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**Chapter X**

**E-Learning is a Social Tool  
for E-Commerce at  
Tertiary Institutions**

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**ABSTRACT**

*This chapter sets out to inform the reader about the background of e-Learning. It starts with a brief introduction to the concept of e-Learning, presenting a compelling case why institutions implement e-Learning and describes the difference between technology-delivered e-Learning and technology-enhanced e-Learning. The discussion includes some advantages and disadvantages of technology-enhanced e-Learning and then examines some learner, facilitator and technology aspects of technology-enhanced e-Learning. It continues with a brief discussion on technology-enhanced e-Learning at the Cape Technikon.*

*This project further assesses the perceptions of learners using an online survey to address the issues and concerns that learners experienced with regard to technology-enhanced e-Learning. This chapter also inspects the efficiency usage of e-Learning tools within a technology-enhanced e-Learning environment and concludes with some significant findings of the survey, which includes the importance of computer literacy, interaction and communication in the technology-enhanced e-Learning environment.*

## INTRODUCTION

Tertiary education institutions aim to be recognized for social, knowledge and economic contributions in South Africa. There has also been an increase in the different uses of the Internet (e.g., online banking, online shopping, learning and teaching within tertiary educational institutions.) This increase has contributed to the electronic learning revolution and some South African tertiary institutions are making a technology-based paradigm shift for this reason.

The changes in delivery methods of Information Systems subjects are a suggestion of the technological changes in our society as a whole. There are some issues that are of concern to learners studying in a technology-enhanced e-learning environment. This study used an electronic survey to assess student perceptions of the technology-enhanced e-learning environment.

### Institution of Study

In 1920, HRH Prince Arthur of Connought laid the foundation stone of Longmarket Street Building of the then Cape Technical College. The establishment of the college followed more than ten years of representations by the community for the consolidation of the technical courses, which had been offered in various venues in town. In 1923, the official opening of Longmarket Street Building took place. The building soon proved to be too small; extensions were added in 1926 and 1949. The Cape Technikon is an institution that has taken on the e-learning initiative.

## BACKGROUND

Traditional delivery of learning methods generally required only the instructor, a textbook and support materials according to (Taylor, 2002). Traditional learning environments are defined in terms of time (the timing of instruction), place (the physical location of instruction) and space (collection of materials and resources available to the learner) (Piccoli et al., 2001).

The acceptance of the Internet and use of World Wide Web (WWW) technology in tertiary institutions have resulted in the surfacing of an endless amount of resources for students (Sheard et al., 2000). The Internet had an overwhelming impact on a number of industries (Evans & Wurster, 1997) and the growth in Internet usage created much interest in Web-based learning (Fong & Hui, 2002). (Tian, 2001; Fong & Hui, 2002) argued that students can access resources globally through the Internet to assist them in their learning and that it has become an attractive alternative to traditional modes of communication.

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