
Digital and non-digital tools for adult education in French companies

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Abstract

Context, research question and method

The rapid changes due to companies' digitization make us wonder about the tools implemented in training courses (face-to-face, distance, hybrid) for companies' workers, and explore their uses. As a group of 13 students in an apprenticeship Master 2 (sandwich course) working in various training departments, we are confronted with the choices made framing the work we do there.

The aim of this study is to take stock of the digital tools used to produce and distribute educational content in our various companies, putting it into perspective with the results produced by professional associations (ISTF and AFINEF, 2023 and 2024) and to identify any tensions underlying their use (e.g. conflicts between human resources management and training departments).

We search for national surveys on the subject. We used the categorization made the surveys carried out by the ISTF and AFINEF (Edtech companies) : content production tools and content distribution tools. We also collected the tools used for adult education within our twelve professional organizations (private and public sectors). We have used a common presentation grid.

Survey analysis

Two major contradictions emerge from the results of the surveys studied by the ISTF. Firstly, the discrepancy between the development of distance learning (more than half of companies declaring that more than 50% of their employees follow a course incorporating digital learning) and an underdeveloped skills of a significant percentage of employees. This raise question of distance learning courses that require few skills.

Secondly, according to the ISTF survey, face-to-face training remains the most satisfactory

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training modality for completing training paths, and tutoring during the training action removes the obstacles to participation and fosters success. This also highlights a misalignment with the emerging digital training offerings.

Analysis of tools selected by companies

While learning management systems (LMS) are specific, they constitute the main management tools and determine the production and diffusion tools. While public-sector companies may use open-source software, in private-sector companies we observed a significant presence and widespread use of tools from the Microsoft Office suite. It has even led to divert software from their primary functions, as in the case of Teams, a videoconferencing tool that has gradually been enhanced with additional functions for distance learning.

Teams, used for distance learning and file storage.

The multitude of functions offered by "all-in-one" software can lead to a relationship of dependency. This leaves room for other tools for functionalities that are poorly covered by the Microsoft offering. For example Canva is cited by all companies, mainly for course design.

Training objectives can be divided as follows:

Face-to-face training is mainly aiming the acquisition of skills and practices. For example, one of the companies we analyzed, creates a fresco to raise awareness on societal issues, concerning various addictions, following the model of climate fresco (<https://fresqueduclimat.org/>) as well as the acquisition of good practices and gestures. Distance learning courses are more conceptual by nature. However, they can also provide training on a specific theme. And last but not least, e-learning is designed to provide knowledge on specific subjects.

We are still analyzing the data we have collected, particularly with regard to non-digital tools such as the frescoes.

References

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