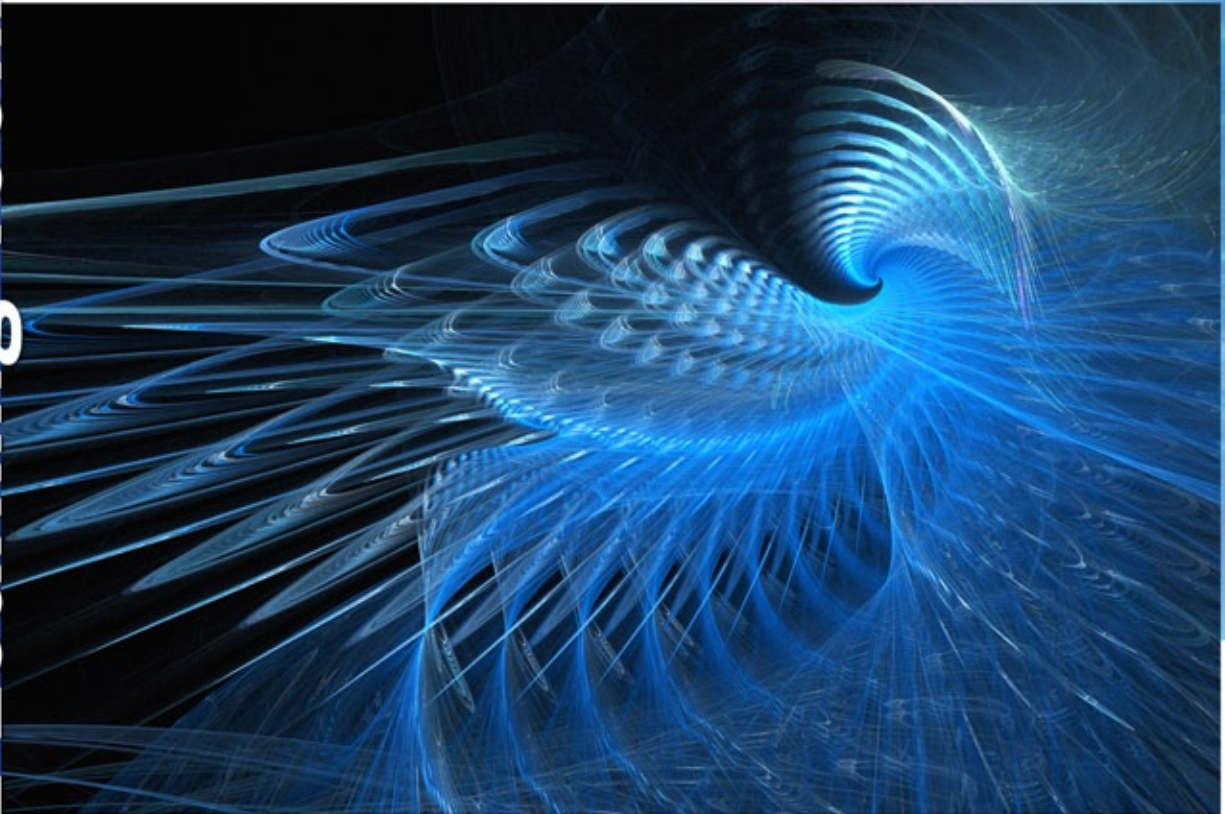


## Tools for Developing Innovative Online Training



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# **Emerging E-Learning Technologies: Tools for Developing Innovative Online Training**

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## Preface

In a 2000 report on e-learning, Trace Urdan and Cornelia Weggan divided the “corporate e-learning universe” into the sectors of *content*, *technology*, and *services*. I use this tri-part division of the e-learning field to structure a series of three inter-related reports for Brandon Hall Research.

The first report, entitled *Emerging E-Learning: New Approaches to Delivering Engaging Online Learning Content* was published as an e-book in December 2005. In it I identified 50 new *content formats* for e-learning that are now emerging to replace the “page-turner” models of online pedagogy so prevalent in the first few years of online learning.

This report, the second in the series, focuses on *emerging innovative technologies* for e-learning. In it you will find descriptions of 52 technologies that will have a major impact on e-learning over the next five years. I have provided links to online learning examples, lists of online resources, and a bibliography for each of the technologies. A list of companies and organizations that are developing and using these technologies is provided at the end of the report, along with an index.

A third report, which focuses on the extensive variety of *emerging services* that support e-learning, will be available in early 2007.

This series of three inter-related reports started with Brandon Hall and Richard Nantel perceiving that the field of e-learning is currently undergoing significant change. They asked me to research and report on these trends and changes, and I thank them for their support and encouragement.

My colleagues at Operitel Corporation, where I served as Chief Learning Officer until recently, have supported this research from the beginning. A special thanks to Michael Skinner, Operitel’s CEO, and the rest of the Operitel management team – David Fell, Carlos Oliveira, and Jason Stimers – for making my work environment such a positive place to produce this kind of research. Pamela Fragomeli, Lise Bye, Grant Hamilton, Amy Davey, Pierre Cahorn, Jennifer McDowell, and Dan Medakovic were very supportive team mates who allowed me to be more productive. Thanks also to Chad Nolan for checking all the hyperlinks and addresses throughout the report and to Chris Downs for copy-editing the manuscript.

None of this would have been possible if my wife, Karen Anderson, had not encouraged me to get into the e-learning field way back in 1992, and had not accompanied me on this journey with input, editing, and support at all points of my career. Thanks, Karen.

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# Wiki Tools

## Related terms

Collaboration tools, social networking

## Description

Wikis are fully editable Web sites; anyone can read or add content to a wiki site. Wikis are great tools for online collaboration on any topic. My first report in this series, entitled *Emerging E-Learning: New Approaches to Delivering Engaging Online Learning Content* (Brandon Hall Research, 2005), reviewed wikis as a separate online content format. Now in *this* report I look at the tools available for developing wikis.

The term wiki (derived from the Hawaiian word for “quick”) is applied to a diverse set of systems, features, approaches, and projects. Some fundamental principles include the following:

- Anyone can change anything.
- Wikis use simplified hypertext mark-up.
- Content is ego-less, time-less, and never finished.

Tomkins (2005) identifies four different forms of educational wikis:

1. Single-user wiki: Allows a person to collect and edit his or her own thoughts using a Web-based environment.
2. Lab book wiki: For students to keep notes online. These can be shared or peer reviewed and changed by fellow students.
3. Collaborative writing wiki: With a page locking system, can be used by a team for joint writing.
4. Knowledge base wiki: A place to collect all the knowledge within a group.

For wikis to work, it is important to have several contributors. With some basic instructions, wikis can be important tools for educational collaboration.

## Selected Examples

The best known wiki is Wikipedia, the online encyclopedia that has been built with tens of thousands of volunteer contributors. There are now over 1,300,000 articles in English in Wikipedia. <http://www.wikipedia.org/>

### Wiki Tools:

*MediaWiki*, the software used to run Wikipedia, is available for other applications. <http://wikipedia.sourceforge.net/features.html>

*SourceWatch* is a wiki that tracks political comments in the USA. Anyone can add to it. <http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=SourceWatch>

*Tiki for Education* is a wiki being set up to develop shared knowledge on all aspects of education. See the progress at: <http://edu.tikiwiki.org/tiki-index.php>

*UseModWiki* is the software used to set up the first ever wiki. <http://www.usemod.com/cgi-bin/wiki.pl?UseModWiki>

*Schtuff* is a free wiki service that allows tagging, custom permissions, an image gallery, RSS, and email notification. <http://www.schtuff.com/>

Wikis are fully editable Web sites; anyone can read or add content to a wiki site. Wikis are great tools for online collaboration on any topic.



## Wiki Tools

There are "wiki farms" (places where you can set up a wiki without needing your own server) such as *SeedWiki*.

<http://www.seedwiki.com/>

There are hundred of "wiki engines." The most complete listing is at the following site:

<http://c2.com/cgi/wiki?WikiEngines>

*MeatballWiki* is a community of active practitioners striving to teach each other how to organize people using online tools.

<http://www.usemod.com/cgi-bin/mb.pl?MeatballWiki>

Frank Gilbane has an article on the enterprise applications for blogs and wikis.

<http://www.gilbane.com/artpdf/GR12.10.pdf>

*Jotspot* is an "application wiki." Essentially, it is a platform for open collaborative software development. See why it is different.

<http://www.jot.com>

Not all uses of wikis in education work well. See the account of one educator's "brilliant failure" using wikis in his classroom.

<http://kairosnews.org/node/view/3794>

*Wikiversity* is a project "to build an electronic institution of learning" based on the wiki model.

<http://flosse.dicole.org/?item=wikiversity-time-to-vote>

The South African Association of Science and Technology Educators has developed a set of free online electronic textbooks using wiki technology.

[http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/SA\\_NC\\_Saaste:Technology](http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/SA_NC_Saaste:Technology)

Elliott Masie has a LearningWiki devoted to supporting his work with the e-learning community and his annual conference.

<http://www.learningwiki.com/>

Jon Udell, a columnist for *Infoworld Magazine*, gives an online talk on how a wiki can change over time, using the example of the "Heavy Metal Umlaut" article in Wikipedia.

<http://weblog.infoworld.com/udell/gems/umlaut.html>

SocialText Wiki is designed for work groups in corporate environments. A free trial is available.

<http://www.socialtext.com/>

### Online Resources

A huge source of links to wikis, as well as an analysis of how they work, is provided by David Mattison, an archivist with the British Columbia Archives. His article, "Quickikiwiki, Swiki, Twiki, Zwiki and the Plone Wars Wiki as a PIM and Collaborative Content Tool," is a rich source of information on wikis.

<http://www.infotoday.com/searcher/apr03/mattison.shtml>

Brian Lamb, of the University of British Columbia, maintains an extensive list of wiki sites.

<http://careo.elearning.ubc.ca/~blamb/wiki-radio/>

James Farmer has a sample lesson plan using a Wiki.

<http://radio.Weblogs.com/0120501/categories/wikis/2004/02/16.html>

*The term wiki (derived from the Hawaiian word for "quick") is applied to a diverse set of systems, features, approaches, and projects.*



## Wiki Tools

WritingWiki.org has lots of resources on wikis. Especially useful is the article “For Teachers New to Wikis.”

<http://writingwiki.org>

The e-Learning Centre in the UK maintains a long list of Wiki Tools.

<http://www.e-learningcentre.co.uk/eclipse/vendors/wikis.htm>

The Learning Commons project at the University of Calgary has a brochure for faculty on “Supporting Student Collaboration through the use of Wikis.”

[http://tlc.ucalgary.ca/documents/ITBL\\_studentwikis.pdf](http://tlc.ucalgary.ca/documents/ITBL_studentwikis.pdf)

Teresa Almeida d'Eça in Portugal has posted a list of various Web teaching tools, including wikis, that she updates regularly.

<http://64.71.48.37/teresadeca/webheads/online-learning-environments.htm#Wikis>

Stewart Mader, an Instructional Technologist for Sciences and Math at Brown University, produces a blog devoted to the use of wikis in education, including a section on wiki tools.

<http://www.ikiw.org/>

Whiplash is a series of ten-minute screencasts on various wikis.

<http://whiplash.pbwiki.com/>

WWTools for Education has an extensive list of resources for wikis in education.

<http://m.fasfind.com/wwwtools/m/25242.cfm?x=0&rid=25242>

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