



Digital Game-Based Learning

Everyone loves to play games. In fact, I know of quite a few personal friends who take on a different personality at night when they retreat to fly a vintage aircraft, become a Roman gladiator, or descend as a powerful wizard into a dark dungeon. I myself have been guilty of preferring the original World War I flight simulation game, Red Baron.

Now imagine going to work and getting paid to play a game that you really enjoy, never realizing that you are learning valuable skills that will help you during your daily job. Games have been used for centuries to teach but only recently have employers begun to realize the potential games offer in motivating and teaching valuable skills in a way that makes their employee happier and more productive.

The emerging world of game simulations offers a unique combination in training, education, and professional development options. The focus on this new learning is clearly on the learner, mixing the engagement of games along with the content of business education. This new learner based training and education will:

- Reflect training and learning that people will want to do (or will be eager to really succeed in achieving and be relevant). In addition this training should apply to concrete aspects of the learners' job.
- Contain a wide type of different forms and types of learning games (examples, from Sim City to Myst and Civilization). From action based to more complex role playing.
- Combine the appropriate learning methods for each type of content. Matching and offering players a wide variety of game choices will help game based learning appeal to a broad variety of learners.
- Increase employees' skills, productivity and value to the organization. Game learning has also been called "stealth learning." This generally means that players should generally enjoy themselves while playing and only realize after finishing a game that they have learned something valuable.
- Provide a total learning experience that combined with reflection and other types of learning will produce a positive, holistic result. For game learning to ultimately be successful, there must be a link from the learner to the concrete work environment.

Detailed games often have a sophisticated level that players often do not recognize. To return to my Red Baron game as an example: when your German pilot progresses and you become an ace, you receive a higher quality aircraft. Likewise, when you fly for the Allies and rise in rank or become an ace, a better aircraft awaits. The original Red Baron game was a DOS based game. Even though it is a dinosaur by today's standards, it had a historical element that was in many ways educational and instructive. It was informative in that it contained accurate historical information about vintage aircraft, missions, airfields, major aces, medals and key war dates. Not to mention the fun I had flying a Sopwith Camel against a Zeppelin.

Excerpt from Digital Game-Based Learning by Marc Prensky

This material is the property of and maintained by TRC Interactive, Inc. It is fully reproducible only if it is not used to write any new material to be distributed outside of your organization. All reproductions must include "© MMXI, TRC Interactive Inc. (800) 222-9909" as it is protected by U.S. copyright laws and is the property of TRC Interactive, Inc.

[...training you can bank on](#)