THIS WEEK: Management Strategies

Understanding Today's Learner

By Jane Hart

E-Learning 2.0 is not just another learning fad. There are real imperatives for incorporating it into your learning strategy, not least the fact that you can use it effectively to meet the demands of today's learners. In this article, I draw both on research and on evidence from organisations that shows today's learners are different. I've found that for many organisations there is a real need to address the characteristics of our changing workforce or student population.

Part One of this essay looks at what the research tells us about the characteristics of today's learners (aka Learners 2.0), and how they best learn. **Part Two** reports on interviews with eLearning Guild members on how they perceive learners today, and how they are addressing their needs. **Part Three** looks at the importance for learning and development professionals to experience being a Learner 2.0 in order to advise on appropriate new learning approaches.

Part One: The research

In order to build a profile of today's learners, the research looked at two main ways of defining today's learner: (1) by age and generational attitudinal differences, and (2) by their use of the technology, in particular the use of Web 2.0 social media tools.

Age and generational attitudinal differences

Five generations are currently alive, and for the first time in history there are four in the workforce. Each of these generations has been influenced by the very different times in the last 80 years in which they grew up. Each generation's experience impacted their outlook on life and working. To understand the

Much of what we read about generational differences between learners in the Web 2.0 world is a bit removed from reality. This week's author connects the dots between theory, reality, and practice by using Guild Research and interviews with practitioners. In Extra Insights, you'll find a solid plan for getting started with Learning 2.0.

The eLearning Guild's 360° Research Report on e-Learning 2.0 coming soon – September 25

A publication of THE eLEARNING GUILD™
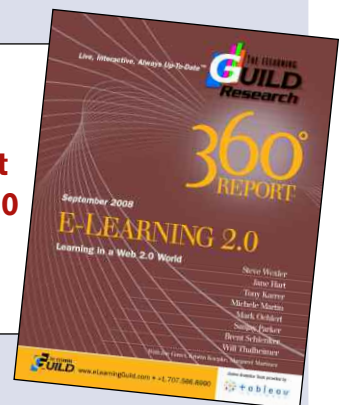
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attitudes to working and living of the youngest generations, it is first necessary to provide a brief summary of the three older generations for comparison. I have drawn on the findings of a number of sources in order to prepare these summaries, which reflect the situation in the Western, developed, nations. (Please see the References at the end of this article.)

Veterans (born 1925-1945) grew up in times of economic hardship, which led them to become disciplined and self-sacrificing. They place duty before pleasure, believe patience is its own reward, see work as an obligation, and, as workers, are loyal, hard-working, and dedicated. They respect authority, and they work within the system. Some of the youngest of this generation are still in the workforce.

Baby Boomers (born 1946-64) are members of a large generation who grew up in economic prosperity after World War II in strong, nuclear families with stay-at-home mums. They are competitive, optimistic, and focus on personal accomplishments. They are workaholics, who "live to work," and often take work home. Their job or profession defines them, and they like to feel valued and needed. They have no work-life balance; many have sacrificed a home life for a career, and for those who tried both, it has been a juggling act. This generation has dominated the workforce for

many years, and now hold significant positions within it.

Generation X (born 1965-1979) grew up in very different circumstances. For many, having divorced parents and mothers at work was the norm. This led to their characteristic resilience, independence, and adaptability. At work, they take employment seriously and have a pragmatic approach to getting things done. They "work to live, not live to work," and move in and out of the workforce to accommodate their family and children.

Compare these profiles with that of the youngest generation in the workplace, **Generation Y** (also known as Millenials) (born 1980-1995), and the biggest generation since the Baby Boomers. A number of sources summarise this generation as follows:

They are the children of Baby Boomers who indulged them and gave them lots of attention, and they now display a high level of self-confidence. This generation grew up in good times, and spent more time in full-time education than any previous generation. Because they have only known economic prosperity, they do not fear unemployment. They are self-reliant and very social. Friends are very important to them, and they have a large network. They like to multi-task, and are always onto the next thing. They question everything,

These generational findings show some quite startling attitudinal differences in the younger generations. It is no longer possible to think workers have the same approach to life, work, or learning as their bosses.

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hence their alias, Generation Why? In the workplace they are not afraid of challenging managers (Baby Boomers). For them, work is a means to an end; it is a place, not their identity. They want flexible working hours, to be able to work from home, and to have time off for travel. Gen Y-ers are quite happy to leave a job if it doesn't come up to expectations. They think they can have it all and are not embarrassed to ask for it. They are happy to job hop until they find what they want.

These generational findings show some quite startling attitudinal differences in the younger generations. It is no longer possible to think workers have the same approach to life, work, or learning as their bosses. In fact, *Time* magazine reported that Generation Y is forcing a cultural shift on companies and managers. As such they are becoming change agents, forcing organisations to rethink and improve their methods of recruiting, training, and management. Sarah Perez, writing in ReadWrite Web, says, "Ignoring the voices of Gen Y is something you should do at your own peril, especially if you're a business looking to hire," and that would seem to go for learning and development too.

For both Generation Y and **Generation Z** (born 1996 onwards), the members of which will start appearing in the workforce in five or so years, technology, and particularly the Internet, has been a major influencing factor in their lives. I will discuss this below.

Use of technology and the use of Web 2.0 social media tools

One of the well-known theories of generational use of technology has been offered by Marc Prensky, who contrasted **digital natives** with **digital immigrants**.

Digital immigrants are members of the older generations (mainly Baby Boomers but also Veterans and to some extent Gen X). They have learned to use the technology, "like all immigrants, some better than others – to adapt to their environment, but always retain, to some degree, their 'accent,' that is, their foot in the past." Prensky believes that although many embrace computers, the Internet, and mobile devices such as iPods, they use the technology very differently than the younger generations (Gens Y and Z).

Digital natives grew up with the technology. They are "native speakers" of the digital language of computers, video games, and the Internet. Because of this, they "think and process information fundamentally differently from their predecessors."

This generational view of the use of technology has not been without its critics, who say it is not so simple to write off members of the older generations as "digital immigrants" simply because of their age, and that many heavy users of the Net also have characteristics very similar to digital natives. In fact the Digital Natives Project asserts:

"Digital natives share a common global culture that is defined not by age, strictly, but by certain attributes and experiences related to how they interact with in-
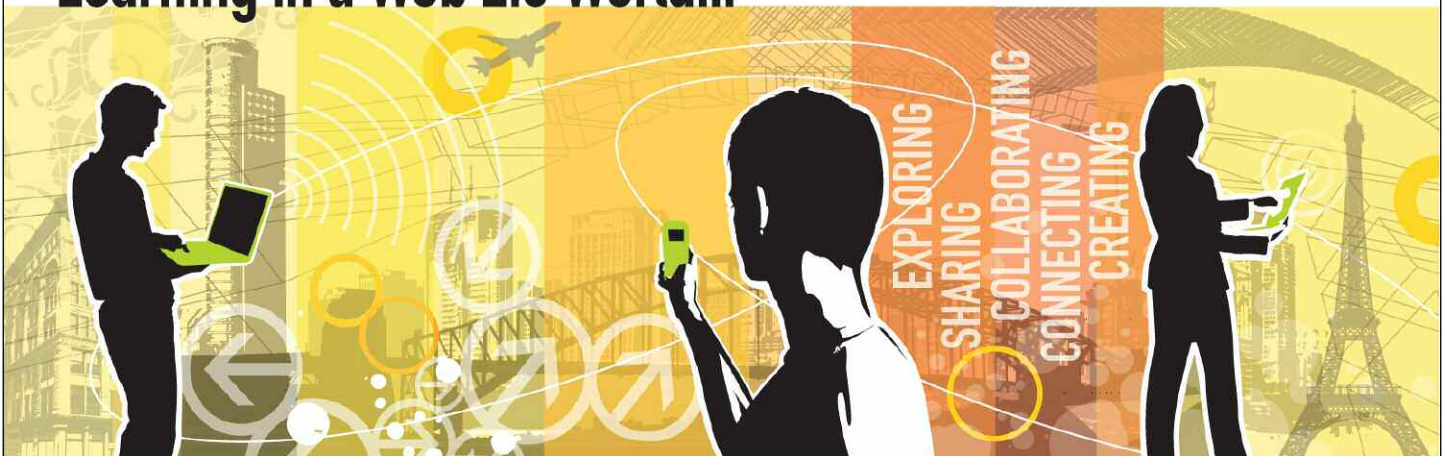
> *[J]ust because learning is made available online (as e-Learning) doesn't make the traditional "talk and chalk" approach any more effective for [the new breed of learners], and linear PowerPoint presentations and courseware simply bore them.*

formation technologies, information itself, one another, and other people and institutions. Those who were not 'born digital' can be just as connected, if not more so, than their younger counterparts."

It is quite clear there is a spectrum of digital fluency across the generations, from those who have very little understanding or use of the technology to those for whom the technology is "in their blood." This also appears to be the case with the second phase of the Web, known as Web 2.0, which involves the use of social media tools such as blogs, wikis, social networking, and social bookmarking services. These support a more collaborative, social, user-generated-content view of the world.

However, although all Internet users will come across social media tools at some time, there are very different patterns of use in terms of (a) the level of engagement with social media, that is, how they interact with the tools, (b) the frequency of engagement, or how regularly they make use of social media, and (c) the scale of engagement, which is the range of tools they use.

In terms of level of engagement, I have developed a Model of Engagement with Social Media, which identifies three main levels:

1. Readers (or passive Consumers) – users who simply browse Web sites, blogs, and wikis, watch videos, listen to Podcasts, etc.,
2. Participants (or active Contributors) – users who contribute to content in blogs, wikis, and other Web sites, share links using online bookmarking services or from their RSS readers; or otherwise connect with others using instant messaging, SMS, and micro-blogging and social networking services, and
3. Creators (or pro-active Producers) – users who create and share their own content like photos, videos, and other files and documents, as well as build their own blogs, wikis, social networks, etc., to encourage connections and discussion with others.

Technological profiles of Web 2.0 users once again tend to focus on Generation Y, and how they are connected 24/7 and "are a major part of Web 2.0 culture." Forrester's 2008 North American Technographics benchmark survey showed that nine out of ten Gen Yers own a PC, and 82 percent own a mobile phone. The survey also stated that it is "technology use that sets this generation apart: Gen Y spends more time online – for leisure or work – than watching TV. Seventy-two percent of Gen Y mobile phone owners send or receive text messages, and 42 percent of online Gen Yers watch Internet video at least monthly." A May 2008 survey by In-stat showed that Gen Y was "leading the move to mobile social networks and Mobile

Web 2.0," which includes mobile blogging, file sharing, location-based socialization services, and chat.

However, other surveys show significant and increasing use of social media across the generations. For example, the fastest growing demographic on the social network, Facebook, is 25 years and older, and Forrester's report also shows that, "Gen X is ramping up its Internet and mobile activities, including reading blogs (21 percent of online Gen Xers do it at least monthly) and texting (61 percent of Gen X mobile subscribers do it every day)." Universal McCann's August "Media in Mind" study of 5,000 U.S. adults showed that 10% now publish blogs, and 22% use instant messaging.

Although these surveys only go some way to describe the full extent of users' engagement with social media, it is clear that a defining characteristic of today's new breed of learner is one that is highly engaged at all levels (Consumer, Participant, and Creator), on a regular basis, with wide experience of a number of social media tools.

A profile of today's new breed of learner

Aggregating all the characteristics identified so far, we can build a profile of the new learner of today as someone who is:

- Most likely to be under 30 (and a member of Generation Y or Z) but might also be older than 30 (and a member of Gen X, Baby Boomer, Vets),
- A digital native (or a very tech-savvy digital immigrant),
- Connected 24/7 via a PC and/or mobile device, and
- A highly engaged user of a broad range of social media tools on a frequent (daily) basis.

This high level of connectedness and engagement with Web 2.0 social media permits us to label today's new learner as a Web 2.0 Learner or Learner 2.0.

How 2.0 Learners learn – and the types of learning that best suit them

From the many studies of Generation Y I cited above, as well as those that focus on the education of this generation, together with emerging theories of Web 2.0 learning, we can identify some features of the new breed of learner:

- They prefer hyperlinked information coming from many sources.
- They are skilled multi-taskers, and they parallel process. They are used to simultaneously working with different content, and interacting with others.
- They are highly visual learners, preferring to process pictures, sounds, and video rather than text.
- They are experiential learners who learn by dis-

In educational organisations it seemed to be easier to add-in new tools, since course management systems provided a much wider range of functionality than corporate learning management systems.

covery rather than being "told." They like to inter-act with content to explore and draw their own conclusions. Simulations, games, and role playing allow them to learn by "being there," and also to enjoy themselves and have fun.

• They have short attention spans, so prefer bite-sited chunks of content (either on a PC or iPod).

• They are very social, and love to share with oth-ers. They enjoy working in teams. Interaction with others is key to their learning, and they want to be part of a community, collaborating, sharing, and exchanging ideas.

• They are happy to take on different roles in their learning, either as a student, or even as an instruc-tor, facilitator, or supporter of others, and switch between them.

• They prefer to learn "just in time," that is, have ac-cess to relevant information they can apply imme-diately.

• They need immediate feedback, responsiveness, and ideas from others, as they are used to instant gratification.

• They are very independent learners, and are able to teach themselves with guidance; they don't need sets of instructions like their predecessors – just like they found out how to use their iPods or Google.

• They prefer to construct their own learning – as-sembling information and tools from different sources.

One thing is clear, that just because learning is made available online (as e-Learning) doesn't make the traditional "talk and chalk" approach any more effective for them, and linear PowerPoint presenta-tions and courseware simply bore them.
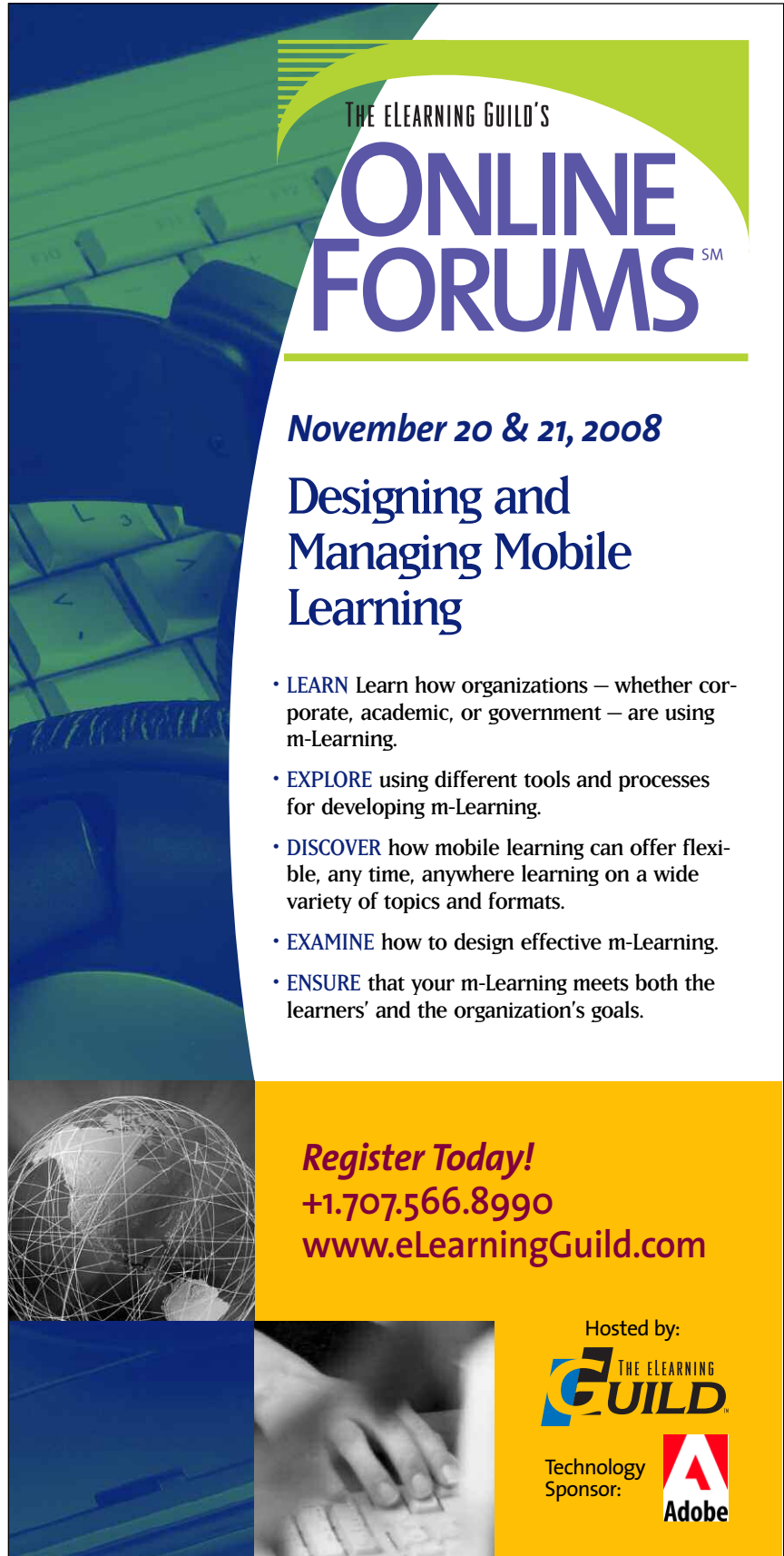
Furthermore, if we add into the equation the point mentioned above, that Generation Y is a much more demanding generation than previous ones, then it fol-lows that younger Web 2.0 Learners, in particular, are going to insist that new approaches and tools are adopted in the workplace.

So, to what extent are eLearning Guild members' organisations using Web 2.0 approaches and tech-nologies to meet the needs of today's learners?

Part Two: The practice

The second part of this report documents the out-come of a number of interviews with eLearning Guild members from both education and workplace learn-ing, in response to three key questions:

1. What differences have you noticed in learners today?

2. To what extent are you implementing Web 2.0 learning approaches and technologies to meet the needs of these new learners?

3. How do you ensure that other, more traditional learners are prepared for these Web 2.0 learning approaches and technologies?

Interviewees identified a number of characteristics in today's learners that concur with the research findings, but also added some further interesting reflections.

Generational differences

Byron Cutting, Learning Solutions Specialist with AAA, had spotted generational differences in learners when he was teaching, "Whereas traditional learners (i.e. those that grew up prior to the Internet) are used to sitting through lectures and long reading assignments, newer learners often struggle to do so. Instead they prefer to gather information from multiple sources, often simultaneously, to gain knowledge." He noticed too, the younger learners in his classes would turn to Wikipedia or Google to look up additional information as he was lecturing. He remarked, "I discovered very quickly that not only were they gaining the deeper knowledge they sought from the Internet, but they were also picking up on the key points from my lecture – even though they didn't seem to be paying any attention." In his current organisation, he says, "Older workers often do their best to avoid CBT offerings and not use the collaboration tools available to them. The younger workers, however, can be seen IMing, texting, surfing, and flipping back and forth through multiple browser windows."

Roger Pearman of Qualifying.org, Inc. said that, "While it is tempting to note generational differences, I've observed that the issue is more complex. I have had a sizable number of 55-year-old participants who are using blogs and iPods in our programs. As is often the case, 'learners' are those who use multiple strategies to achieve a new understanding and greater effectiveness. It is just that in today's technological environment there are more strategies than five years ago to learn new information and behaviours. I'm coming to the view the true learners are eager to use as many pathways as possible – especially if it will allow multi-tasking."

Use of technology

Marcel de Leeuwe, an Educational Scientist at a multimedia publisher in the Netherlands, noticed that today's younger learners use the technology without even realising it; whereas older, less tech-savvy workers require instructions and books to find out about it. He also felt there was a big difference in the mindset of workers; again, today's younger learners want to create and share content themselves, but this is beyond the comprehension of most older employees.

Nicola Avery saw a big difference in confidence

levels at the University of Surrey in England, where she is an E-Learning Advisor. The students who had more experience in trying things out online were happy to get stuck in and experience the technologies, compared with the educators who were more resistant to using the technologies, and then were more likely to use them for their own research rather than for teaching purposes.

Inge de Ward, E-Learning Coordinator for the Institute of Tropical Medicine (ITP) in Antwerp, Belgium also identified geographical differences in the use of technology and culture of the international students at the Institute. Students from Asian countries appeared much more competent with the use of mobiles and computers than some of their Western counterparts, and, "In Western learning culture, most of the learning process is focused around 'me' while in a lot of Southern hemisphere countries (e.g., Peru) as well as in other cultural groups (First Nations for example), learning is part of a community engagement." (*Editor's Note:* First Nations is a term of ethnicity that refers to the Aboriginal peoples in Canada who are neither Inuit nor Métis people.) She has also observed that African countries, which may not be so advanced in their use of technologies, are making an enormous leap into Web 2.0, as they are eager to become engaged and acquire knowledge from others.

Expectations

Charles Jennings, Global Head of Learning at Thomson Reuters, noted that today's learners expect learning to be absolutely relevant to their tasks and responsibilities; they expect access to the Web from work; and they also expect to be able to carry out their learning from wherever they are and whenever it best suits them.

Bradley Shoebottom, Information Architect at Innovatia in Canada, agreed that employees want learning "just in time," and don't have the time to hunt around for it.

The extent to which interviewees' organisations were implementing e-Learning 2.0 approaches to meet the needs of learners today varied quite considerably, from a few who had no plans to implement it to those who already had made significant steps (as the Guild's survey data also shows).

Self-organising learners

In a few places the impetus often came from the students or workers themselves. Nicola Avery had observed instances where the use of social tools had been instigated by self-organising students at her university, for example, they set up their own study groups on social networks. Inge de Ward cited a similar example of a group of students who had set up their

Whilst conducting the interviews, it became very clear that the most successful implementations or drives towards e-Learning 2.0 were largely due to the passionate learning and development individuals who were highly engaged with social software themselves.

own discussion group when they were unable to access an ITP discussion forum.

Mike Taylor, Learning & Development Consultant at Fossil & Hydro Generation, also mentioned a number of blogging and wiki initiatives that had been set up by younger employees, albeit "under the radar."

Adding-in or replacing

In the organisations where e-Learning 2.0 was being implemented top-down, some were adding on Web 2.0 approaches to their current offerings, whilst others were using them to replace traditional approaches.

In educational organisations it seemed to be easier to add-in new tools, since course management systems provided a much wider range of functionality than corporate learning management systems. Bradley Shoemaker explained that at the Royal Military College of Canada, where he is an ILT instructor, "The Desire2Learn platform allows discussion groups and blogs, including student-created groups and blogs."

Charles Jennings described how at Thomson Reuters, they had already embedded a number of on-demand learning resources, particularly as part of their Institute of Technology, which is a performance support environment that includes courses, online books, blogs, Podcasts, RSS feeds, and wikis for expertise sharing. This was done because they needed to be more responsive to business problems, and avoid taking people out of their jobs. Charles and the Senior Talent/L&D team at Thomson Reuters, have also just recently developed a totally new learning and development strategy that has at its core Learning 2.0 principles, including social learning, and which is relevant to the needs of a changing workforce.

However, a number of users were finding it slow or difficult to incorporate e-Learning 2.0, as they were coming up against barriers.

Old mindsets

Marcel de Leeuwe stated that, as it was educators, learning managers, and instructional designers who were commissioning learning, they were not asking for learning to be delivered in this new way. He felt that most of his customers were scared of allowing others to share and create content; they wanted to control it, and for many of his corporate customers, he believed that e-Learning 2.0 was simply beyond their imagination – and there were not enough big companies implementing new methodologies to influence their thinking.

Misty Campbell-Olbert, who is an instructional designer at Compass Knowledge Group, agreed that, whereas some of her clients were beginning to embrace blogs and wikis, they had not branched out to any of the social networking sites as yet. She felt it

was a slow road to a "mentality" change in the concept of social networking in the field of academia.

Blocking of sites

A number of interviewees reported that the blocking of many social media sites, such as Blogger, YouTube, and Facebook, by their organisations made their job very difficult. (In fact, The eLearning Guild survey results showed that blocking of sites is quite widespread). Whereas other organisations, like Thomson Reuters, don't limit access to Web sites or tools, but rather have an "appropriate use" policy

Entering new territory

One learning and development practitioner from Australia said that he had to liaise with Knowledge Management and IT services to open the doors to Web 2.0 usage, as Web 2.0 was not in use anywhere else in the business. As a result, he was entering new territory and dealing with the red tape which comes with integrating social software in a corporate professional services environment. He added that it might be very tempting for someone not sold on social software to place it in the "too-hard basket," but he felt it was worth the effort. This seemed to be the case with a number of the interviewees who were experiencing barriers and challenges; they remained positive and optimistic as they tried to "chip away" at the obstacles, and eager to change mindsets.

In those organisations that were implementing e-Learning 2.0 approaches, interviewees offered some key advice and suggestions as to how to get traditional learners involved.

[A] large number of Guild members have a long way to go before they can consider themselves as highly engaged with the tools as the new breed of learners that they now need to serve.

Figure 1 *Guild member use tends toward the Reader level.*

Source: The eLearning Guild Research
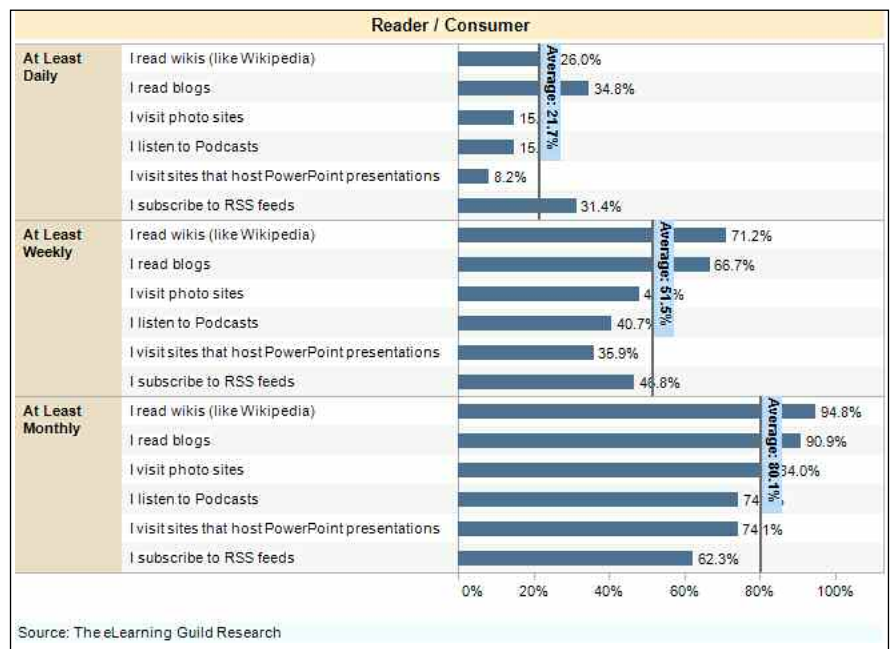
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Provide traditional information

Ole Kristenson, who works for Grundfos, explained that as part of rolling out the new collaborative tools they try to have traditional information about them, e.g. e-mails, text pages, small presentations, and software simulations.

Start with what they know

Nicola Avery mentioned that, as educators tend to go for tools that replicate what they already know, this is a good place to start getting people engaged with new tools. Marcel de Leuuwe also picked up on this; he felt that traditional learners want something that is very close to their own learning or working. With blogging, he felt that this had been more successful when implemented within a course management system like Moodle – which teachers understood – rather than getting them to set up a Blogger account – which was a step too far.

Ease them in gently

Inge de Waard made an important point. As social media participation is possible at a number of different levels, for those who are unaccustomed to these tools, simply by encouraging contribution – whether it be in a discussion or some content – they are actively engaging, and it doesn't have to be a difficult or uncomfortable experience. In other words, you ease them in gently rather than expecting them all to be creating their own content from scratch.

Inge also made another interesting point. She felt wikis were probably the most difficult social media tool to implement, since they required significant involvement to make them work. It is much easier to get people to recognise the value of shared bookmarks in a team, or connecting with overseas colleagues through social networking sites, so start with simple things.

Marcel de Leeuwe agreed that wikis were not the best tool to start with, as they generally required both technical skills and a different mindset to use them. He also thought it was important to look for quick wins, like demonstrating the value of a RSS reader.

Pilots

A number of the interviewees also felt that piloting was important. Bradley Shoemaker said that for internal personnel at RMC, they start with pilot groups to make them advocates of the new learning methods. They also test what does and does not work with the pilot group. Misty Campbell-Olbert uses the same approach. If they make use of a new technology, they place it in an orientation course so that users can practice with it. They incorporate it into one pilot course, and then survey the users before deciding to implement it.

Whilst conducting the interviews, it became very

clear that the most successful implementations or drives towards e-Learning 2.0 were largely due to the passionate learning and development individuals who were highly engaged with social software themselves. This begged the question to what extent learning and

Figure 2 *Only about a third of respondents are Participants.*
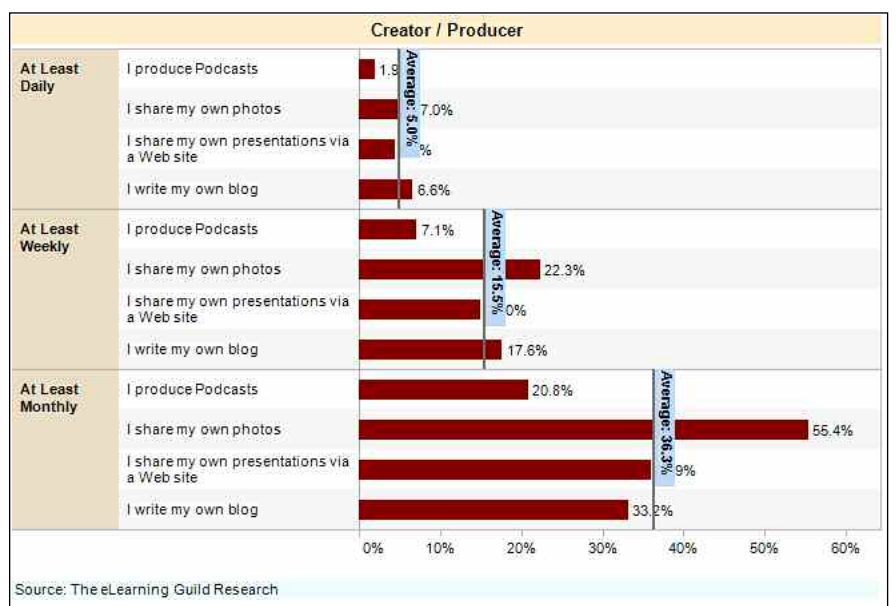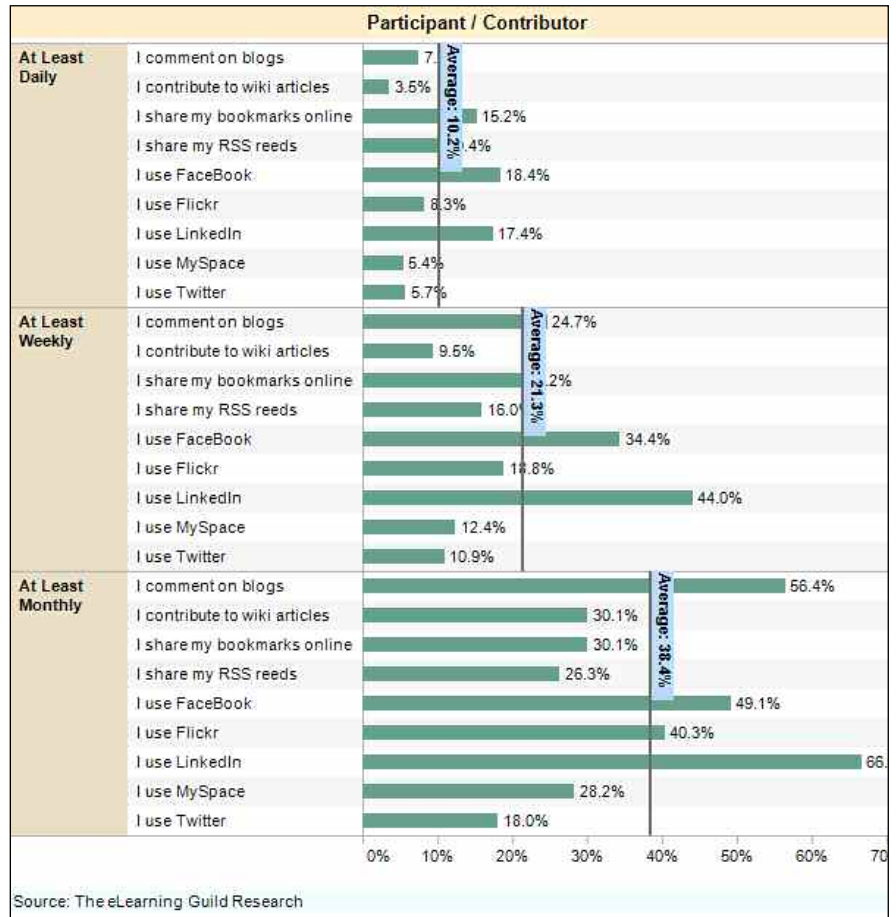
Figure 3 *The smallest group of respondents report that they are Creators of 2.0 content.*

development professionals need not only understand the concepts behind e-Learning 2.0, but also experience Web 2.0 social media tools at first hand in order to be able to advise on the implementation of appropriate approaches and tools. In fact to what extent do they need to be Learners 2.0 themselves?

Part Three: Learning and development professionals as Learners 2.0

The results of The eLearning Guild's member survey showed that usage of Web 2.0 social media varied across the levels, frequency, and breadth of engagement. Figures 1, 2, and 3 on pages 7 and 8 provide the percentage of members undertaking a number of key activities at Reader, Participant, and Creator levels (defined earlier in this article) on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis.

These charts show that, on average, on a monthly basis, eLearning Guild members are primarily Readers/Consumers (80.1%), whilst just over a third are Participants/Contributors (38.1%) or Creators/Producers (36.3%). However, there is a significant difference when the results are sorted by age. For example, see Figure 4 for the effect of age on participation. (For further breakdown by age and gender, see *The eLearning Guild's 360° Research Report on e-Learning 2.0*, which will be available on Thursday, September 25, 2008. Also see "Web 2.0 use across three+ generations" in the Best of the Blogs list in this issue of *Learning Solutions*.)

This suggests that a large number of Guild members have a long way to go before they can consider themselves as highly engaged with the tools as the new breed of learners that they now need to serve.

So to what extent did the interviewees feel it was important to understand and experience these new tools and technologies? All interviewees, without exception, felt it was very important for learning and development practitioners to keep abreast of new learning approaches and technologies, but the extent to which they felt they needed to be actively engaged with social media varied.

Conceptual understanding

A number of the people I interviewed felt it was only necessary to have a conceptual understanding of social media, through reading about new tools and technologies, attending conferences and networking events, and finding out about best practices, strategies, and techniques.

Hands-on use of tools

Many others to whom I spoke thought it was important, if not "absolutely essential," to have hands-on experience of the tools. Ellen Owen believed you

can't make a proper judgement unless you have tried a tool or a technology, and Nicola Avery felt it was important to get an understanding of "the good, the bad, and the ugly" of particular technologies. Misty Campbell-Olbert felt that learning and development professionals should use these tools in their daily lives: "The more practice they have with a new technology, they will begin to see the benefit of using that technology."
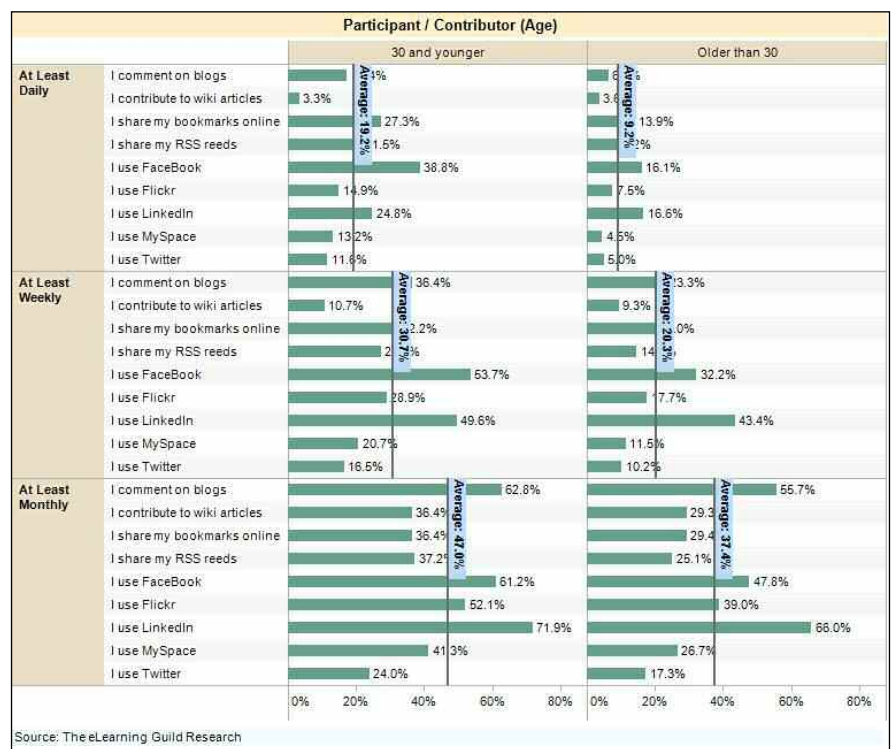
Use the tools in their own practice

Others still considered it vital to use social media in their own professional practice, either as personal tools or as group tools within their own teams. Marcel de Leuuwe, for instance, felt that demonstrating how to use a tool in your own practice was the only way to get people to understand it.

One learning and development professional from Australia went further, when he said that practitioners must be personally involved, and passionate about the approach. They must be early adopters, and be seen as a champion of the cause. "Web 2.0 is something you do, rather than something you learn in a formal learning. You just need to get out and do it," and by that he meant, "Sign-up to blog feeds, join social bookmarking networks, write regular posts on your blog, and contribute to wikis."

Charles Jennings summarised all this when he said that learning and development professionals need to be the "poster children" in the effective use of new learning approaches and technologies.

"Web 2.0 is something you do, rather than something you learn in a formal learning. You just need to get out and do it. Sign-up to blog feeds, join social bookmarking networks, write regular posts on your blog, and contribute to wikis."

Figure 4 *When the survey data on participation is sorted by age, it appears that respondents over 30 are less likely to be Participants in social media.*

Participant / Contributor (Age)		
	30 and younger	Older than 30
At Least Daily		
I comment on blogs	4% (Average: 19.2%)	6.% (Average: 9.2%)
I contribute to wiki articles	3.3%	3.8%
I share my bookmarks online	27.3%	13.9%
I share my RSS reeds	1.5%	.2%
I use FaceBook	38.8%	16.1%
I use Flickr	14.9%	7.5%
I use LinkedIn	24.8%	16.6%
I use MySpace	13.2%	4.5%
I use Twitter	11.6%	5.0%
At Least Weekly		
I comment on blogs	36.4% (Average: 30.7%)	3.3% (Average: 20.3%)
I contribute to wiki articles	10.7%	9.3%
I share my bookmarks online	2.2%	.0%
I share my RSS reeds	2.7%	14.
I use FaceBook	53.7%	32.2%
I use Flickr	28.9%	7.7%
I use LinkedIn	49.6%	43.4%
I use MySpace	20.7%	11.5%
I use Twitter	16.5%	10.2%
At Least Monthly		
I comment on blogs	62.8% (Average: 47.0%)	55.7% (Average: 37.4%)
I contribute to wiki articles	36.4%	29.3
I share my bookmarks online	36.4%	29.4%
I share my RSS reeds	37.2%	25.1%
I use FaceBook	61.2%	47.8%
I use Flickr	52.1%	39.0%
I use LinkedIn	71.9%	66.0%
I use MySpace	41.3%	26.7%
I use Twitter	24.0%	17.3%

Source: The eLearning Guild Research

Management Strategies

So how can members become poster children? Take a look at Sidebar 1, where you will find some suggestions on getting started with social media, and then go experience what it is like to be a new learner today.

In summary

Today's new breed of learners are proficient users of Web 2.0 tools and technologies, who want to see the new social and collaborative approaches that they underpin in all aspects of their life – whether it be playing, working, or learning. Although some organisations are struggling to implement these new tools and approaches, it seems that the most successful e-Learning 2.0 implementations or, at least, movements towards e-Learning 2.0, are being promoted by passionate professionals who are highly engaged with Web 2.0 tools and their ethos, and who themselves are one of this new breed of learners.

The message for Guild members is clear; they will have to become immersed in these tools if they stand any chance of driving change within their organisations, and keeping up to speed as new learner demographics change.

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> *The message for Guild members is clear; they will have to become immersed in these tools if they stand any chance of driving change within their organisations, and keeping up to speed as new learner demographics change.*

Sidebar 1 *Getting started with social media: Some suggestions*

- 12 Step Plan to getting started with Social Learning, Jane Hart, Centre for Learning & Performance Technologies, August 2008 http://c4lpt.co.uk/articles/socialmedia.html
- How to do more on the Internet for free, Jane Hart, Centre for Learning & Performance Technologies http://c4lpt.co.uk/how2domore/index.html
- See Tony Karrer's column on "How to Get Started" in this issue of Learning Solutions.
- If you haven't already done so, take the time to read the four previous articles in this Learning Solutions series on Learning 2.0.
  - Will Thalheimer: "Evaluating e-Learning 2.0: Getting Our Heads Around the Complexity" (August 18, 2008)
  - Brent Schlenker: "What is e-Learning 2.0?" (August 25, 2008)
  - Michele Martin and Sanjay Parker: "Why e-Learning 2.0" (September 8, 2008)
  - Mark Oehlert: "Change 2.0: How Does e-Learning 2.0 Affect Organizational Culture?" (September 15, 2008)
- I hope you were able to join in The Guild's Online Forum last week on "Implementing e-Learning 2.0 Technologies." If not, plan to attend any of the multiple Learning 2.0 sessions at DevLearn 2008 ("Learning in a Web 2.0 World").
- And of course, by all means, download *The eLearning Guild's 360° Research Report on e-Learning 2.0* when it becomes available later this week.

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Author Contact

Jane Hart is a Social Media and
Learning advisor. After working for
14 years as a lecturer in a university,
where she was an early evangelist
for online learning, in 1997 she set
up her learning consultancy practice.
Since that time she has worked with businesses
(large and small) as well as education, on numerous
(e-)learning projects. Jane is also the founder of the
Centre for Learning & Performance Technologies –
now one of the world's most-visited and most popular
learning sites on the Web – where she keeps abreast
of learning trends, technologies and tools. Features
at the site include the Directory of Learning Tools, the
Top 100 Tools for Learning, and 25 Tools every learn-
ing professional should have in their toolbox.

Contact Jane by email to jane.hart@c4lpt.co.uk.

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the author(s) of each week's article, or you can make a
general comment to other readers.*

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*Additional information on the topics covered in these arti-
cles is also listed in the Guild Resource Directory.*

In the Archives

This is the first article by Jane Hart for The eLearning Guild. The eLearning Guild
has previously published articles whose topics relate to this week's. These are avail-
able to Guild members in the Learning Solutions Archive online. Members must log
in to download them. Here are the authors, the article topics, and the publication
dates. *Not a Guild Member? Join today for immediate access to all 269 articles in
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Articles on related topics

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Shevy Levy and Jim Yupangco, "Overcoming the Challenges of Social Learning in
the Workplace" (August 11, 2008)

Best of the Blogs

Pew Internet: Teens, Video Games, and Civics (PDF): http://www.pewinternet.org/
pdfs/PIP_Teens_Games_and_Civics_Report_FINAL.pdf (September 16, 2008)

Web 2.0 use across three+ generations: http://www.elearningguild.net/research/
?p=197 (September 16, 2008)

The Back of the Napkin: http://clive-shepherd.blogspot.com/2008/09/back-of-nap-
kin.html (September 16, 2008)

Social Web -- All about the small stuff: http://www.elearnspace.org/blog/archives/
003524.html (September 16, 2008)

Multimedia design: http://www.elearnspace.org/blog/archives/003517.html
(September 11, 2008)

Captivate vs. Camtasia – No contest: http://elearninglive.com/wordpress/2008/
09/captivate-vs-camtasia-no-contest/ (September 11, 2008)

Can You SlideShare?: http://clive-shepherd.blogspot.com/2008/09/can-you-
slideshare.html (September 11, 2008)

On gender and confidence in e-Learning: http://www.elearningguild.net/research/
?p=191 (September 10, 2008)

The 3 Laws of Platform Adoption: http://www.25hoursaday.com/weblog/2008/
09/08/The3LawsOfPlatformAdoptionWhyDevelopersChoosePlatformsAndWhatIt
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