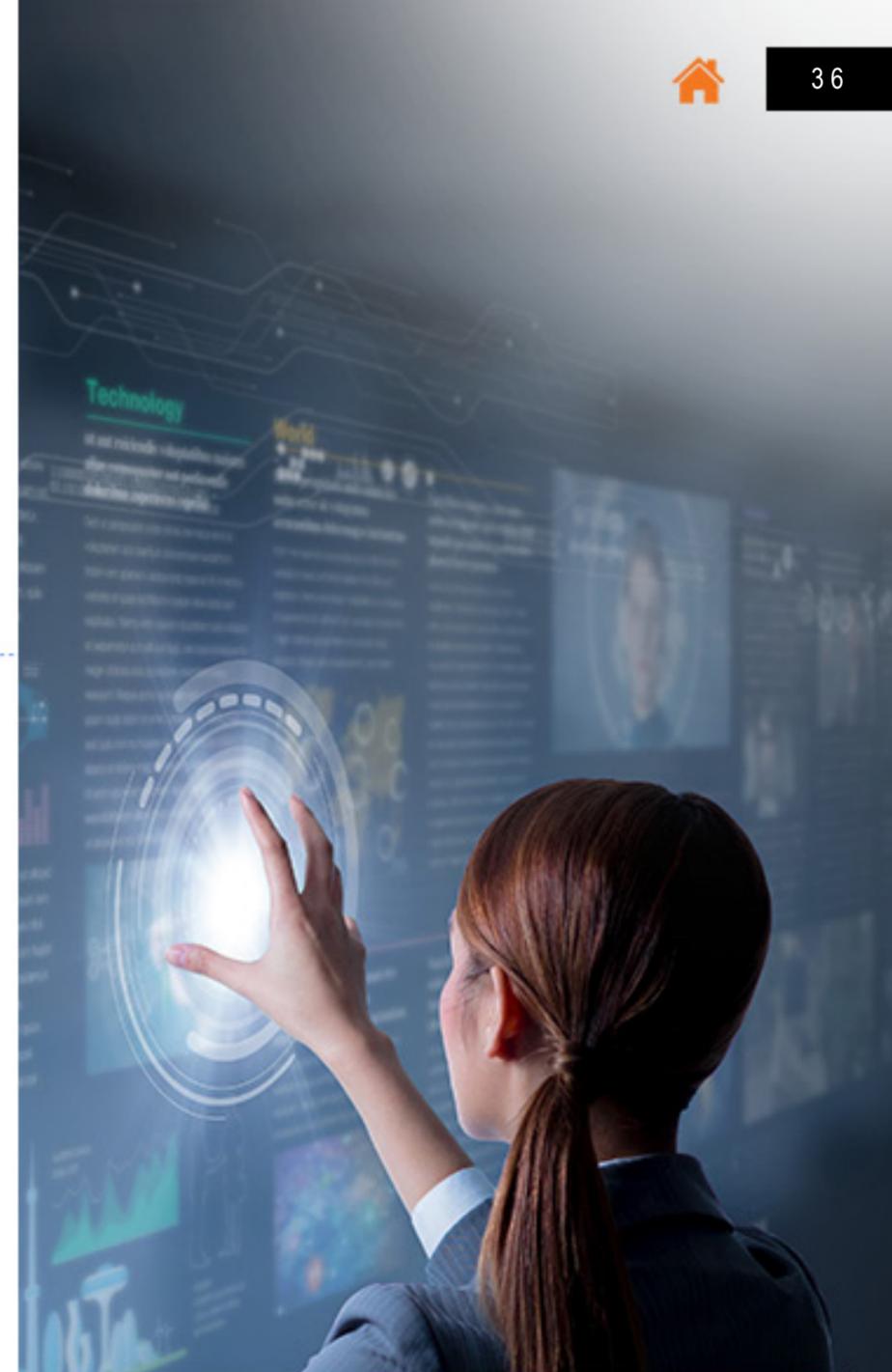
Curation

Thanks to the internet, today we have tremendous knowledge at our fingertips. However, sifting through various options to determine relevancy is often a time-consuming process.

This is precisely where Content Curation fits in. The Curator (an expert) sifts through the data and creates a learning path that meets certain objectives.

Learners are provided learning paths and they have the flexibility to re-configure. They can also share and recommend assets from the portal. The process can be made more inclusive by having learners contribute and enrich the repository.

I believe that 2018 will certainly see an increase in Content curation solutions.



79% of marketers use social media to find content for their curation strategy, whereas only 63% rely on company newsletters and subscriptions.

Source - Curata

Section 3

Emerging or Maturing - Watch out for



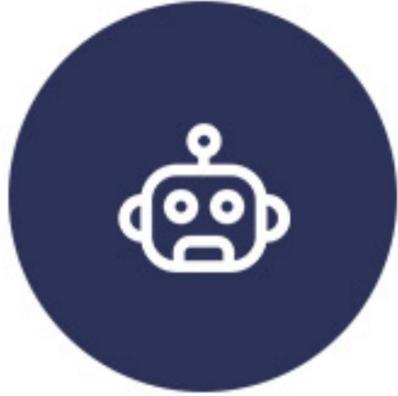
Artificial
Intelligence (AI)
in learning



Artificial Intelligence is a tool, not a threat.

- Rodney Brooks





Artificial Intelligence (AI) in learning

Do I see a world where AI can replace the tasks L&D teams do in terms of defining what courses learners should take and what additional resources they have access to? Not quite!

However, using cues from Learning analytics (notably, xAPI) AI can add tremendous value in recommending assets that can help learners reach the desired goal (skill enhancement or behavioural change).

As we begin understanding learner motivation, behaviour and the dynamics in the current learning path (how they navigate, what they browse, where they spend time and so on), we can potentially use AI to direct them to areas they have not explored.

It would be interesting to see which of the current LMS providers turn out to be the first mover in offering this capability in 2018.



By 2018, 75% of developer teams will include AI functionality in one or more application or service.

Source - IDC FutureScapes 2017





AR/VR for immersive learning



“A combination of VR and interactive teaching brings a unique approach to learning.”



AR/VR for immersive learning

Without any doubt, AR/VR provides one of the most immersive learning experiences. Although this has seen a considerable traction in 2017 and shows promise in 2018, it does come with a hefty price tag (and longer lead time to develop).

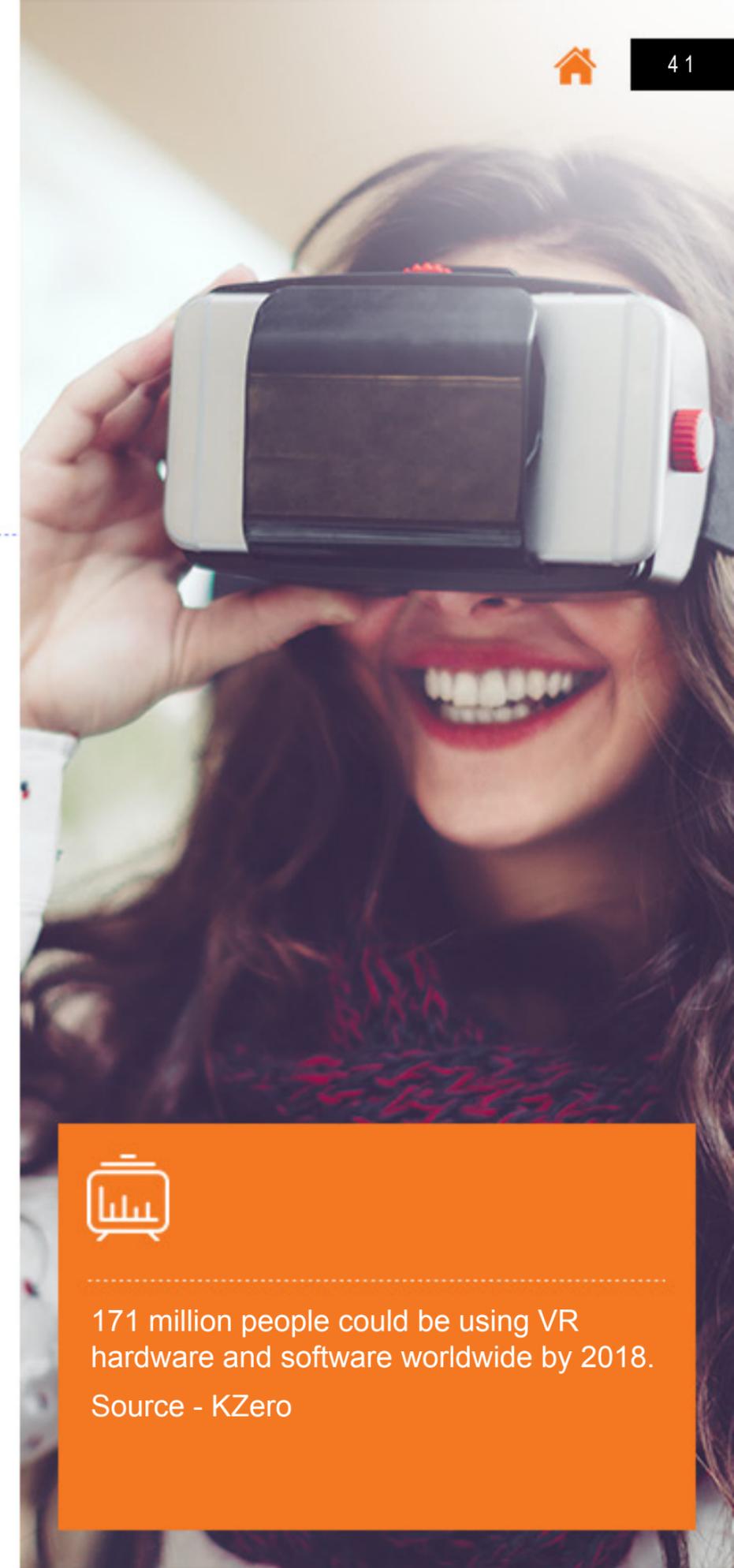
With early adoption in training intended for hazardous workspaces (Health and Safety training) or complex simulations, we are already seeing the beginning of usage of Mobile Apps that embed AR features.

Now, it is anticipated that this will eventually substitute scenarios including branching scenarios as well as video-based learning for behavioural change. This will open doors to its application in soft skills and potentially open doors to the wider application for corporate training.



171 million people could be using VR hardware and software worldwide by 2018.

Source - KZero





Big Data-Reporting and Analytics and its usage in determination of ROI



“

The goal is to turn data into information
and information into insights.

- Carly Fiorina

”

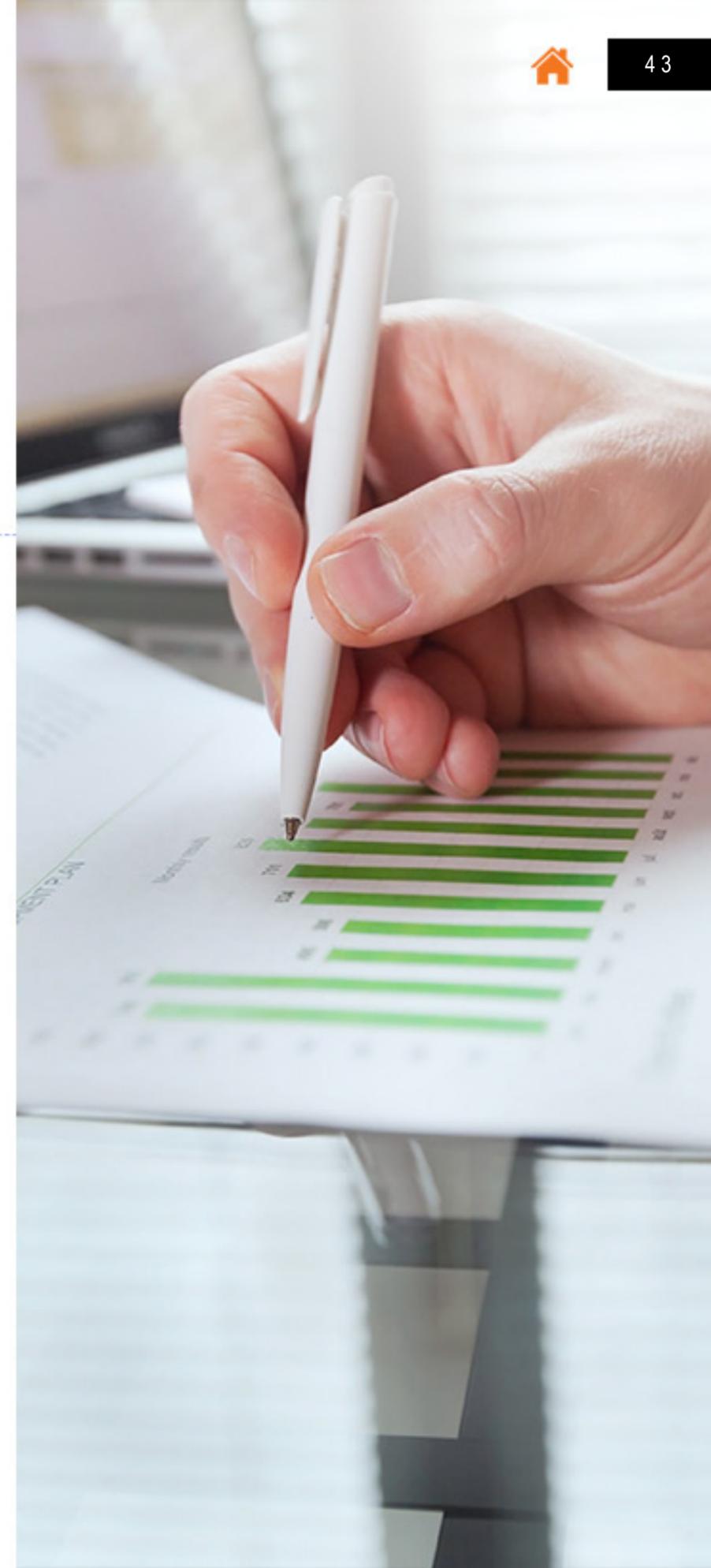


Big Data-Reporting and Analytics and its usage in determination of ROI

Big Data refers to voluminous data that is aggregated from various sources (typically, LMS, LCMS, Learning portals and surveys/polling or assessments in the context of eLearning). Given its volume, complexity and the fact that it is dynamic, there is no tool that can manage and analyse it.

Big Data Reporting and Analytics encompass the approaches through which this data can be presented in formats that are relevant for analysis, decision making and actionable. When processed right, this can give us tremendous insights on how learners learn, the impact of training on skills or behavioural change and the impact on business. It can then help in the determination of ROI on training spend.

I see an increase in Big Data-Reporting and Analytics in 2018 leading to the further optimisation of the training delivery. This analysis can be used to understand learner behaviour and the way they want to learn, the learning paths chosen and update the existing training delivery. These cues can then be used to create personalised and more effective learning paths that enable learners to learn, practice, obtain feedback and remediation and so on.





Learner
Analytics to
enhance learning
experiences



It is obvious that Learnability or learning effectiveness of online courses has an impact on ROI, its measurement is rather a tall order.



Learner Analytics to enhance learning experiences

Although Learner analytics is an integral part of the overall Big Data that is being collated through multiple, I am highlighting this as a separate aspect.

In 2017, we have seen an increased focus on understanding the learners' behaviour and what can be done to improve the motivation, engagement and application of the learning on the job.

Usage of Tin Can API can give a very detailed view of how learners are interacting with the eLearning courses and validate it against the assumptions and revise the learning designs/learning paths, if necessary. I see this trend seeing further traction in 2018 resulting in learning designs that appeal to learners and create the required value that businesses seek.

Over the next 2-3 years, I see the extensive use of AI (Artificial Intelligence) in using this analytics and creating recommended and highly personalised cues for the learners.



Summary

I hope this eBook will help you with pointers you can use to enhance your learning strategy. If you have queries on how to create engaged learners through a Learning and Performance Ecosystem or just implement one part of the many facets covered here, do [contact me](#).

Here is a partial list of my other eBooks:

- [How You Can Measure The Learning Effectiveness Of eLearning Courses And Create A Positive ROI](#)
- [How Gamification Is Reshaping Corporate Training – Featuring 10 examples](#)
- [Microlearning: How Can You Create Macro Impact With Micro Nuggets](#)
- [Your Step By Step Guide To Design High-Impact Blended Training Programs](#)
- [Engaging Millennials In The Workplace – Tips And Learning Strategies That Work](#)



Looking at adopting fully Online or Blended training programs in your Learning Strategy? EI Design can help you with that and more!

Our innovative approaches and focus areas include:

- Learning Portals with Learning Paths
- Personalised learning solutions
- Content curation solutions
- Social Learning (Collaborative learning)
- Microlearning (for both, Formal and Informal learning)
- Millennial-centric solutions
- Approaches to predict, measure and validate the learnability or the learning effectiveness of online courses
- Reporting and analytics

We use the following strategies to create immersive learning:

- Gamification
- Videos and Interactive Videos
- Apps for learning
- Decision making – complex branching simulations
- Scenario-based learning
- Storytorials

We offer a comprehensive services portfolio that includes custom online (eLearning and mLearning) and Blended solutions. With a focus on performance gain, we offer a wide range of Performance Support Tools (just-in-time learning/job-aids). We also have a large Localisation practice, covering over 26 global languages.



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