



Online Training

What is it?

Web-based training is widely available and easy to use. At sites like lynda.com or atomiclearning.com you pay a small fee to access hundreds of tutorial videos that show you how to use software applications like Dreamweaver and Sketchup. The short movies are broken up into categories so you don't have to learn about something until you're ready. It is simple to set up an account and you can watch the movies from any computer with Internet access.

Why is it Significant?

On-demand is a way of life, we access TV and music anytime and we've come to expect learning to be on-demand too. Putting online training into practice in your life eliminates the need to call for tech support or wait until the next training class to get your questions answered.

Some faculty have students subscribe to these training websites to reduce the amount of class time spent learning how to "push buttons". If students learn how to use the software on their own time, class time can be spent talking about important topics like principles of good web design and how to develop a strong web presence.

Pros...

- Students are more engaged in a course that utilizes their laptop and has a web component.
- Class time is more effectively utilized discussing course content rather than showing how to "push buttons".
- Blackboard provides a centralized location for accessing resources. Insert links and use the discussion board for troubleshooting.

Cons...

- You must pay to access online tutorials. Departments could investigate purchasing volume licenses.
- Not all WIT software are available as tutorials on all training sites. Be sure to investigate the titles offered before paying for a subscription.
- An Internet connection is required to access online tutorials.

How to Use it...

Training & development staff recommend that you use any online training as part of a course management system like Blackboard. Here are some ways that Blackboard can facilitate online training:

- 1. Have a clear organizational structure for course materials.** Organize materials by week, topic, or chapter.
- 2. Post thorough instructions for registration and access procedures on the course home page.** Don't assume that students have used an online training website before.
- 3. Communicate objectives, goals, expectations, and etiquette for online interactions.** Clearly outline these from the start to prevent any misuse.
- 4. Use Blackboard to provide examples of what students are expected to produce, as well as supplementary training materials.** They will find the experience easier and more enjoyable if there are guidelines for them to follow.
- 5. Use the discussion board.** Difficulties and potential problems can be resolved without taking up class time.

For further reading...

Wayne State University in Michigan couldn't take time from content area courses to teach technology so they're using Atomic Learning for students and faculty to learn a variety of software packages.
http://static.atomiclearning.com/files/wayne_state_university.pdf

Faculty at **Bowling Green University** in Ohio use Lynda.com as a virtual lab for students to access at any time to master a range of applications.
http://www.lynda.com/casestudies/pdfs/Casestudy_BowlingGreen.pdf

Lynda.com

Subscriptions from \$25 a month
<http://www.lynda.com/>

Atomic Learning

Subscriptions from \$99 a year
<http://movies.atomiclearning.com/highed/>