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## Use of Mobile Devices in Distance Education

Distance education materials are currently being delivered using print and the Internet. With the increasing availability of mobile devices, there is a shift towards the use of mobile devices in distance education. This innovative delivery mode is referred to as mobile learning (mLearning) and is defined as the delivery of electronic materials on mobile devices such as cell phones, PDAs, PalmTop computers, etc. The use of mobile technology in distance education could provide more flexibility for learners since they will be able to learn from anywhere and at anytime. However, the learning materials must be designed properly for delivery on mobile technology because of the limited screen size of the mobile devices. One effective design method is to develop the learning materials in the form of learning objects so that learners can access the learning materials from electronic repositories. Learning materials must be information-rich using concept maps, graphics, etc. to allow for efficient display on mobile devices. The use of wireless mobile devices also allows students to stay connected from anywhere so that they can learn on the go.

The transition to mobile learning requires careful planning. Organizations and educational institutions must convert existing course materials or develop new course materials for delivery on mobile technology, establish the telecommunication infrastructure, train staff and faculty for mobile delivery, and change the culture of the organization for mobile delivery. One of the challenges that organizations will face after implementing mobile learning is how to keep up with the rapid changes in the technology.

