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"Training on the Cheap"
Resource Guide

INTRODUCTION

There are endless resources for trainers on a budget. It has been our goal to create a list to get you started on your search. By no means is this list exhaustive. Use it to get started and you'll find more and more resources on your own. If those resources are helpful to you, pass it forward and share them with a colleague.

While we don't necessarily endorse any of the products or companies listed herein, hopefully the tips and ideas presented will help get you started and prod some of those creative ideas you already have hidden in your overwhelmed subconscious.

All of the links in this document were valid as of the time this document was compiled. Many URLs have been shortened using bit.ly for ease of use (in fact, you'll notice bit.ly is one of the resources listed).

We hope you find this information useful. Feel free to share it with others who may also find use from the information.

Maritta Terrell Trainer & Help Desk Specialist Lloyd Gosselink Rochelle & Townsend, P.C. Austin, TX mterrell@lglawfirm.com	Carol Gerber Director of Learning & Professional Development Moses & Singer LLP New York, NY cgerber@mosessinger.com	Jeri Oglesby-Sires Training & Special Projects Coordinator HunterMaclean Savannah, GA jsires@huntermaclean.com
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RESOURCE TOPICS

	<u>Page</u>
Trainer Resources.....	1
Planning	1
Management	1
Survey Tools	2
Web Conferencing	2
In The Classroom	2
Rewards	4
Recommended Reading	5
Learning for the Trainer	5
Social Networking	8
Classroom Alternatives.....	9
Blogs	9
Podcasts	9
Wikis	10
E-Learning	10
Instructor Led - With a Twist	11
Newsletters	12
Vendor Resources	13
Training Materials	13
Quick Reference Cards	13
Presentations	13
For End-Users	14
Online Learning Resources	14
Software Tips & Tricks	14

Trainer Resources

Planning

Microsoft (bit.ly/MSe48)	Microsoft Office Training Roadmaps.
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Management

OpenELMS (openelms.org)	Open source E-Learning for business, content management system, SCORM learning management system.
Moodle (moodle.org)	Open source web application that can be used to create SCORM compliant online learning sites.
Workforce Connections (bit.ly/7EDYc)	Free web-based content creation and management tools (SCORM and §508 compliant).
WiZiQ (wiziq.com)	Free website which can be used to conduct live online classes (public or private). You can embed the live virtual classroom on your blog or website. In addition, the site allows you to create and administer online tests, upload content or link to existing web assets, manage and group learners.
ATutor (atutor.ca)	Open source web-based learning content management system. Assemble, package and redistribute web-based instructional content, import prepackaged content and conduct courses online.
Dokeos (dokeos.com)	Open source online learning suite. Purports to provide all the features needed for e-learning and blended learning management: from authoring to reporting.
TYPO3 (typo3.org)	A free content management system framework.
Drupal (drupal.org)	Open source content management platform allowing individuals to publish, manage and organize a wide variety of content on a website or intranet.
Microsoft Excel	You can use an Excel workbook to manage training. Keep a spreadsheet of classes and the dates they have been offered, a spreadsheet with an employee list and the classes/dates they have attended. Track skills you want to train, training each employee needs, training paths, skills assessments, etc. You'll be surprised how powerful Excel can be for training management, albeit labor intensive.
Microsoft Access	If you're good with databases, develop a training database. Microsoft has a training database template at their website that you can download and modify to fit your needs.

Management	
SharePoint (bit.ly/ObirY)	SharePoint has some out-of-the box functionality for training management. Though imperfect, it does automate many processes such as class registration and notification. Take a look at SLK (SharePoint Learning Kit) (bit.ly/2G2HJW) and LG (Learning Gateway) (bit.ly/1allpz) to see if these plug-ins will work for your needs.

Survey Tools	
Zoomerang (zomerang.com)	Basic (free) service allows up to 30 questions per survey and up to 100 responses per survey.
Survey Monkey (surveymonkey.com)	Basic (free) services allows up to 10 questions per survey and up to 100 responses per survey.
SharePoint (bit.ly/ObirY)	Use out of the box functionality to create surveys with no question or response restrictions. Reporting is basic, but it can compile and chart results.

Web Conferencing	
Acrobat (acrobat.com)	Collaborate on documents, meet live over the web and share you screen, valid for up to 3 people, send files to others and store files online.
DimDim (dimdim.com)	Useful for screensharing for up to 20 people. Fairly high tech, make sure you have someone in house for configuration.
Yugma (yugma.com)	Free version allows you to instantly share your desktop online with up to 20 attendees.

In The Classroom	
Training Time (bit.ly/6mpDq)	Ideas and issues for corporate and government trainers and human resource managers.
ILTA (bit.ly/tX8w4)	The link to the right will take you directly to a list of White Papers, Webinars, Peer to Peer issues and more related to Training Programs at ILTA's website.
TrainerBubble (bit.ly/JmBx9)	Free energizers, icebreakers, PowerPoint games, quizzes, quotes, team building exercises, training documents and more!

<i>In The Classroom</i>	
Trainers Warehouse (bit.ly/C46Wt)	Tools, tips and toys for trainers. Subscribe to their monthly email newsletter for monthly training tips delivered to your Inbox.
Sue's Training Resources (bit.ly/MfSjR)	Links to lots of E-Learning resources, games, etc. Not all links lead to free resources, but many do.
Games	<p>Include a competitive game to review information or stimulate sharing. For example, toward the end of a long workshop, play Jeopardy or Trivial Pursuit with questions related to the workshop topic.</p> <p>Use cooperative games where the whole class works together toward a target and rewards go to all who participate. For example, make a "The Ladder of Learning" game show type presentation layout. Use a question and answer format and each correct answer takes you up another rung on the ladder, an incorrect answer takes you back to the bottom. Create "Safe rungs" at 5 question intervals, so you only actually fall back to the previous safe rung. It gets folks playing together.</p>
KISS.r	<p>Keep it Simple, Short and relevant. Training sessions that are short (an hour or less) and task focused will get the most attendance. Focus on a single document type, a single task or a single feature and teach only the basics of the topic. Use actual firm documents, if possible. This helps users put the information in context. Have a fictional company and a database of fictional names, addresses and phone numbers. Recycle an actual firm document using your fictional information. Reuse that same information in all documents you use for training.</p> <p>When delivering these training sessions, explain the concept of the task or feature, explain the steps involved, demonstrate the steps, work through a guided exercise using the steps and then assign an independent exercise using what was taught.</p>

Rewards	
<p>Rewards can inspire a fun atmosphere of competition. In the process you know the information is being stored. It also encourages participation. It's amazing how you can get people to participate when you throw in a little incentive! Learning is a fun process and in the midst of competition, camaraderie and fun, concepts are understood. A word of caution, don't spend too much. A little innovation in thought and pocket can go a long way!</p>	
Certificates	Create a PowerPoint or Publisher template that fits your firm's branding and issue certificates for participation, competitions, accomplishments, testing, or certification. Be careful not to overdo certificates, however, as they will quickly lose their value.
PTO, Jeans, Lunch	Give away a jeans day, an extra PTO day or buy lunch for those who have won a competition or received certification.
Chocolate, Cookies	Line them up like trophies. Those on a diet can decline or give to a hungry person sitting next to them.
Movie Hour	Schedule one in the training room and invite participants who have reached specified goals.
Gift Certificates	Check with local video and electronic game rental stores or movie theatres. Sometimes you can get free rental coupons. Be sure to tell the manager why you want the coupons. It's a great marketing tool for them as well. Many cities also have resources that sell ½ price restaurant gift certificates (typically via radio station web sites).
Drawings	Have a name drawing from everyone who attends class for a month (names are entered in the drawing every time they attend a class). Hold a drawing at the end of the month for \$25 cash or one of the gift certificates.
Raffle Tickets	Issue tickets for desired outcomes, such as attending class, completing E-Learning lessons, taking online tests, assisting peers, etc. Each month or each quarter, hold a drawing using the reward of your choice.
Buttons	Purchase buttons and issue them as incentives. For instance, each time someone passes a certification test they get 2 buttons; the first person to answer the following question correctly gets 1 button; etc.). They can use their buttons to "shop" for gift certificates and other goodies you have purchased.

Rewards	
Toys	<p>Even adults are motivated and encouraged to participate by small toys and stickers. Go to the local party or dollar store.</p> <p>Give little rewards that are tied to the topic or metaphor. For example, in a workshop called "Taming the E-Mail Monster," have little finger puppets that fit on a pen. You'll be surprised at how hard grown adults will work to earn one!</p>
Suckers	<p>Hand them out to anyone who asks or answers a question. At the end of the workshop the person with the most suckers (or sticks) gets an award (or star) for participation.</p>
Firm Branded Items	<p>Use small notepads or other company branded items in a quiz competition.</p>
Bookmarks	<p>Find motivational quotes and cute clip art images. Put them together and print bookmarks on colored stock paper, punch a hole at the top and add curly ribbon to use as gimmicks before rolling out a new program.</p>

Recommended Reading
<p>The Insider's Guide to Becoming a Rapid E-Learning Pro (bit.ly/17CLQI) Free 46-page E-Book</p>
<p>E-Learning Solutions on a Shoestring by Jane Bozarth (bit.ly/qK4zZ) Help for the Chronically Underfunded Trainer (\$42.00)</p>

Learning for the Trainer	
<p>ILTA (iltanet.org)</p>	<p>Access archived Webinars, Peer to Peer issues, Podcasts, Webcasts and White Papers. Use the Managers Knowledgebase to find links related to a particular area of interest.</p>
<p>Adobe TV (tv.adobe.com)</p>	<p>Tons of free video demonstrations on all things Adobe.</p>
<p>Microsoft Office Online (office.microsoft.com)</p>	<p>Microsoft has really done a great job with its Office Online website. There is so much information here for trainers and learners alike. Pack a lunch and spend some time looking around to see all that Microsoft has to offer. Download demos, templates. Send links to users to self-paced training and other relevant content. Use bit.ly to shorten those long links and even track the links to see if users are visiting the sites you send them.</p>

Learning for the Trainer

Bit.ly (bit.ly)	Shorten long URLs that you email users for help and how-to sites on the Internet or on the firm's intranet. Bit.ly even allows you to track the links to see if users are actually visiting the sites you send them.
Professional Development	Blogs, white papers, websites, webzines, free webinars and social networking sites can be great resources for trainers. You can find tons of information, tips, tricks and ideas to put in your toolkit. There is an abundance of resources on the Internet, we're listing a few here.
Delicious (delicious.com)	Setting up an account at Delicious is an absolute MUST. You can bookmark all of the great sites you run across, tag them and even share your bookmarks. Since Delicious is a social bookmarking site, you can subscribe to your favorite tags or add people to your network whose bookmarks you want to see. Don't worry, you can mark some of your bookmarks as private if you don't want to share them with others. Install the bookmarking buttons in your browser to make it easy to bookmark sites. Bookmarks in Delicious are mobile, so you can access them from any computer, any time, any where.
Susan Boyd Associates (susan-boyd.com)	Many helpful articles, training checklists and analogies to use for technical training.
Tripwire Magazine (tripwiremagazine.com)	Though technically for Web Developers and Designers, you'll find lots of helpful tools to create e-learning, newsletters and other "design related" tips for trainers. Other similar sites are Web Resources Depot (webresourcesdepot.com) and Cats who Code (catswhocode.com)

Learning for the Trainer

<p>Legal Tech Blogs & Sites</p> <p>Geek Law Blog (geeklawblog.com)</p> <p>Dennis Kennedy (denniskennedy.com)</p> <p>Law.com > Legal Technology (law.com)</p> <p>Law Technology News (lawtechnews.com)</p> <p>Society of Legal Learning Professionals (legallearning.net)</p> <p>Professional Legal Trainers Group (pltg.org)</p>	<p>There are many websites and blogs devoted to legal technology. These are a great way to learn about other software programs and stay current, or even one step ahead, on legal technology issues. We're listing just a few.</p>
<p>Learning Blogs & Sites</p> <p>Zaidlearn (zaidlearn.blogspot.com)</p> <p>Jane's E-Learning Pick of the Day (janeknight.typepad.com)</p> <p>The Masie Center (masie.com)</p> <p>eLearning Guild (elearningguild.com)</p>	<p>In addition to legal specific technology, you'll find blogs and sites devoted to learning and training in general. We're listing just a few.</p>
<p>WebEx (webex.com/web-seminars)</p>	<p>WebEx has many free webinars and recorded webinars. You can view all recorded or upcoming events by Area of Interest (such as Information Technology, Professional Development and Training).</p>

Learning for the Trainer

Microsoft E-Learning (microsoftlearning.com)	With My Learning you can personalize and plan your learning path by products, experience and goals. Your organization may have access to some of the Learning Solutions through Software Assurance benefits. Additional courses can be purchased.
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Social Networking

You are doing yourself a terrible disservice if you aren't plugged in to the social networking world. This is the best place for crowd-sourcing your projects, getting ideas, learning tips and finding experts. In addition, you need to know all you can about these sites because you WILL be asked!

ILTA (iltanet.org)	You'll pick up the best tips and get FAST answers to your most pressing questions via the discussion groups at ILTA.
LinkedIn (linkedin.com)	Join some of the many training and legal related subgroups.
Twitter (twitter.com)	Believe it or not, this is a great place to pick up valuable tips and tidbits of information you can use in the classroom or for training development.
Delicious (delicious.com)	Social bookmarking site enabling you to save and tag bookmarks you find interesting, subscribe to your favorite tags to see what sites other users are bookmarking and add people to your network and see what they're bookmarking.
FaceBook (facebook.com)	Yep, you just gotta do it!

Classroom Alternatives

<i>Blogs</i>	
Create a blog to deliver training information, share your views on learning and more.	
WordPress (wordpress.com)	Features include: 3GB of storage space, free themes (or customize your own CSS code to brand your blog), make your blog public or private, integrated stats, ability to allow (or disallow) commenting, topic tagging, add your blog to your LinkedIn profile (or link to your LinkedIn profile).
Blogger (blogspot.com)	Blog, share photos and videos. Personalize your blog with themes, gadgets and more.
Windows Live (home.live.com)	Features include: Secure file sharing, blog, instant messaging, videos sharing, ability to create a network for your organization, create a training calendar, create Spaces to group related information together.
SharePoint (bit.ly/ObirY)	If you have an intranet built on SharePoint, you can setup a blog using SharePoint out of the box functionality.

<i>Podcasts</i>	
Visit ILTA's website to see Tony Hartsfield's archived podcasting webinar titled, "Podcasting: What's It All About?". Tony's Podcasting Resources are available for download as well and include online tutorials, software, hardware and more.	
Audacity (audacity.sourceforge.net)	Open source software for recording and editing sounds.
ClickCaster (clickcaster.com)	Publish podcasts, making them public or private, statistics. Free account allows for 125MB of storage space, 1 RSS Channel. Upgrade for more storage space, unlimited bandwidth and multiple RSS channels (prices range from \$4.99 to \$29.99/month)
PodBean (podbean.com)	Upload, publish, manage and promote podcasts; ability to set access as public or private; customizable themes; integrated feed generation; analysis tools; ability to embed podcasts in emails, blogs, websites, social networking sites; mobile access
PodHoles (podholes.com)	A podcast about podcasting.
How to Podcast (bit.ly/HZYuN)	Free podcast tutorial.
Podcast Alley (podcastalley.com)	Website with all things podcast.

Wikis	
Use a Wiki to create a searchable knowledge base with link trees. You can also use a wiki to keep information current.	
PBWiki (pbworks.com)	2 GB storage space, Upload documents, use tags and folders to organize content, ability to search content.
Twiki (twiki.org)	Open source enterprise wiki and Web 2.0 application platform which can be used to create a structured Wiki, knowledge management system, enterprise collaboration platform on an intranet or on the Internet.
SharePoint (bit.ly/ObirY)	If you have SharePoint or an intranet based on SharePoint, use out of the box functionality to create a wiki.

E-Learning	
You can host E-Learning on your firm's intranet or save to the network.	
Jing (jingproject.com)	Create and edit a screen capture, record video of onscreen action as well as audio to accompany (up to 5 minutes of screen recording). You can share your captures over the web, via IM, in an E-mail message, upload to your intranet, or save on the network. Also comes with a free Screencast.com account with 2GB of storage for online sharing. Free version records in SWF Video, paid version (\$14.95/year) records in SWF or MPEG-4 Video format, videos are "unbranded," allows for instant upload to YouTube and recording from a Webcam.
Audacity (audacity.sourceforge.net)	Free open source software for recording and editing sounds.
Microsoft PowerPoint	You can use PowerPoint to create some basic E-learning. Record your instructions and insert the audio files on their respective slides. Screen shots and animation can truly "automate" and make the E-learning session run without learner interaction - similar to a video.
CamStudio (camstudio.org)	Open source screen recorder software. Capture screen motion and audio to create AVI or SWF files.
ScreenToaster (screentoaster.com)	Web-based free screen recorder to capture videos of onscreen action and create flash videos.
Wink	A tutorial and presentation creation software which allows you to capture screenshots and enables the addition of explanation boxes, buttons, titles & more. Supports various output formats like .exe, .flv and .html

Instructor Led - With a Twist

You can deliver instructor led training in ways other than in the classroom. Here are some great examples:

Mobile Training	Ask computer support to show you the issues they've had in the past month and make a list of the ones you think could be eliminated with training. Go see that particular user about a ticket they submitted and teach them how to troubleshoot the problem themselves. For example, a user asks Computer Support to reset her Internet Explorer home page for her. Drop by her desk and show her how to do it.
Random Acts of Training	<p>Roam the halls 1 day per week or 1 hour per day checking in with users to see what they're working on and how you can help them. You'll be surprised how often folks who rarely come to training sessions and rarely have "problems," will come up with quick questions for you when you stick your head in their office at random!</p> <p>If they don't have any questions for you, give them a little known tip about a particular software program you know they work in. For instance, if they work in Word a lot say, "Hey, did you know that you can use our Payne Numbering Assistant to create a Table of Contents with just a couple of mouse clicks even if you don't have numbering in your document?"</p>
Competition	Create a competition around a particular skill, skill level or software program. Create some fun graphics to tease about and market the upcoming competition and hold open workshops on the skills that will be involved. Winner gets a PTO day or jeans day and an inexpensive trophy (AAA Trophy has some creative business trophies - many for under \$5 at awardstrophies.com). Save even more money by giving the trophy without a name engraved on it. If the winner is "unseated" in the next competition, the trophy is passed on.
Marketing, Technology and Management Committees, oh my!	Ask if you can have 5-10 minutes at each committee meeting to do a quick demonstration on a tip, feature or software program related to that particular committee. Often demonstrating something helps people become more motivated to learn about other features that may help them. Focus on demonstrations that will either save time or otherwise increase efficiency.

<i>Instructor Led - With a Twist</i>	
Weekly Q&A Sessions	At the same time each week be available in your learning center for an hour with donuts. Make it a stipulation that you cannot have a donut unless you ask a question and stay for the answer.
Peer to Peer Tutoring	Encourage users to take certification tests on a particular software program. Users that are certified can be marketed as SMEs (Subject Matter Experts). Encourage them to "donate" 1 lunch hour per month in the training room to tutor their peers.
Munch n' Learn	Hold 1-hour training sessions an hour before the work day begins or during lunch, food provided by the firm, of course. Food is a GREAT motivator! These sessions are conducive to "demonstration only" with no hands-on.
Personal PC Troubleshooting	<p>Offer a session in the guise of "basic troubleshooting techniques for your home PC," but slip in some common computer support issues that come up. For instance, often the first thing the help desk personnel have users do is restart their computers. Teach this as a troubleshooting technique and they're likely to be a little more proactive when troubleshooting at the office.</p> <p>Get input from your computer support folks for items to include. Keep it simple and stay away from discussing anything that would cause them to have to "crack the box" or hack the registry.</p>
Computer Basics	Often users have to learn features to enable them to do their jobs, but they don't learn the foundational skills that they are built on. Offering a "Computer Basics" class where users learn things like how to copy files to a thumb drive or how to rename files can be refreshing and low stress.

<i>Newsletters</i>
<p>Weekly E-mailed "Quick Tips" or more lengthy tips newsletters are great ways to teach users basic features, new features, little known features and so much more.</p> <p>To encourage readership, every now and then bury an "Easter Egg," and the first user to find it and contact you wins a prize. Don't tell them you're doing it, just see how many people find it. Then, when you announce the winner the first time everyone will read your newsletter to see if you've planted another hidden gem.</p>

Newsletters	
Microsoft Publisher	Design your branded tip sheet or newsletter in Microsoft Publisher and email it directly from within Publisher, then print to PDF and upload to your intranet or network for an archives listing.

Vendor Resources	
When you are negotiating with a new software company, ask for free or reduced-price training. Go to existing vendors' websites to see what training resources are available or ask your sales rep. At the very least, many products have a knowledge base, FAQ section and/or user guide online.	
LexisNexis CaseSoft (casesoft.com)	Webinar center for the CaseSoft products offering quick webinars on many features and products in the CaseSoft line.
LexisNexis University (lexisnexis.com/university)	Offering classes on a wealth of topics. Some classes are free, others are for a fee. Track the classes for which you are registered, track training history and view upcoming training opportunities. Helpful for trainers and end users. They will also send trainers to your firm for free to hold sessions on using their research products.
Westlaw (bit.ly/11mAXW)	eLearning, eLearning for paralegals, Webinars, Telephone Training and on site options are available.

Training Materials

Quick Reference Cards	
CustomGuide (bit.ly/3n5BzM)	Free Quick Reference cards on Microsoft Office and Adobe products.
Microsoft Word	Create a template using your firm's branding and make your own Quick Reference Cards. Hand these out during your sessions instead of long, cumbersome, printed manuals.
Gadwin Printscreen (gadwin.com)	Free version of their print screen utility allows you to capture a selected portion of your screen and even add boxes, captions, arrows and more. Save captured image to a file or copy to the clipboard.

Presentations	
Microsoft (bit.ly/TNfv4)	Free PowerPoint Presentations with Flash Movies from Microsoft - dramatically improved!

For End-Users

Online Learning Resources	
Microsoft (bit.ly/TNfv4)	Online Training Demos Showcase with lots of great demos for your users, many with built-in interaction.
Microsoft (bit.ly/XSASu)	Microsoft Webcasts and Podcasts
Microsoft (bit.ly/XSASu)	Self-paced courses for End-Users in all Office products versions 2003 & 2007 with links to other training resources - even Office Training Roadmaps!
Common Craft (commoncraft.com)	Free, fun, simple "In Plain English" series of videos explaining technology in short videos. Topics include Twitter, World Wide Web, Blogs, Podcasting, Social Media and more.

Software Tips & Tricks	
Allen Wyatt's Word Tips (word.tips.net)	Daily and Weekly Emails for End-User Word tips.
Allen Wyatt's Excel Tips (excel.tips.net)	Daily and Weekly Emails for End-User Excel tips.
Word MVPs (word.mvps.org)	Several Word MVPs have helpful information on a variety of more advanced Word topics.
Mousetrax (mousetrax.com)	Free Word Tips & Tricks eBook and technical support EZine.

**THE PLTG GUIDE TO
"TRAINING ON THE CHEAP"**



**PROFESSIONAL
L E G A L
TRAINERS
G R O U P**



JUNE 12, 2009

INTRODUCTION

This document is the result of a working session held by the Professional Legal Trainers' Group ("PLTG") on Friday, June 12th, 2009. All references to websites and product names are believed to be accurate as of that date.

Although PLTG does not endorse any product or company, it is pleased to pass along its members' tips for preparing and delivering effective training when there is little or no money in the budget. Our members were asked to focus on the following four categories:

- Websites
- Software Applications
- Materials
- Motivational Techniques

This was intended to be a highly selective guide; please do not infer anything from the absence of your favorite free learning resources.

Some of the suggestions in this guide could have appeared in several categories, so if you do not see something where you expect to see it, please continue flipping through, or use the PDF search feature.

For more information about PLTG, please see <http://www.pltg.org>.

WEBSITES:

Microsoft Resources:

- Microsoft's " Help and How-To" Website, <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/training/FX100565001033.aspx>, offers free training resources for Office programs. Members reported better results using Google to search this site, instead of the built-in search engine.
- Microsoft's free Word 2003 to 2007 Website, <http://office.microsoft.com/assistance/asstvid.aspx?assetid=XT100766331033&vwidth=1044&vheight=788&type=flash&CTT=11&Origin=HA100744321033>, will show you where your Word 2003 commands ended up in Word 2007. You can also use it to get Word 2007 screenshots for pre-training.
- Mr. Excel, <http://www.mrexcel.com>, provides podcasts, articles and a message-board forum to answer all of your Microsoft Excel questions.
- Newsletters: Websites where you can subscribe to free newsletters with updates and tips for using Microsoft products include:
 - Woody's Office Watch: <http://news.office-watch.com/>
 - Allan Wyatt's Word Tips: <http://word.tips.net>

Blogs, Wikis and Podcasts: You can take advantage of Web 2.0 technology to make content available to your users whenever and wherever they need it. (For suggestions for free software to create the e-learning content, please see the "Software" section below.) Suggested websites include:

- Blogs: You can use <http://www.blogger.com> (free) to host a blog of training materials and tips & tricks, to which your users can subscribe with RSS Feeds
- Podcasts: You can use <http://www.podbean.com> (free), <http://www.blip.tv> (free) or <http://ourmedia.org/> (free) to host your training podcasts
- Wikis: You can use a wiki to create a searchable question and answer resource for your users, or to post the current version of rapidly changing policies or training schedules. Free wiki software providers include PBWiki (Basic Edition), <http://pbworks.com>, and Twiki, <http://www.twiki.org>.

Screensharing and Web Conferencing:

- Adobe offers a free service, "Adobe ConnectNow" at <http://www.acrobat.com>, for web conferencing, file sharing, and screen sharing for up to 3 people.
- DimDim, www.dimdim.com, had mixed results as a free web conferencing tool, but members report that it is useful for free screensharing among up to 20 people.
- ShowmyPC, <http://www.showmypc.com>, is another free alternative to services like WebEx and GoToMyPC.

Free e-Learning Websites:

- GCF Learn Free, <http://www.gcflearnfree.org/>, offers free, non-interactive e-learning on Office programs
- Common Craft's "In Plain English" series explains technology topics in short videos available for free on YouTube, <http://www.youtube.com> (search for "common craft"), and in unbranded versions for a fee at Common Craft's website, <http://www.commoncraft.com>.
- The Thiagi Group, at <http://www.thiagi.com>, offers free training games to help you energize your training classes.
- Training Magazine Network, at <http://www.trainingmagnetwork.com> (free registration required), allows you to provide your learners with access to a Web 2.0 social learning environment, which purports to allow one to "measure, track and prove the measurable impact of training."

Content Management: Joomla, <http://www.joomla.org/>, is a free, web-based content management system which, it was suggested, could be used as an LMS.

Train the Trainer:

- The International Legal Technology Association provides free access to its archived webinars on cutting edge legal technology topics at <http://www.iltanet.org/MainMenuCategory/Archives/WebinarRecordings.aspx>
- Lynda.com, <http://www.lynda.com>, provides on-line classes you can use to improve your skills and stay one step ahead of the callers. Lynda.com offers monthly and annual subscription rates, as well as a free trial for its video tutorials.

SOFTWARE

Blackberry Simulators: Research in Motion, Ltd., the maker of Blackberries, has free simulators available on its website at <http://na.blackberry.com/eng/developers/resources/simulators.jsp> that you can use in Blackberry training sessions. It can be a bit of a challenge to find the simulator for your model, but once you download and install the simulator you can use it to show a room full of people what the buttons on their Blackberries will do.

Creating E-Learning: Several free and cheap programs are available to help you capture and combine screenshots, video, and audio to create your own e-learning content. To distribute the content, please see the section on Web 2.0 technologies above.

- Screen Captures: Jing, available at <http://www.jingproject.com>, offers a free and a cheap (\$14.95 per year) version of its screen capture software, which can be used to create Flash video for e-learning.
- Audio Capture and Editing: Audacity, available at <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>, is a free program that will record sound from your PC microphone and let you edit sound files from your computer and other sources
- Video Capture and Editing: With Windows Movie Maker, which comes free with most new computers and can be downloaded at <http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/downloads/updates/moviemaker2.msp>, you can record video from your computer's webcam and edit video and audio to create e-learning

VNC for Remote Control: Relatively inexpensive VNC software is available that will let you view and take control of learners' screens, so you can see what is going on in your classroom more easily (i.e., all users' screens presented as thumbnails on your monitor), or so you can help a learner without having to leave your office. Your firm's helpdesk may already have this in place, and they may be able to make this available to you. If not, one example is SmartCode VNC Manager available at <http://www.s-code.com>.

MATERIALS

Electronic Training Materials: Several PLTG member firms are distributing new hire materials and other voluminous training materials electronically, either through an intranet or on CD. Not only does this save the cost of the paper and the staff time formerly needed to do the duplicating, but the materials are searchable and, therefore, more useful for the learners.

Go Low-Tech: Flip charts, Posterboard and other 3-dimensional materials are low cost ways to

- engage kinesthetic learners
- make ephemeral ideas more permanent
- make abstract ideas more easily understandable

Recycle Existing Training: Content you have already created can be sliced, diced, and repurposed for use on other topics or for delivery in other formats.

The "Help" Menu: Every now and then, the help file that comes with the software you use is actually helpful.

- You can often use the text and pictures in the help file as the basis for your own classes, "tips" e-mails, or handouts.
- Some users can even be convinced to learn how to use the help files themselves.

MOTIVATIONAL TECHNIQUES

Wake 'em up!: Long training sessions can dull even the keenest minds. Several of our users suggested that a little humor will go a long way towards keeping learners engaged. Puzzles were also suggested, including "Wuzzles" word puzzles (www.wuzzlesandpuzzles.com).

Bring the training to the users: Members have used "Training To Go" or "Room Service Training" to deliver short (10-15 minute) training sessions to users on their schedules and on the subjects that they want to learn.

Competition:

- Friendly competition among users has been used to increase attendance and participation. Prizes for winners can be as free as a mention in the firm newsletter (see "Rewards," below).
- Where competition between users does not fit with the firm culture, you can encourage users to compete against themselves.
- "Stump the Trainer" sessions challenge people to bring their toughest documents in so the whole class can see how an expert approaches a challenging situation.

Rewards: You don't have to spend a lot of money to show users that the firm appreciates their efforts.

- Certificates: Find a PowerPoint template on <http://office.microsoft.com>, adjust it to fit the firm's color scheme, add the logo, scan in the managing partner's signature, swipe some nice paper from Marketing, and you're in business.
- Public acknowledgment: Mention high achievers' names in a newsletter, in a news item on your intranet home page, or in department meetings. Have a "Learner of the Month" trophy that rotates to the desk of the person who demonstrates the most commitment to learning each month, Stanley Cup-style.
- Have a "Denim Day" or find another way to relax the dress code for those who have reached a specified learning goal.

The PLTG is an organization of legal application trainers from law firms and consulting agencies in the metropolitan New York area. The PLTG is dedicated to exchanging cutting-edge information, ideas, and experiences to provide support to, and improve the performance of, the legal training community.

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