

Top 10 things you told us at Learning Technologies 2009

Krista Woodley, Senior Instructional Designer at Brightwave gives her view on the trends at January's Learning Technologies Conference and Exhibition.

LT09 was jam-packed with plenty of informal learning and good old-fashioned social networking for everyone. So what's a-buzz at Brightwave towers? Here's the top 10 things you told us...

1 – **Informal and social learning:** We don't just mean getting beaten at Scrabulous.... it's about blending formal and informal learning. Whether your learners are Generation Y or an earlier vintage, they can all benefit from collaboration, discussion, sharing resources, wikis, blogs - which leads us neatly to...

2 – **Partnership:** Over 70% of you like to take a partnership approach with us because it improves project schedules and reduce costs. Collaboration isn't just for learners: it's good for all of us. Enjoy the journey as well as the destination.

3 – **Budgets:** Money talks – and we're all ears. Our Brightwave Trends 2008 survey finds half of you are expecting your e-learning spend to rise in 2009 whilst 80% of you expect total training budgets to be cut or stay the same. 62% of people expect e-learning to receive a greater proportion of overall training budgets (according to the Towards Maturity Driving Business Benefits report Jan 09).

4 – **Measurement:** Whether budgets are up or down, you need to show some bang for your buck. Almost 60% of you are under more pressure to measure the impact of e-learning.* And if we're increasing informal and social learning, can we measure them in the same ways?

5 – **Rapid:** Dylan said, "Time is a jet plane, it moves too fast". But how can we all best use rapid tools to keep pace? It's not about pressing a magic button. Rapid tools need to be supported with strong processes, great design and a skilled team.

6 – **Creativity:** "Power to the brain, not the budget", to quote one of our stand visitors. Whether your budget is a blockbuster or a small indie, you need some creative thinking in your design approach to get your learners hooked. Speaking of which...

7 – **Games:** Avatars and virtual worlds are about more than wizards and hobgoblins these days. There are some great courses using 3D simulations and games – but how can we best use them to support the learning, and not just to add bells and whistles?

8 – **Starting out?** It was great to meet lots of e-learning first-timers looking to put your toes in the water. Come on in, it's lovely! (Unsurprisingly, down here in Brighton, the sea hasn't been looking lovely at all recently, so please don't take that invitation too literally...)

9 – **Gender balance:** We saw Laura Overton, Jane Hart and others but there were a few murmurs about gender balance, maybe more at the conference than the exhibition. But (gasp!) there's no shortage of sistas here at Brightwave towers, so we won't worry our pretty little heads too much.

10 – **Gum:** Some visitors had apparently mistaken our giveaway 'brain-boosting' chewing gum for condoms. We're hoping all was clear when they opened the packet, but if next year's exhibition is full of three-month-old babies, we'll be claiming that as the Brightwave baby boom...

* Brightwave survey polled e-learning and training specialists within large UK organisations (5000 plus employees) between October 2008 and December 2008.

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