ELEARNINGNEWS ARTICLE

Year 3 - number 53 Wednesday 23 january 2019

How was e-Learning born and how did it develop?

Online learning is the new future, but it is important to ask ourselves some important questions about this topic. How have these courses born? How have they developed and above all, what is the current situation?

How has e-Learning born? How did it develop over time? What is the current situation? We try to give answers to these questions here, for those who ever asked themselves.

First of all, it should be noted that before being called e-Learning, online training was identified with the term of DL (distance learning). This defined the set of educational activities carried out within an educational project was designed for situations of no co-presence of teachers and learners in the same place.

Based on the methods of communication and on the type of communication support that were used, we can identify four different generations.

1. First Generation

To talk about the first generation of DL, it is necessary to go back in time to 1837, in Great Britain, when Isaac Pitman began to create the first shorthand course, by correspondence. It was so successful that in 1843 he founded the "Phonographic Correspondence Society". In 1951 the first Italian correspondence courses were created, organized by the "Scuola Radio Elettra".

2. Second Generation

Here we are around 1960-1990 and training courses are delivered, in addition to the traditional post service, also thanks to new media such as audio cassettes, videocassettes, floppy disks or CD-ROMs.
Advertising reaches students via television.

3. Third Generation

In the 1990s, we have passed from the second to the third generation.
In fact, only in those years education began to be more successful thanks to the support of Internet. In this phase with the diffusion of Computer, one of the most important tools supporting online training, specific software for the management and automatic control of self-training processes were also born.
We already can start to define these types of courses as e-Learning.

4. Fourth Generation

With the spread of the Internet, a new type of learning starts its development, based on the global network. Thanks to the potential of internet tools, it includes the advantages of distance learning,
The Fourth Generation grows in parallel with the evolution of the Web, giving life to an increasingly interactive and collaborative environment (we are talking about web 2.0).
This period has to be considered as one of the most important times for e-Learning training. Distance education is seen as a trustworthy method for a successful training path.

This is how users started to approach an untraditional form of distance education that could fill gaps.

And with web 2.0 there is a shift in the centrality of learning towards the learner. The exchange and communication between the participants is enhanced, a new model is born!