



## Towards a second generation of e-learning

**Shirley Alexander**, Director of the Institute for Interactive Media and Learning,  
University of Technology, Sydney  
Shirley.Alexander@uts.edu.au

**Abstract:** The first generation of e-learning development has been characterised by a high level of experimentation as academics draw upon a range of learning theories to underpin the development of e-learning programs using an ever-increasingly diverse set of tools starting with text alone, but more recently using sophisticated interactive multimedia. But has this experimentation led to the body of knowledge in e-learning that might reasonably have been expected given the high levels of funding devoted to these activities? Or are we simply repeating the same experiments many times over without really building on what has been done before and hence being condemned to forever produce first generation e-learning programs?

This paper will address these issues, looking in particular at what questions have been asked, what theories of learning have underpinned developments, what has counted as evidence in answering the questions, and what has been discovered that is of significance in e-learning. Finally, an agenda will be proposed for a second generation of e-learning development.