National
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E Learning in the Military College:
How the Library and Educational Research Centre
Can Play a Vital Supporting Role.

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0. Abstract

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the readiness of the Military College in respect to implementing e-learning. It also investigates how the Library and Education Research Centre can play a vital role in supporting this effort.

The dissertation focuses on five key areas, which include the purpose of the investigation (research question). The current state of readiness in the Military College to implement e learning is investigated. The Library and Education Research Centre and the services it offers its patron is investigated also how these services could be improved by using e-learning platforms. The benefits to the organisation in its entirety are examined. Finally the dissertation examines the role of the Librarian and concludes by analysing the information collected and makes an number of observations.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the organisational readiness of the Military College with respect to e-learning, and also to examine how the Library and Educational Research Centre can play a vital supporting role.

The dissertation will examine how the Library and Educational Research Centre can tailor its current services to embrace e-learning, to provide a library service which meets the needs of its patrons.

It will also investigate the benefits of implementing e-learning into the organisation and how if implemented correctly this will enhance the current services offered to Library patrons

The role of the librarian in effectively implementing e-learning into the current library service will also be investigated.

2. Methodology

This dissertation combines a literature review, and an e-Learning readiness survey that involved visits to sites and interviewing key personnel.

This dissertation is based on the Military College and the Library and Educational Research Centre. The dissertation focuses on students who are

currently undergoing a Command and Staff Course in the Military College, which will lead to them, being awarded an Masters of Art in Leadership, Management and Defence Studies MA (LMDS) from Maynooth College.

It is not the intention of this dissertation to investigate the role e-learning has to play within a military environment, rather to examine the Military College as any other academic organisation. Furthermore, to investigate the Library and Educational Research Centre library and its services it offers its patrons rather than examining them as military personnel.

The Military College is located in the Defence Forces Training Centre (DFTC) in the Curragh Camp, Co. Kildare. The Military College conducts a range of courses throughout the year. However, it is intended, for the purpose of this dissertation to concentrate on the most senior and the most important. The course is a Command and Staff Course which leads students to a Masters of Art in Leadership, Management and Defence Studies MA (LMDS).

The Military College has teamed up with Maynooth College to offer this accreditation to its students. It is as a result of this partnership that e-learning alternatives are being investigated.

Maynooth College is located approximately thirty miles from the Military College, and students who are currently undergoing the Command and Staff Course do not have any access to lectures, course notes, bibliography databases or any of its electronic resources which are vitally important. Maynooth College wants to make available these services to students in the Military College.

Another factor arose during this partnership between Maynooth College and the Military College. During a visit of the academic staff of Maynooth College, they became aware that the current access to the library service was inadequate. The Library and Educational Research provides library services to its patrons from 9.30 a.m to 5 p.m. from Monday to Thursday and from 9.30a.m. to 3.30 p.m. on Fridays. The only other schedule opening hours are Tuesday until 6 p.m. There is No opening at the weekends.

Despite the availability of Internet and internet facilities in the students rooms there are no library service which can be accessed by them.

In cooperation and agreement with both Colleges it was decided to provide students who are currently undergoing the Command and Staff Course and staff access to a host of services via Blackboard System by provide them with e-learning services and learning objects. "E learning refers to the use of internet technologies to deliver a broad array of solutions that enhance knowledge and performance" (Rosenberg p28, 2002)

While there has been an agreement in principle to providing wider access to resources, it has not yet been implemented. This dissertation when completed will establish the framework for implementation, including identifying what

needs to be done before e-learning is successfully implemented in the Military College

Students and Students Needs

Students who attend the Command and Staff course vary in their academic qualification, however they are mostly postgraduates. The students are of different ages and have different levels of I.T.C. literacy. These factors are important when considering providing access to electronic information.

The Command and Staff course is the senior course conducted in the Military College. The course is residential and of nine-month duration. The students who attend this course are senior officers of the Army, Naval Service and Air Corps. The students hold the equivalent rank of Commandant and in most cases, the students are both male and female.

Getting access to accurate, relevant and current information is vital for those students. Students rely on the Library and Educational Research Centre to provide information to meet their needs. However, this can only be done during the hours that the library is opened.

In addition to this, students are required to conduct a number of researched-based projects, and they are also required to present and deliver oral presentations. It is important that students have access to materials outside of the library opening hours. Students information needs must be catered for and alternative methods needs to be introduced "users must be encouraged to access and interact with high-quality collection of high quality scholarly and educational materials in ways that are meaningful to them." (Clark, 2001, p 79).

E-Learning Readiness: Is The Military College Prepared?

"The internet is changing the world we live in. It is a change no less significant than the industrial revolution of the 18th and 19th centuries. Over the last two decades, information technology and the internet have been transferring the ways companies do business, the way students learn, the way scientists carry out research and the way in which governments provide services to their citizens (Towards a Knowledge based Europe, p 3, 2002). M.J. Rosenberg in his book E-Learning Strategies for Delivering Knowledge in the Digital Age suggest that there is a growing body of evidence which suggests that technology will limit the impact of traditional training. He also suggests that learning is moving from the classroom to anytime, anywhere. While carrying out the preliminary investigations for this dissertation (copy can be obtained by contacting the author), the author conducted an e-learning readiness survey in the Military College. The purpose of this investigation was to establish if the Military College was ready to implement a durable e-learning strategy.

Rosenberg's 20 Key Strategic Questions for assessing an organisation's e-learning readiness was used. The result of this assessment can be seen in

Annex A.

The 20 questions were divided into seven areas of understanding:
Area (1) – The business requirements.
Area (2) – The changing nature of learning and e-learning.
Area (3) – The value of instructional and information design.
Area (4) – Change management.
Area (5) – Reinventing the training organisation.
Area (6) – The e-learning industry.
Area (7) – Personal Commitment.

The survey was conducted by interviewing two key personnel. A total of twenty questions addressed the seven key areas and the responses from the interviewers were recorded. The rating scales was as follows:

Rating Scale
0 = No evidence of any positive initiative or result in this area.
1 = Little evidence, but there are potential improvement opportunities.
2 = Initiatives underway but progress is fleeting.
3 = Initatives underway with some sustainable success probably down the road.
4 = Reasonable success achieved, now the challenge is to keep it going in the right direction.
5 = Approaching sustainability perhaps even best practice.

Results at a Glance
Overall the Military College scored quite high and would appear to be positioned correctly to embrace e learning. The overall scores were:

Rating Scale	1	2	3	5	6	-
Score Total	1	0	6	10	3	-

Analysing the Scores

Any item which a response of 0-1 could be an area for concern. In the readiness survey, one of the questions received a score of 1. However, this is not a major concern at present. The questions were in relation to Internet availability. The low score achieved was because currently there is not the infrastructure in place. However, plans are underway and it is expected to dramatically increase access to the Internet throughout the Military College in early 2003. It is intended to "roll out" broadband internet access by June 2003. Any item with a response of 2 or 3 indicates that progress is being made but more effort would be worthwhile to avoid disruption. These areas where opportunities for improvement may be easiest. The readiness survey concluded with six questions which scored three points. While it may seem that this is a high score and a cause for concern, more detailed analysis appears to indicate that some of the reasons for not scoring higher is due to the nature of the Military College business. An example of answers which received 2 or 3 scores and explanation for these answers are as follows:

Q: *Is your organisation willing to allow e-learning to thrive at the expense of the class room?*
R. The interviewee explained that there were no intentions to transfer Doctrinal Training or Peacekeeping Training to the digital classroom.

Q. *Could your organisation demonstrate the benefits of e- learning?*
R. The interviewee wanted to have tangible evidence of the benefits of e learning before attempting to demonstrate it.

Q. *Is your organisation prepared to out source some of its functions and management?*
R. The interviewee explained that this had been given some consideration but had not happened thus far.

Finally, in respect to rating scales of **2-3** three other questions were given a score of **3**. These were:

Q. *How well is the Military College using Internet and Intranet?*
Q. *How prepared (skills, knowledge, motivation) are your workforce?*
Q. *How will your organisation overcome any bad prior experiences you and others had with technology....?*

These questions were areas where improvement could be made and needed to be prioritised to ensure that they did not cause further difficulties later.

Any item with a response of **4-5** indicates considerable progress. In total, there were 13 questions which received a response of **4-5**. This was an encouraging score and indicates that the Military College is well on the way to embracing an e-learning strategy.

If management interest can be maintained and the Military College continues on the path and monitors the areas which received lower scores it will be in a positive position to implement a durable e-learning strategy. "Without support at the executive level, it is highly doubtful that an e-learning initiative will succeed." (Rosenberg, p. 193, 2001).

Library And Educational Research Centre: Services Offered To Its Patrons, Is There A Role For E-Learning Within The Library?

The Library and Education Research Centre endeavours to provide all students and library patrons with a wide range of information in a variety of formats to meet their educational needs. Students may select from books, journals, videos, maps, dictionaries, reference books, grey literature or they can select from a variety of electronic or on-line resources. The library also provides access points for students to use the Internet. The library currently has nine access points which connect to the Internet via ISDN adapter.

During recent user surveys, a common trend has been emerging. Students and library patrons want access to more information more often. This trend is not

unique to just the Library and Educational Research Centre but it is a trend which is emerging throughout the academic sector. "The concept of virtual library services has far reaching implications for academic libraries nationwide. As students begin to demand a wider variety of information services and support – and the nature of this support is constantly in flux, librarians and libraries will be motivated to discover new ways to delivering services such as reference, instruction and research support." (Valeda F. p 187, 2000).

Students within the Military College have indicated during recent library users surveys that they need access to library resources after traditional services hours are over. They indicated that the need to be able to access the library service and its collection remotely.

One of the reasons why students cannot get access to the Library and Educational Research Centre after normal working hours is due to staff shortages. The Library currently employs a total of 5 employees. They include:

> 1 Professional (Librarian)
> 1 Para Professional (Assistant Librarian)
> 1 Library Assistant, *and*
> 2 part time Data In-putters.

The Library and Educational Research Centre does have its library catalogue on the internal Intranet System, however this is not up-dated regularly due to staff
shortages.

The Librarian has identified a number of initiatives which would improve the current library service. However, currently these are paper based plans, because the funding or expertise is not available to take these plans further.

E Learning and Library Services

"The proliferation of electronic resources in libraries has enabled users to conduct library research without physically entering the library. Full-text databases, digitised library resources, e-books, and the web are buzzwords of the times. Librarians are exploring ways of supporting patrons in the emerging virtual communities. (Lesley, M. p 22, 2002).
E-learning platforms or virtual learning platforms offer huge potential for libraries. Library service have the potential to reach library patrons anywhere and anytime. Patrons would have access to library service 24 hours a day seven days a week. "Some learners appreciate the fact that on-line learning often allows them greater control over the pace of learning and delivery style." (Fichter, DP. P 68, 2002).

Library Patrons need access to more library services and more information they need integrated access to
- Both on-line and physical information resources.
- Collections of books, journals, both electronic and paper based.
- Internet web databases both commercial and free.

- Electronic versions of grey literature which was created within the Defence Forces. Access to electronic reports and other items which would improve the organisational Knowledge Management policy.
- In addition teaching and learning resources that are created by staff and students of the Military College including PowerPoint presentations, recordings, etc.

Using an e-learning platform like blackboard would greatly enhance the opportunity open to library patrons. Blackboard is a comprehensive and flexible e-learning software platform which would offer patrons ready access to printable information resources, required to support learning and research. Librarians must expend the range of resources that is provided to patrons including those available in electronic formats, especially web-based or web accessible information resources. "It is quite clear that education in the 21st century presents challenges to quality assurances that were unimaginable a quarter of a century ago. E-learning in particular, with its ability to render time and place irrelevant, requires that we abandon traditional indicators of 'quality' such as 'contact hours' 'library holdings' and 'physical attendance' among others in favour of more meaningful resources ... a focus on the learner rather than the institution." (Wallace, K.P. p 185, 2002).

If libraries were to embrace e-learning platforms and offer library services, it would have an enormous potential for both students, staff, and other library patrons. E-learning platforms when properly established have the potential to offer a host of services which traditionally are not offered in academic libraries in Ireland. These include:

Electronic reference service, this would allow library patrons to contact the library staff using any of the following methods:
- *Chat*: Synchronous Allowing library patrons chat with a member of staff, and ask relevant reference questions.
- *E-mail*: Asynchronous Patrons could use the services to request information.

Other services which could be made available include:
- *Teaching Library Research Skills* – Patrons could learn On-Line these very important skills.
- *Web-accessible Tutorials* –
  - Library Facilities Orientation.
  - Searching the Library Catalogue, Author and Title.
  - Searching the Catalogue by Keyword and Subject.
  - Searching indexes of periodical literature.
  - How to use the World Wide Web properly including:
    - Search engines Vs Subject directories.
    - Assessing quality on the W.W.W.
    - Describing the Deep Web.

- *Ask a Librarian Service* – Patrons could ask a question to the library staff using synchronous software.

- *Document Delivery* – Books or journal articles which are not available electronically could be sent to the patron's home address.

- *Interlibrary Loan* – If the Military College or Maynooth College do not have or owned a particular item they could borrow it from another library. Patrons could make their request for this service via Blackboard.

- *Electronic Reserve* – If any item is not available because it is borrowed by another patron then it could be reserve the item by using this facility.

- *Library Information* – Patrons could find opening hours, contact details etc in this area.

- *Library Subject Bibliographers* – Giving the names and contact numbers for personnel who are responsible for different areas in the library.

- *How Do I?* – This area would include frequently asked questions about the library and its services.

Libraries need to change the way it offers services to its patrons. A number of major trends have developed which have impacted on the provision of library services to the university communities. "The 'on-line agenda' that is the increased in on-line teaching and learning programmes, introduction of personalised portals, customised of service and the development of virtual interaction between the university and its clients … the integration of all student support services, including library and information services across the university campus." (Cullen, R. P. Calvert, p63, 2002).

The technical requirement for setting up an e-learning environment for library patrons would present some challenges. However, the benefits of creating an integrated on-line learning environment would greatly outweigh any problems.

The goals of creating an e-learning environment for library patrons would be to expand library related services to all patrons.
- To increase the facilities and confidences with which library patrons use the library.
- Introduce and utilise technology is a cost effective way to deliver a wider variety of library services to a wider audience.
- To use available technologies to provide a fast, effective reference service regardless of distance or location, thus promoting the idea of libraries without walls and increasing access.

"Emerging information technologies are allowing academic libraries to transform the way they provide access to their resources and consequently, changing the way patrons find and use information." (Foler, p1, 1997).

Benefits of implementing e-learning environment into the Military College and the Library and Educational Research Centre.

"E-learning and old fashioned teaching are not in competition – they are complementators and each subject area and type or level of training will find its natural balance."

Marc J. Rosenberg in his book E-learning: Strategies for Delivering Knowledge in the Digital age identifies 11 major benefits of e learning. While all eleven benefits may not immediately appear to be directly related to the Military College on the Library and Educational Research Centre, they do offer huge potential in supporting teaching and research throughout the College.

Rosenberg eleven principles include:

- E-learning lower cost; e-learning is often the most cost effective way to deliver instruction, by reducing travel expenses and significantly reducing classroom/instructor infrastructure.
- E learning enhances business responsiveness; e-learning can reach an unlimited number of people virtually simultaneously.
- Messages are consistent or customised, depending on need; everyone gets the same content presented in the same way, yet the programmes can also be customised for different learning needs or different groups of people.
- Content is more timely and dependable; because it's web-enabled e-learning objects can be up-dated instantaneously making the information more accurate and current and useful for longer periods of time.
- *Learning is 24/7* – Patrons can access e-learning anywhere and anytime "just in time – any time".
- *No User "Ramp up" time* – Patrons in the main are comfortable with browser technology; learning to access e-learning is quickly becoming a non issue.
- *Universality* – E-learning is web-enabled and patrons can access and receive information in virtually the same.
- *Builds Community* – The web enables people to build enduring community of practice when they come together to share knowledge. This can be a huge motivating factor when it comes to organisational learning.
- *Scalability* – E-learning solutions are highly scalable. Programmes can move from 10 participants to 100 or more with little effort.
- *Leverage the Corporate Investment in the Web* – Executives are increasingly looking for ways to leverage their huge investment in corporate Intranets.
- *Provides an Increasingly Valuable Customer Service* – A business e-commerce effort can be enhanced through effective and engaging use of e learning.

Relating Rosenberg eleven benefit principles of e-learning to the Military College and the Library and Educational Research Centre would include the following:

E-learning lowers cost: Cost of providing classroom based teaching is increasing. The Military College conduct a number of courses throughout the year, e-learning would reduce these costs by cutting down on travel expenses, classroom and instructor infrastructure. In addition, the Library and Educational Research Centre spends a considerable amount of its annual budget on providing training for library patrons, this would also be reduced by using e-learning training objects.

E learning enhances business requirements: E-learning can reach an unlimited number of people. Providing library patrons access to e-learning objects ensures that they can receive detailed, accurate and appropriate information simultaneously.

Messages are consistent or customised, depending on need. Military College students and patrons of the Library and Educational Research Centre can gain control of their learning. Training programmes can be tailored to meet different needs. Patrons can also control the pace of their learning.

Content is more timely and dependable: Because its web enabled, patrons will be able to access information which is "up to the minute."

Learning 24/7: Patrons can access e-learning anywhere anytime. Library patrons could access library services after normal duty hours. They could search catalogues, access e-journals, e-books, make reservations, e-mail library staff or access a host of other library services.

No user "ramp up". Most of the students and library patrons are familiar with web based information and web browser technology.

Universality: Information would be available to support learning and could be accessed from anywhere.

Builds Community: E learning would help to bridge the small but significant geographical gap between Maynooth College and the Military College. It would also provide a platform where resources could be shared which would have a tremendous impact of the learning experiences.

Scalability: E-learning objects are highly scalable. Patrons could have access to this material whenever they liked. E-learning platforms allow resources to be shared and the libraries electronic resources and other materials could be accessed for these platforms. This would ensure that library resources are used to their full potential, this in turn would increase the libraries Return On Investment.

Leverages the Corporate Investment in the Web – The Defence Forces have a very effective Intranet site (DFNET) e-learning objects could be delivered via the internal Intranet system.

Provides an increasingly valuable customer service – e learning would enhance customer relations. Patrons have demanded in the past access to library services outside of normal duty hours, e-learning platform would facilitate this.

E learning offers tremendous potential for teaching, learning and the provision of library services to patrons. Patrons need access to information when it suits them. E-learning platforms offer the potential to delivery information which until recently was impossible within the Military College. The Military College is in a position to implement e-learning. Nevertheless, before this is achieved considerable work needs to be done e.g. drafting an e-learning strategy and building and managing e-learning infrastructure. For e-learning to be successful in the organisation proper funding needs to be in place. Management commitment needs to be strong and cooperation between all stakeholders needs to be established. When in place e-learning can be a success story for the Military College and the Library and Educational Research Centre. "Internet technology has opened up many new exciting avenues for learning providers to explore in trying to promote and encourage learning at all levels. The concept of learning-on-demand increases relevancy. The concept of anytime, anywhere learning promotes life long learning and makes distance a problem of the past." (Hamid, A. p 315, 2002).

Role of the Librarian

Librarians are uniquely qualified and positioned to assume an active role in the restructuring of teaching-learning environments. "Today being a librarian means expanding the range of resources that we provide to patrons." (Kovack, D. p.1 2002).

Librarians need to embrace new technologies and tailor their services so as they can be delivered electronically. E-learning platforms offer librarians a host of opportunities to deliver library services including on-line subject guides, web based access to electronic journals and e-reserve collections. Library service could also include interactive web-based modules and discussion lists to support student learning, video conferencing and virtual reference facility which includes direct chat could also be used. These services when delivered via an e-learning platform would significantly influence the way students interact within the library. While most if not all academic libraries now have a web site which allows patrons to search the library catalogue and reserve or renew books, and search electronic journals, only a few libraries in Ireland offer any other service on-line. While libraries services are developing the pace of change is significantly slower than it is in the United States or in the United Kingdom. "The number of libraries experimenting with chat references in 1999 could be counted on one hand. It is impossible to determine the ever changing 2002 statistic ... but certainly

there are hundreds of libraries in the United States, with more around the world, offering some type of digital reference." (Hinko, B. p.1 2002).

Library Services offered to patrons should be designed to meet effectively a wide range of informational, bibliographical and users needs. Demands on students and time available to visit the library must also be paramount in the planning of library services. Services must include.

- On-line reference assistance.
- Computer-based bibliographic and informational services.
- Reliable, rapid and secure access to e-learning objects and other electronic resources.
- Library tutorial services which include:
  - How to reference library oration
  - How to search the internet,
  - Search the Library Catalogue,
  - Teaching library research skills, etc.
- Instructions on electronic resources including on-line databases and CD ROMs.
- Document delivery service. The patron can request an item to be sent to his home or work, either electronically or by post. There must also be the facility to reserve items. Ask a librarian service, whereby patrons can chat, e-mail phone or fax a question to the library and expect prompt replies. "Various means of offering reference services have their advantages and disadvantages. In person visits, telephone, fax, e-mail and more real time reference are ... complementary to each other." (Mayo, p 22, 2002).

Library's must exploit information technologies and deliver services to allow patrons to access their resources at times that suit them. The emphasis must shift from the library as a physical building to a hybrid library or blended approach when library patrons can access information in the library building but also when they are remote and away from it.

There are other challenges which librarians face in respect to e-learning and developing their service electronically. One of the major challenges is training. It is not good enough to just give access, patrons and library staff must be given good quality instructions. Librarians are "experts in collecting, organising and evaluating and providing access to information in all formats. They are able to teach students how to become knowledgeable information handlers for print formats as well as for electronic information in the Internet environment." (Hannelore, B.R. p 47, 1997).

Maintaining and supporting library services available on e-learning platforms will have a tremendous impact on the staff. This new environment will make it necessary for librarians, information assistants and library patrons to acquire more skills and technical knowledge. Technical training for the library staff to support service offered on the e-learning platform should be handled with the I.T. Department in consultation with the e-learning platform vendor i.e. Blackboard.

In addition to developing their own skills, management might need to employ additional staff to develop library service which comply with best practices i.e. library service which are traditionally offered face to face may have to be redesigned when being offered on e-learning platform. Areas such as interaction design and human computer interaction as well as learning theories need to be considered."libraries ... are abandoning traditional information resources in favour of electronic information resources. The reason ... library resources is no longer restricted to the physical location of libraries." (Ashoor, M.S. p 38, 2000).

3. Conclusions

The purpose of this dissertation was to examine the organisational readiness of the Military College with respect to e learning. Secondly, to examine the Library and Educational Research Centre and assess how it could play a supporting role.

The e-learning readiness survey which was conducted in the Military College concluded that it was in a positive position to implement a durable e-learning strategy.Recent user surveys and other third party inspections of the Library and Educational Research Centres Services, which it offers its patrons, have indicated that there is a greater demand for library service than that which is being currently provided.

Students and patrons of the library service require library services outside of normal duty hours. The current staffing levels are inadequate for a professional academic library service. The librarian in the Library and Educational Research Centre has written plans on how to improve the current situation, however because of inadequate funding these plans are still on paper.

The introduction of e-learning platforms to the library service would have the potential to delivery more resources and services to library patrons.
Library patrons would be able to access:
o   On-line databases.
o   E books, e journals, and other electronic information.
o   Electronic version of grey literature.
o   Access teaching and learning resources that have been created by staff and students.

Library services could be enforced by providing Electronic referencing services via chat and e-mail.

Providing on-line web tutorials in the areas of:
o   Teaching library skills.
o   Library facilities.
o   Searching the library catalogue.
o   Correct searching of indexes of periodical literature.
o   Tutorials of Internet searching.

Additional services would include:

o   Ask a Librarian.
o   Document Delivery.
o   Interlibrary loans.
o   Electronic reserves.
o   Library information.
o   How do I (Frequently ask questions area).

The benefit to library patrons of these new services would be that they would have access to a virtual library 24/7. This greatly increases exposure to information which would encourage and support library patrons.

The benefits of implementing e learning would not just be patron based. There are many advantages for the organisation also. Rosenberg's eleven benefit principles are all applicable to the Military College, mainly:

- E-learning would reduce training costs.
- It would enhance business requirements because information could reach unprecedented amounts of students.

Messages are consistent, users will get the same information but they can control the speed in which they learn.
Content is more timely and dependable, patrons will have up-to-date current, reliable, accurate information, which in turn will ensure that they are equipped with the right information to make right choices and decisions.

No User Ramp Up: E learning is easy to learn and most students are familiar with web-based material.

Universality: Students do not have to be in the library to access information; they can do so from home. This reduces costs on the organisation.

Builds Communities: E learning would build bridges and delete the geographical divide, which exists between Maynooth College and the Military College.

Scalability: The organisation only needs to create the learning object or library service once, but it could be accessed many times.

Leverages: These learning objects could be transferred to the DFNET (Intranet).

Customer Care: Providing access to additional service to patrons will dramatically increase customer services.

E learning offers the organisation huge potential to deliver improved teaching and learning capabilities. It also offers tremendous potential to improve the existing library service. If it is to be implemented it has to be properly funded. Learning and teaching modules need to be carefully planned and designed.

Current best practice guidelines need to be considered in respect to:
- Interaction design.
- Human computer interaction.
- Learning theories.

The librarian has an important role in the successful implementation of e learning in the Library and Educational Research Centre and the Military College. Their function is to provide:
- Access to new exciting library services by exploiting information technologies.
- Ensuring the library staff and patrons are adequately trained in these new services to maximum potential.

The Military College is in a positive position to implement e learning. Patrons are demanding more access to information to support their learning. The Library and Educational Research Centre can dramatically improve its services by embracing e-learning platforms. For it to be successful, it must be properly planned and designed. Commitment must be there from top management and importantly it must be properly funded. Then students in the Military College will have access to unprecedented levels of information. "If learners didn't find e-learning an acceptable alternative to traditional training it wouldn't exist." Fichter, D. p 69, 2002).

Further research into this topic could investigate the correlation between provision of e-learning platform and the overall results obtained by library users.

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