

# Actual Reality: Exploring Learning Technology Themes in 2016

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*By Kate Graham, Content & Communications Manager*

Every year there is a new trend in learning technology. Previous years have seen us explore social learning, mobile learning and gamification for example – each hailed at the next ‘big thing’. This year there is a lot of hype around virtual reality headsets, which is all well and good, but is this kind of technology really on the brink of being adopted by most organisations today?

As an analyst and practitioner, it is a mission close to my heart to understand the actual reality (as opposed to the virtual one) faced by learning professionals. Every corporate context is unique and brings its own set of challenges. The trends that become adopted in a high tech company for example, are often slow (or non-existent) to filter through in say, public sector organisations.

As part of our ongoing programme of research at Fosway Group, we host regular roundtable events that enable us to spend quality time with learning leaders across a range of organisations and industries. During focused, facilitated discussions, we explore the realities of both new trends and long-standing challenges...some of which just won't go away...

This year, we have identified a number of key themes relating to learning technology. Rather than encompassing the latest innovations or trends, these themes are part of a bigger, more strategic picture that underpin the transformation happening in learning at present. The approach of today's learning leaders is shifting to cope with new challenges presented by technology, working habits and the increasingly sophisticated demands of learners. So we believe the key areas for consideration in 2016 are as follows.



## The shift to digital learning

Learning is undergoing a transformation as organisations as a whole evolve. It's becoming more digitally-led and digitally delivered. This is moving L&D on from the e-learning era, but what does a fully digitally-led learning content strategy and experience look like? And what are the implications for suppliers, systems and staff?

## Practical solutions for real-world learning projects

Articles, conference sessions and whitepapers are often focused on the new and exciting. But there is still too little focus on what has really worked for learning professionals in practice. It's vital that we actively seek out and discover working examples and lessons learnt from successful (and possibly the less-than-successful) onboarding, leaderships, product knowledge and compliance initiatives.

## Getting beyond 70:20:10

The 70:20:10 model continues to increase in popularity, but is it really a good strategy for learning? Does it drive the right behaviours in L&D or help it perform more effectively? I am looking forward to interrogating which L&D strategies really work and drive an actionable agenda for L&D and deliver successful outcomes for the business. And ways of getting beyond 70:20:10 with reference to alternative learning strategies.

## L&D's role in Human Capital Management

The learning function and HR are inextricably linked, even if in many organisations they seem poles apart. It is critical for learning to understand how it fits into the broader HR decision making process and how L&D can have a real influence against a backdrop of HR transformation. By being more agile and more innovative, learning has the opportunity to lead the way, which is an exciting prospect.

## The learner as a consumer...

...and the consumer is king. User experience and employee engagement are now key concerns for L&D professionals. But without the consumer-grade technology, how do you deliver learner-centric solutions that drive engagement, adoption and actually impact learner success?



## Next generation learning systems

Contrary to popular believe, the LMS is not dead. In Fosway's latest research, over 90% of organisations are planning to use their LMS more, not less. The drivers for LMS are stronger than ever, but so is the belief that LMS's don't deliver an engaging user experience. The challenge is for our learning systems to truly deliver next generation learning including mobile, social and video, not just formal training and e-learning. This is a key strategic challenge for learning professionals and one which we'll be exploring with reference to the opportunities and challenges offered by the next generation of learning systems.

We're looking forward to sharing our research and insights around these key themes throughout the rest of 2016 and would welcome your thoughts on your priority challenges within your organisation.

*This article, written by Fosway's Content and Communications Manager, Kate Graham, first appeared in [E-learning Age magazine](#).*



# Accelerate and De-risk

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Fosway Group's analyst and advisory services deliver the insights your organisation needs to achieve results and eliminate risk. We know that every aspect of next generation HR and talent are more intertwined than ever. When you work with us, you accelerate your insight and make better decisions.

We're Europe's #1 independent HR analyst, and just like the Roman road we draw our name from, you'll find that we're unusually direct. We don't have a vested interest in your technology or consulting choices. You can depend on us to tell you what you need to know to succeed.

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