



Promatum

7 reasons to embrace mobile learning

A Promatum Free Guide

1 Harness devices already in your workplace

“Bring your own device” is an IT policy whereby employees are permitted, or encouraged, to use their own mobile devices in carrying out their duties, and connect them (possibly with limitations) to company infrastructure such as wifi networks, databases and other IT systems.

The prevalence of BYOD is estimated at between 44 and 75%, with 82% of employees surveyed by IBM stating that smartphone use plays a “critical role” in business.

“I am always ready to learn although I do not always like being taught.”

Winston Churchill

Although some activities within the LMS may be best suited to completion on a desktop or laptop computer, increasingly they can be accessed just as well via a smartphone or tablet.

3 Capture knowledge on the job

It’s commonplace now to see television breaking news reports illustrated by amateur footage uploaded by “citizen journalists” from a smartphone or tablet.

More and more of us go about our lives with sophisticated video, photo and audio capturing equipment literally in our pockets.

“As much as I love my laptop, that is not the way the world is going to learn. They are going to learn on tablets and phones. Better be on board or miss the train.”

Jay Cross, Author & eLearning pioneer

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2 Increase engagement with the company LMS

Giving your staff the choice of which device to use increases the likelihood they’ll want to engage - ultimately leading to better learning outcomes, and regular use of the system.

“Most work based mobile learning happens in stolen moments”

Geoff Stead, Qualcomm

In terms of the workplace, this technology means that everyone can capture and share information, wherever they happen to be.

Whether it’s photographing evidence of an equipment failure for later investigation or recording a voice memo to be typed up at the office, mobile technology has the potential to improve knowledge capture immensely.

4 Promote contextual learning

According to the 70:20:10 model of learning, the majority of learning happens “on the job” - that is, in the everyday situations which arise as employees go about their work.

Much of this learning may go unnoticed by both the employer and employee alike - for example, pausing to look up a schematic on the internet or checking through a health and safety policy when preparing a risk assessment are both learning events, although they may not be recognised as such.

“Using smartphones to deliver learning has been so effective that participants now take their courses in about 45% less time”

Kristofor Swanson, Merrill Lynch

We’ve all been to a training day or conference and found ourselves sitting in the second seminar after lunch, trying not to nod off. Too much learning in one sitting can be somewhat soporific.

Mobile devices come into their own in facilitating short, focused and flexible learning sessions.

6 Promote sharing of knowledge

Humans learn in a social context — therefore, being able to interact with others in a group is important for learning. Mobile devices allow near instant sharing of learning objects in a one-to-many or one-to-one relationship, which is ideal for disseminating content and activities, but also for peer to peer learning.

“You can’t teach people everything they need to know. The best you can do is position them where they can find what they need to know, when they need to know it.”

Seymour Papert, MIT professor and e-learning pioneer

The power of mobile devices is that they allow this learning to happen much more effectively. Employees using a smartphone now literally have the world’s knowledge at their fingertips.

Making your company intranet, manuals or database easily accessible via a responsive website or dedicated app allows your staff to grab whatever chunk of information they require “in the moment” without disrupting workflow.

5 Deliver “bite-size” learning

The ability to quickly power-up a device, complete an assigned task, and then return to what you were doing reduces the perceived barriers to “learning” as a discrete activity and helps embed it into the working day.

There’s plenty of evidence to suggest that breaking down learning into manageable chunks improves retention rates - and mobile devices are a perfect way to deliver that model.

“The only sustainable competitive advantage is the ability to learn and apply the right stuff faster.”

Wayne Hodgins, Autodesk Inc

Encouraging employees to share their learning gives each team member access to a broader experience than simply learning alone.

7 Embed learning within daily routines

It would be nice to imagine that your employees and colleagues have learning uppermost in their mind at all times, and take advantage of every opportunity to further their personal development.

In the real world, however, most people juggle a constantly shifting set of priorities, and as learning is seldom felt to be “urgent”, it can fall by the wayside.

“I absolutely think we need to give people access to material where and when they need it. It's imperative to have a mobile learning strategy.”

Karl-Heinz Oehler, VP, Hertz

What's unique about mobile devices in a learning context is that most people already check in several times per day, as part of their daily routine, so they're the perfect vehicle for embedding learning as a day-to-day activity rather than something for training days and other “special occasions”.

