

MAY 2020 - VOLUME I

## Evolving Learning Technologies

INTUITION PUBLISHING PTE LIMITED

Education and technology both have a great impact on our prosperity today. They contribute to the knowledge and wealth of humanity. In many ways, education is as much the same as it was centuries ago. The difference is while the tutor is lecturing from a podium in front of the audience, they are also using various technologies to assist the learners. Students now have tablets in front of them instead of heavy, lengthy textbooks. Some scroll newsfeeds to offer fresh ideas for discussion, while others search the internet to find an answer to another tricky question. Only a cynic would claim that technologies have nothing to do with enhancing education; technological progress allows for educational progress.

Sometimes people just cannot physically attend classes, for example, during a global pandemic. Socially anxious teens feel better when attending online courses. No one will bully classmates online or make fun of others, making remote learning a useful arrangement. Many universities offer various types of online degrees, and more importantly, it is possible to obtain a digital certificate that will be considered legal. At first, diplomas that were obtained online were not treated seriously. Now digital certificates are evolving into online profiles that record all aspects of education, training, and employment. It is evident that recent events will drive the evolution of remote tools and digital learning environments.

A serious limitation to the learning process can be ineffective communication between tutors and their learners. Digital communication and collaboration platforms can enhance this and allow for deeper understanding of information post lecture. Improved communication channels make it possible to maintain dialogue with your tutors at any time and ask any questions. It is possible to consult tutors and obtain immediate help and response. To make it even easier, learners can reference recordings of previous sessions. The faster questions can be answered the easier the learning process becomes.

Many people underestimate the role of digital simulations and models. They assist in explaining any concept much better than textbooks or printed materials. Digital models and visual simulations help interpret complicated concepts in a tangible manner. Most people are visual and tactile learners. They can understand the topic better if they can see and feel it. Mixed reality devices are rapidly changing the face of learning, as anyone would prefer studying a 3D virtual jet engine over one on paper. Jet engines are expensive and so is reserving physical hardware for training. Being able to access such training virtually also means learners do not have to travel to training hangers to work on physical hardware. Such technology is proven to increase speed and quality of training, and can vastly reduce costs.

While some can learn faster than others, others need to set aside enough time to assimilate information. It is almost impossible to absorb and process all information obtained in a session. Many learners need



repetition to memorize and understand content. Thanks to technological advancements, one can train and develop skills continually with online access. Self-learning can be more effective than studying in groups and having a mentor, as technology allows more independence.

Adaptive learning technologies use machine-driven data to measure student progress, dynamically adjusting to the level or type of course content based on an individual's strengths or weaknesses in ways that accelerate a learner's performance with both automated and instructor interventions. There is no "one size fits all" so adaptive content can maintain user engagement by adjusting the content delivered to meet the learners needs. Advocates for adaptive learning believe that it can be a solution to the challenges of training, such as cost, access, and quality. As the underlying technologies continue to develop, AI & ML technologies have the potential to enhance online learning, adaptive learning software, and research processes in ways that more intuitively respond to and engage with learners.

Biometrics, a technology that recognizes people based on certain physical or behavioural traits, is working its way into the learning environment. The tech is used to recognize the physical and emotional disposition of learners in the classroom, altering course material to tailor to the individual's needs based on biometric signals. The tech can also be used to provide real-time emotional feedback allowing trainers to adjust their courses to maintain engagement. Another use of biometrics in the learning environment is to prevent abuse of the system. Regulations are mandating that providers must ensure the identity of a learner engaging in online training. Able to prevent distraction and authenticate users, biometrics are able to continually monitor the learner in a passive manner to prevent abuse of learning systems.

So what should come next after the LMS? As with many technological advancements, there will be a convergence and blurring of lines. The digital learning environments of the next generation will feature many or all of the aforementioned technologies. Some may go even further to integrate other business processes into their ecosystem. It is not difficult to imagine a digital record of your education, employment, and government information all compiled into a digital profile, aiming to make life easier for both the employer and employee.

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