

The Role of Mobile in Learning (Oct 15)



by David James

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“Technology we now have at our fingertips empowers us all to create video content as quickly as it takes to say a message and show a task. It’s not expected to be high-production quality these days. What matters more is that, in their micro- moments of need, your people are able to quickly and easily find the contextually relevant resources they want to engage with, when they need to know and perform.”

When eLearning first appeared in the workplace, it was an innovative new way of reaching people. Employees learned at work in a way that few had learned before.

The difference with mobile learning (or mLearning) is that it’s arrived in the workplace with a familiar set of habits that had been honed by each device owner. Learning and development (L&D) is now just catching up to capitalize on the opportunity that’s presented.

At a time when the majority of us have integrated mobile technology into our daily lives the question shouldn’t just be: *how do we get our learning content onto mobile?* But, *how do we (L&D) integrate into our employees’ digital lives—being where they are and capitalizing on their digital content consumption habits?* This is because mobile habits aren’t all about stopping what we’re doing to concentrate on our device. They are often about combining what we’re doing with immediate access to information, know-how, or entertainment. It’s about making the most of downtime in order to work, connect, amuse, or inform ourselves. And it’s about getting from not-knowing to knowing and then carrying on.

The distinction to be made here is that mobile content consumption habits are rarely about “learning” but about finding things out and preparing to perform. Whether that’s by tailoring news feeds; accessing industry insights; connecting with friends, peers, colleagues, and experts; seeking “how-to” support; browsing for inspiration; or finding out specific information “in the moment.”

On top of this, the growing popularity of online video content has led to industry expert [Mary Meeker](#) to predict that by 2017, 74 percent of all Internet traffic will be video.

Thinking strategically

So, what does this all then mean for L&D?

The potential for mobile learning is to engage employees on their terms and provide content in a form that they recognize and want. But we know this, because we're mobile content consumers ourselves.

When developing a mobile content strategy for L&D, think about the [micro-moments](#) that employees might be experiencing. [According to Kim Larson](#), global director of Google BrandLab, micro-moments are the "I-want-to-go, I-want-to-do, I-want-to-buy, or I-want-to-know moments when people are turning to devices to find answers, discover new things, or make decisions." Of course, these moments will be different for different employee groups, whether they be new-starters, new managers, experienced managers, budget-holders, salespeople, marketers, etc. One thing's for sure, there are going to be plenty of them—and far too many for one person (or one small team) to plug with content.

With so many different employee groups, how can you execute a mobile learning strategy at scale?

The trick is to create contextually relevant content over time—and to get a little help while you're at it.

Learning from YouTube, the world's most engaged-with content website, you can employ their "CCC content framework" to *create* content, *collaborate*, and *curate* in order to collect your mLearning content to support your clients in their micro-moments of need.

Create

Of course, to get things started, you and your team might *create* some *how-to* content for some of those *I-want-to-do* and *I-want-to-know* moments. Pick a pain-point and answer the questions being asked with short-form video, wherever you can. Organizations are now doing this for induction, performance management, management tips, selling techniques, and all sorts of internal systems training.

Collaborate

Ultimately, the goal here is to help you broaden the relevance and reach of your mobile learning while leveraging the expertise and experience of additional creators. For this, you might work with your finance department to create content on what budget-holders will need in their micro-moments of: running a P&L for the first time, forecasting, processing payments, re-forecasting, year-end activities, etc. You might collaborate more remotely and seek expertise gathered from across the business. Collect *want-to-know* and *want-to-do* video clips (recorded on mobiles or webcams) and screen-recordings (using online tools such as QuickTime, Camtasia, Screencast-o-Matic, etc.). In doing so, you collect content as quickly as it takes to *say-it* and *show-it*.

In a recent survey by [Towards Maturity](#), 84 percent of respondents were potentially willing to use technology to share what they know with their peers.

Curate

The final content type in the CCC framework is *curate*. This means making good use of the wealth of great content that already exists and making this available in micro-moments of need. This could be information that sits on the company website, intranet, policy notes, or any other content that could (and should) be as easy to find as a web-search—perhaps repackaged as a video clip.

It might be content from the Internet that can be referenced, alongside organizational context. There are many tools you can use to find and filter relevant online content sources. But better still, let others in your business know that you plan to curate and invite them to provide relevant content (and context) too.

Capitalize on successful online habits

It's a no-brainer to get where your learners are and that's why mobile learning is such a hot topic right now. But it's half the job to only be there. The opportunity is to capitalize on habits that are already successfully employed online.

Technology we now have at our fingertips empowers us all to create video content as quickly as it takes to say a *message* and show a *task*. It's not expected to be high-production quality these days. What matters more is that, in their micro-moments of need, your people are able to quickly and easily find the contextually relevant resources they want to engage with, when they need to *know* and *perform*.

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