

It is cheaper, your staff wants it and most importantly, it works.

So why are you not taking your learning programme virtual?

Today's virtual learning experience has come a long way from its original format. Technical difficulties have been addressed, new interactive capabilities drive engagement, and in today's world, classes are even more accessible via mobile devices and laptops. So if virtual instructor-led training (VILT) is not currently part of your learning programme, maybe it should be.

In a time when companies are scrutinising budget and facing tough economic and resource constraints, VILT can be an effective, cost-efficient, location-neutral learning solution. With recent advancements, virtual learning also has the capability to deliver learning engagements equal to those experienced in traditional, in-person classroom settings.

Just how far has VILT come?

A skilled virtual instructor now has a growing number of options to engage students at their computers. A single session can include typical classroom learning activities such as ice breakers, written and oral presentation of formal material and experiences, group exercise activities, discussions, breakout sessions and assessments. Pace, method and content can be altered anytime during the session. In addition, VILT now harnesses online technology to include interactive voice and text chat, polling and surveys, games, whiteboard and application sharing. In short, it is high tech meeting high touch, using reliable technology methods to create a highly personalised learning experience.

Of course, not all virtual learning is created equal. Your learning programme is a foundation for continued company growth and success, so it is absolutely crucial to appoint only experienced, skilful instructors who can customise the VILT experience to the exact needs of your staff. Convenience and cost savings are certainly beneficial, but quality comes first. With its ever-expanding capabilities, VILT can certainly become an asset to your learning plan.

ESI International can help your company explore VILT as part of a customised, comprehensive learning plan to help you achieve your goals. To learn more, please contact ESI at enquiries@esi-europe.com or +44(0) 20 7017 7100.

A recent ESI International survey shows that 82 percent of respondents say they are still using traditional, instructor-led classroom solutions for their learning programmes.

However, interactive use and savvy continue to grow across all age segments. *ASTD's State of the Industry Report* has shown a "consistent upward trend of technology-based methods," with e-learning counting as one-third of all available learning content in 2008.¹ And in 2009, e-learning had solidly "become an integral component of organisations' delivery of training."² The 2009 SIMBA report also forecasted great growth in live e-learning with a predicted increase of 10%.³

¹ Paradise, Andrew. 2008. *State of the Industry Report*. Alexandria, VA: ASTD, 2008.

² Paradise, Andrew and Laleh Patel. 2009. *State of the Industry Report*. Alexandria, VA: ASTD, 2009.

³ Corporate Training Marketing 2009: Forecast and Analysis. Stamford, CT: Simba Information, 2009.

