

Mallon, D. (2009). Providing Learning at the Speed of Business: Using an Integrated Rapid e-Learning Development and Virtual Classroom Platform Research Bulletin. *The latest in Enterprise Learning and Talent Management* 4(37), 1-12

This article highlights the changing role of the Learning and Development (L&D) department from that of content creators for traditional formal programmes to that of a department which must increasingly rely on informal learning to meet the time critical needs of the business. Mallon suggests L&D departments must become a centre of excellence for content creation in all its forms which includes content created by the L&D department and the employee population of the organisation. Mallon proposes the use of Virtual Classroom technology as a solution to efficient content creation and delivery. The article reviews the features of Adobe Connect Pro and provides examples of its use in corporate learning. Mallon concludes by suggesting high impact learning organisations need to seek tools that facilitate efficient and high quality content creation by training departments and which will also allow these departments teach the business how to create and share knowledge with care and consistency ensuring content is findable and usable.

Mallon suggests that L&D departments in high impact learning organisations are responsible for content – how to create it, publish it, track it and measure effectiveness. However with the reliance on informal learning he identifies new skills that L&D departments need to acquire such as community management to cultivate social learning and efficient management of learning content flowing through the organisation. Research indicates that content efficiency is a function of people within the organisation, the standards and processes in place in the organisation and the technology in place to augment the organisation's people and support the processes. Mallon argues this leads to new roles such as information architect to help make content management decisions, optimized processes that are simple and straightforward and systems that facilitate content creation, deployment and tracking. The case histories illustrate how the adobe platform was used in large companies and provide statistics regarding speed of content creation and reduction in delivery time.

A recent trend within our organisation has been the introduction of one hour seminars delivered on a regular basis by Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) within a particular department. The events are run without input from L&D and appear to be successful. This

practise is an indication of the informal learning Mallon describes in the article. The addition of virtual classroom technology to these events would ensure the content was available for review at a later stage by any employee within the department or to employees in other areas of the business. The statistics presented in the case histories are more than impressive for example development time for content for a product launch reduced from two weeks to one day, but without the background information as to how long it took or what processes were introduced to reach this level of efficiency it is difficult to accept it especially when the research indicates the content is highly interactive, includes narrations and multimedia. The only product reviewed is the Adobe platform so the article does not address the issue of its flash output and its lack of compatibility with iPads and iPhones nor does it address any issues or challenges using the platform.