THE E-LEARNING BENEFITS IN THE ROMANIAN BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

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E-learning is learning based on information technologies, and particularly based on the Interne educational system has a lot of advantages, such as flexibility, availability, time and resources savings and it respects the individual learning rhythm of each of the employees. According as IT area advanced, training's possibilities of employees were diversified, interactive lessons and training devices on demand, replacing classical lessons. The most competitive sectors of Romanian economy are those which use e-learning solutions. The portfolio of competences, the level of employees' information, the models and the work methods are essential pre-requisites for the companies' success. In this context, the investment in training of employees can prove most profitable for company.

Keywords: e-Learning benefits, e-Learning platform, blended learning, business environment

Cod JEL A: General Economics and Teaching.

Overview of the advantages offers to company's by E-learning

The advances informational technologies contributed to the motivational increase towards the study of some disciplines, which have nothing in common with informatics, because they facilitate learning, due to the fact that the individual particularities of the student are taken into account, also his/ her capacities and preferences, assuring the existence of feedback between the student and program, increasing the efficiency of the learning process. Thus, the informational technologies are used more frequently in the diversity of the human activities' spheres: medicine, finances, mass-media, in education and science.

The Romanian business environment adopted step-by-step this modern way training, adapting the general notions to default compulsions business environment. In keeping with "**elearningeuropa.info**" site programs, e-learning means to use new multimedia technologies and Internet, for improving the quality of learning, to facilitate the access to resources, services and cooperation. E-learning is available for a large spectrum of activities starting from the computer-assisted training as online education. E-learning services evolved from the introduction computers in the educational process. In this context there is a tendency to integrate educational services, through using activities as regards computer in practical situations or in classroom. As for e-learning in Romania is necessary to notice that the most universities from the country have special web interfaces for to publish information to each discipline, whence the students can download them.

The **e-learning benefits** are:
- permits the quick integration for new employees;
- the employees choose the moment for training and have anytime access to information;
- the knowledge offered is divided and easy of access;
- assures training for a great number of employees and diminish transport costs for training;
- the costs of delivery are low;
- the questions post-training can be elucidated anytime;
- reports about learning process are offered;
- the training effect as regards organization's performance is estimated.

E-learning offers to company's substantial advantages and its perfect adapted to specific and exacting training in business. The stages in development e-learning system are:

1**. Analysis needs**: The identification of target group, analysis needs of training, solutions for online education, comparative analyses.

2**. Design and projection instruction**: specific training models, type of contents, learning styles, the objective settlement, standards of quality.

3. **Development** e-learning system: the settlement of content and its structure, visual design, demonstrations, simulations, laboratories, tests, support materials, specific methods of training, interaction methods (synchronous: chat, asynchronous conferences: discussions forum, e-mail).

4. **Implementation** of system requires: Analysis of context, the settlement responsibilities, the check of contents, the activities program, the evaluation of performances, barriers in implementation.

5. **Management** of e-learning systems: necessity, marks management of education to distance programs.

6. **Evaluation** e-learning programs which will contains: comparisons between evaluation of e-learning programs and classic variant of evaluation, strategies of evaluation, the material evaluation of courses, self evaluation. An

important instrument for evaluation course represents the date concerning student's performances, the rate of achieve the individual tasks.

Recording continue of the way which the students achieve their works, delivers an important statistical instrument, which can be correlated with the content of learning sequence. For the business world, the e-learning development meant the creation standard programs for training, which assure knowledge and abilities to employees faster than the traditional solutions used by now. The advantages of these programs are speed of answer, offering training in real-time, and the possibility as this training to be accessed anywhere and anytime.

E-learning applications analysis in business environment

E-learning market is in development throughout in the world, although some countries are stronger advanced than others. E-Learning records an increasing development also in the business environment.

A recent study performed by the specialists from Global Industry Analysts (SUA) estimates that, by 2010, e-learning market at an international level will exceed 52,6 billion dollars.

In Romania, if the market of educational software will be a free-competition market, is estimated that the number of companies which develop e-learning solutions will increase very much. Also, this increase will contain the training online by reason of the pressures which appear into companies concerning quickly and simultaneous training of new products, procedures and settlements for all employees. Thus, the training market for adults shall continue to increase, and e-learning shall cover more and more interest for training. Directing to the estimations made for Daily-business by main e-solutions providers on Romanian market, market's average increase will be 20% in 2008.

For most companies, investments in human resources are very important, not only through their value, but also through the significance that the training of the staff has on the organization. The investment in training existing or newly hired staff is a long-term one and therefore the monitoring of this process is very important.

Projects of proportion presuppose complete solutions, which are the result of partnerships between important players on this market, and SIVECO Romania is already a recognized name at international level, providing components and even integrated educational solutions in Europe, Asia and Africa.

Technologies used by E-learning platforms

At present, the whole industry related to education has a high standard of complexity; e-learning is associated with on-line courses support and the current technologies put at command systems for organization and deliver the courses (LMS Learning Management System) guided to the appearance and development e-learning platforms used-up mainly in education but also in the firms which offer courses of improvement in business environment.

For online courses a solution represents the open source platforms of learning, for example:

 MOODLE (http://www.moodle.org),

Atutor (http://www.atutor.ca/)

Blackboard (http://www.blackboard.com),

Typo3 (http://edu.typo3.com),

 LogiCampus (http://www.logicampus.com.

Because they are free cost and available specific code source, the open source platforms are successful concurrent for the commercial plat-forms. They are fitted for any type instructional and permit the updating and desirable modifications. E-learning platforms in Romania:

AEL platform (Educational Assistant for High-Schools, **http://portal.edu.ro**) for computer assisted training, main product of SIVECO, offers the support for teaching and learning, testing,   evaluation, administration content, recording the results of learning process. The company   offers e-business solutions, e-learning and e-health. It applies high technologies as Enterprise   Java Beans, jdbc, Java servlets, jsp, Java applets, and uses intensive XML. AEL is optimized   for synchronous learning, the teacher checking up the lesson, creating, coordinating and   recording the educational process. **AEL platform** is easy to adapt to any training's type or for   any management area of education. In this moment the platform is used in universities, and   also in societies for training their employees. **AeL Enterprise** is a modern instrument of training   and monitoring the improvement of staff inside a company, through which all the   employees   of   a   company, irrespective of their location (central headquarters, branch offices,   etc) to benefit from the same course, same information, to be trained alike. In other words,   they should apply the same procedures and be influenced by the same culture of the firm or   institution, irrespective if they meet in a classroom or they remain in their own offices,   because they are united thorough a training platform: **Advanced eLearning**.

ACADEMIA   ONLINE   (**http://www.academiaonline.ro**)   e-learning   system   is   achieved   by   InsideMedia Srl, with the support of specialists from Institute of Science Education and   Association   for Excellency in Career. Academia Online contains material and contents   supports, sequential presented in specific rhythm of student, placed in a form and optimum   design   for   on-line   learning   using   visual   content.   The methods, proposed by Institute of Science   Education,   are   created   in   constructive   manner.   These distinguish

fundamentally this e-learning system of other systems of learning to distance. The training is sustained by continuous evaluation and self evaluation.

EDUCATIA.NET **(http:www.opensoftware.ro)** e-learning platform offers courses in text, chart and multi-media format and contains elements for synchronous and asynchronous communication as well as advanced systems of testing. The courses, from different areas, are offered into a complex format and easy to approach by users. The structure of the courses is modular.

TIMSOFT ELEARNING (**http://www.timsoft.ro**) assures the development of online courses, hosting for online workshops, consulting and e-learning training, and development of incorporate systems for e-learning. The main product developed is the environment for online education eLearnTS with variants both Romanian and English language. Another products: IntraTS (intranet application what assures the organization and quick access to information, management of documents, cooperation) and eTests (application for online testing, dynamic producing of questionnaires and training modules).

Statistical instruments for implementation e-learning systems

More than a new type of education, an e-learning system is a business solution, a successful option for institutions which offer courses of training. Most studies show us that e-learning helps very much to decrease the costs of training but for reducing the costs, the solution must be complex and contain many components. From among the most important are: Learning Management System (LMS), which assures a better management of training process, and an electronic courses set for areas in which the necessity of training employees is priority. The optimum solution training which can work best on Romanian market, for companies, is a mix between classic learning and introduction online modules, mainly for the programs which involve using evaluation instruments.

In feasibility studies for implementation e-learning system the comparison between different solutions from the market can be made using a series of statistical instruments, as:

-flexibility to improve the program;

-costs- expenses made by a student for to reach established objectives;

-scale- the number of students involved in learning activity in a period time;

-perception- the technical quality of documents received by students;

-symmetry- the desirable level for each student;

-check from student looking the cooperation with another students or teacher for to accomplish learning objectives;

-interactivity- minimum time in which is obtained an answers from interaction;

-the capacity of integrate the possibility to present information in different ways and from different sources;

-necessary times for to reach an learning objective by student.

An e-learning solution is specific for companies which exceed 300 employees, distributed on a big territory, because in these organizations is noticed best the advantages. Theoretically, the prices of courses begin from 30 euro for individual users and can reach thousands euro for companies, but also there are free courses, subsidized by European funds.

Concerning Romania post- integration in UE, which generates a fast need to put with different procedures and working processes, e-learning is the best online instrument learning for European legislation and its procedures. Specialists in the educational area and from INTUITEXT (part of Softwin Group) estimate the blended learning (a combination classic training with e-learning) represents the future training for employees.

Other firm which offer online courses is SIVECO; AeL Enterprise is designed after a flexible model, not only from an organizational point of view, but also from the point of view of training materials (one can organize interactive sessions with the help of multimedia facilities and/or of video-conferences, and during the presentations one can integrate most types of MS Office documents, films and other interactive materials).

AeL Enterprise ensures a unitary training, a better monitoring of the process and of the results obtained by the students and instructors, evaluation of the didactic methods used, connections with related domains, careful planning of resources, time economy and optimization of the training process.

Conclusions

The transformation of knowledge in an essential element of social activities, its multiple functions and economic roles – a quasi-universal raw material, a capital and essential way of work with the tendency of having a prevailing role in firms and product – is normally reflected in the permanent attempt to intensify the processes of obtaining them. Maybe the most conclusive expression of this tendency is represented, in the last decades, by the permanent lifelong learning outline or by the whole period of life as an essential component of realizing a favorable environment for the economy based on knowledge.

In this context, e-Learning is having a substantial impact on personal development and citizenship, and it can do even better, provided that the human factor is not neglected within e-Learning, since this is a necessary (although not sufficient) condition to achieve enriching e-Learning experiences.

This means concentrating investment, research and practices on two priority areas: the personalization of e-Learning solutions, encouraging such developments as the bottom up production of content, the capacity of e-Learning to fit many different learning styles and the emergence of technologies that increase the flexibility in fruition, and the "humanization" of e-Learning, embodied by such developments as the diffusion of game-based elements, new possibilities for learners' interaction and empowerment, the community building aspect of e-Learning.

In Romania, as for evolution of e-learning, the prospects are good but can offering a really virtual learning environment, completely and interactive, is necessary to make a serious investment in virtual platform. The costs for Web systems and software are big, and the investment is retrieved very difficult. Because the development costs recover later in paid price by student, the online modules will become more expensive than classic training. In Romania, e-learning for companies is a market in forming. In future, the utilization of e-learning solutions will become a compulsory development component of our society.

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