



WEB 3.0 REPRESENTS A SHIFT IN HOW PEOPLE INTERACT WITH THE WEB

WEB 3.0: TRANSFORMING LEARNING

The growing role of technology in organizational learning is both a boon and a burden. While the benefits of emerging technologies are broad and unprecedented, it is nearly impossible for most learning professionals to keep pace with the rapid evolution of these tools. Even as today's technology experts discuss artificial intelligence, immersive virtual worlds, and the future of mobile devices, many organizations are still wrestling with how best to leverage on-line learning.

Research my firm conducted recently showed that learning departments have not fully adopted many of the tools, technologies and concepts associated with Web 2.0, and yet the next evolution – often referred to as Web 3.0 – is now upon us.

Not sure what Web 3.0 is? It's Ok, it's a little confusing. Most pundits categorize Web 3.0 as a range of Internet-based services and technologies that include components such as natural language search, forms of artificial intelligence, software agents that make recommendations to users and the application of context to content. Rather than a collection of technologies or applications that can be purchased or in-

stalled, Web 3.0 represents a shift in how people interact with the Web.

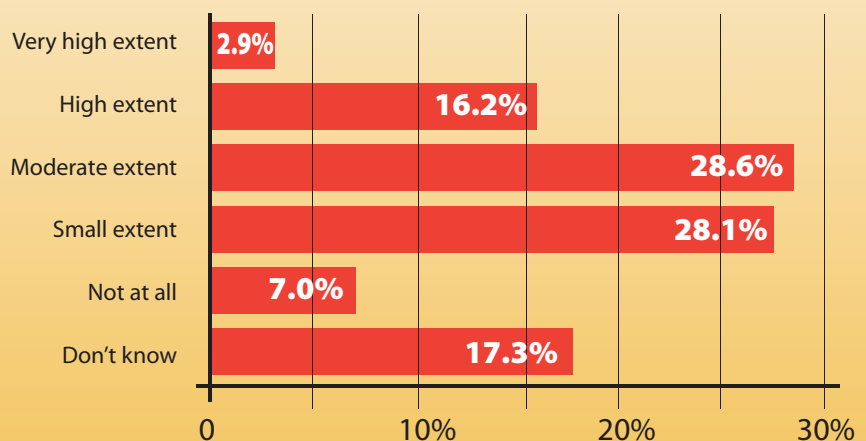
Recently we conducted a new study on how organizations are using Web 3.0 in learning. In the study, we break Web 3.0 into three basic components. The first component is what is most commonly referred to as the Semantic Web. This is a vision of the Internet in which software can understand the meaning of data and use natural language searches. The Semantic Web is a customized experience; information is tailored to the users' needs, location and identity.

Unfortunately in the vast majority of companies this is not what most employee's experience. All too often, internal search results do not provide the best answers and the information is often only partially related to what an employees needs. Web 3.0 technologies offer the promise of smarter searches with better, more targeted results.

The second component is the Mobile Web, which will allow users to experience the Web seamlessly as they move from one device to another. Not surprisingly, most interaction will take place on mobile

Web 3.0 will likely have an impact on learning in the near future

To what extent do you think Web 3.0 will have a positive impact on learning in your organization three years from now?



devices and the capabilities of these devices will continue to advance at a rapid pace.

However, despite those advancements and a lot of rhetoric in the last decade over the future of mobile learning, the reality is we still have a long way to go in this area. The Mobile Web is seen as the main component of Web 3.0 by study participants, yet not much learning is being designed for or delivered on mobile devices in corporations today.

The third element is the idea of an immersive Internet, in which virtual worlds, augmented reality and 3-D environments are the norm.

The immersive, virtual component of Web 3.0 has been around for some time in the learning field. Yet for all the talk of virtual worlds, simulations and other immersive technologies, this type of learning is just not taking place to any great extent in most companies. It is growing however, and more and more companies are experimenting with these technologies.

But, don't get too discouraged by today's reality. Despite the lack of widespread usage, the good news for Web 3.0 proponents is the study finds that organizations which are leveraging the latest technologies for their learning function are reaping the benefits.

Some other key findings include:

- Web 2.0 technologies have been shown to be effective tools for the learning function, yet many organizations are still grappling with how to leverage them.
- The use of mobile devices for learning is correlated with higher market performance and highly correlated with effective learning.

- The use of virtual world technology for learning is also expected to increase (by a factor of seven in the next three years) and the use of simulations and multiplayer gaming technology are predicted to increase dramatically in the near future.
- Augmented reality, once a staple of science fiction, is becoming increasingly commonplace and holds incredible potential for learning and training.
- Budget constraints and lack of leadership buy-in are viewed as

the biggest obstacles to adoption.

While the majority of companies continue to wrestle with older technologies, high-performing companies are quickly mastering and leveraging newer Web 3.0 technologies for greater productivity. That's a reality that is no longer virtual in top companies today.

Kevin Oakes is CEO of the Institute for Corporate Productivity (i4cp). E-mail [Kevin](#).

