

Reducing Training Costs With Targeted Online Training

Why moving training from the classroom to the cloud makes sense

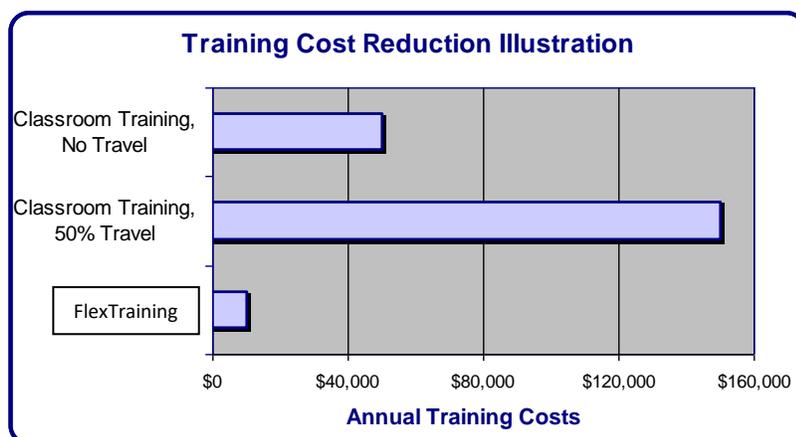
In a tough economic climate, smart choices must be made to reduce ongoing costs and improve effectiveness. One prominent area where expenses can be driven downward is in the delivery of targeted training and skills enhancement. While we focus here on the FlexTraining Universal Learning Platform.

Many organizations face a stark choice: find a cost-effective strategy for delivering targeted education or don't do any training at all. And performing no training at all is not an option in the long run.

This White Paper presents realistic examples that demonstrate how online training using the FlexTraining system drives down ongoing training costs. Conservative assumptions are made concerning individual cost drivers and the utilization of classroom facilities to ensure fairness.

These examples utilize a model where the organization needs to offer classroom or online education to 250 learners. Considering 100 users rather than 250 yields consistent results, and an organization with 1000, or even 5000 learners experiences the same benefits, though at a greater magnitude.

Utilizing FlexTraining for targeted training reduces costs right away, not in some future year or budget cycle.



Login & Go produces faster cost reduction than other technology-based training solutions due to the elimination of hardware, software and other startup expenses. Scenario details, results and assumptions are identified in the following pages:

Scenario: Your organization has 250 employees, customers, partners, affiliates or customers to train. Let's keep the numbers conservative and assume each learner needs just two courses during an average year. And let's be more conservative and assume no instructor or learner incurs any travel costs for classroom training. In these circumstances, how does Classroom Training compare to FlexTraining online training?

Item	FlexTraining	Classroom Training	Cost Reduction	Total Reduction
Instructor time @ \$90/hour		\$36,000	\$36,000	
Classroom facilities		\$9,500	\$9,500	
Course Admin costs: Enrollments, testing, grading		\$21,000	\$21,000	
Printed training materials and binders – 500 sets		\$12,000	\$12,000	
Login & Go Annual Fee: 250 users, unlim. Courses,	\$27,000		(\$27,000)	
Total Cost	\$27,000	\$78,500		\$51,500
Training Cost Reduction				\$51,500

Assumptions:

1. 250 learners, enrolled in an average of 2 courses per year. Thus 500 enrollments per year.
2. Classroom courses average 20 students per class. Thus 25 separate 2-day classroom classes are conducted to handle the 500 enrollments.
3. Classroom courses are 2 days in length, on average. Thus there are 50 classroom days, or 400 teaching hours for classroom courses.
4. An administrator or assistant accepts and tracks enrollments, administers and grades tests. Assume 1 hour per student enrolment, and thus 500 hours total, costing \$30 each.

5. Classroom facility is 1000 sq ft, at \$20 per square foot annual cost, plus \$10,000 cost for audio, video and workstations. Annual costs are thus \$30,000. With 50 training days, you are utilizing $\frac{1}{4}$ of the available days, and therefore responsible for $\frac{1}{4}$ of the facility costs.
6. Training materials for classroom training are assumed to cost \$20 per set.
7. Learners already have internet connections for other purposes, at work or at home, so no new internet browsers or connections need to be built.
8. Developing course material requires essentially the same effort and cost whether the material is used online or in a classroom.

Non-tangible Benefits of Online Training vs. Classroom Training

Some of the most important benefits of online training don't fit neatly into a data table. Consider the following effects of online training which are difficult to quantify, but which have a positive impact on the organization:

24 X 7 availability: The FlexTraining system is available around the clock, allowing learners to perform their learning activities at their convenience, at home or at work.

Asynchronous Learning: Learners and instructors can interact and collaborate without being online at the same time, easing scheduling conflicts.

Concrete results: – FlexTraining provides automated testing for every learner and course, something which is often omitted in classroom training.

Consistent Quality: Online Courses are built once and delivered many times, providing a known consistency, while classroom instruction can vary in completeness and quality.

What About Doing No Training at All?

It may be possible to get by without the critical training your organization needs. You could simply mail out some Word documents or PowerPoint files, or simply place some text on a web site and invite people to go out and read it.

But the results of this strategy are usually systemic and painful, and may include:

1. Poor performance due to lack of knowledge or skills
2. Low morale
3. High turnover
4. A perception among staff that the organization is not committed to excellence
5. Legal and professional non-compliance
6. Higher costs in the long run due to decreased performance and increased errors and omissions

From Industry Analysts

The following summary analysis of an in-depth survey reflects the critical nature of targeted training. It reflects the experiences of managers in many industries.

“ Ironically, the training solutions required to train the new workforce entering the market so they can adequately replace retiring baby boomers is also an applicable solution to aid manufacturing companies in surviving the recession. For the biggest part of business history, training was wrongly viewed as an overhead cost, but in recent years the manufacturing industry and others have come to recognize the great cost savings realized by increased training.

The rules we took so long to learn haven't changed. Training is the key to increasing and securing our future. People are still our most important asset. “

- Survey of 200 companies conducted by the Business Industrial Network.

Can You Afford To Do Nothing?

Most companies and organizations simply cannot continue with business as usual. Management expects costs to be reduced as soon as practical and in every possible area. An emerging solution is the all-in-one online learning framework provided by FlexTraining, a complete online training authoring and delivery system.

It is worth noting that companies with limited budgets and no available technical infrastructure can still provide cost-effective targeted training to their workforces. These companies and organizations utilize monthly online services that provide the same features and benefits as a server-based system.

For example, many are turning to FlexTraining for its immediate impact on training costs.

The FlexTraining system is simple and easy to understand:

1. Complete authoring and training applications with secure menus
2. Flexible configuration and authoring guides, and online Help system
3. Flexible subscription periods
4. Unlimited courses and enrollments
5. You retain complete control of all courses, material, testing, reports and records

FlexTraining includes full tech support and continuous upgrades, and is available in 12-month and 24-month subscriptions.