

For Immediate Release

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Using Learning Objects to Satisfy Immediate and Future Learning Needs

(Alexandria, VA) Nov. 12, 2002 – What is a “learning object?” A modular building block, chunk, reusable information object ... the list of descriptions is endless. Instructional designer Lori Mortimer provides this definition: “At its most basic level, a learning object is a piece of content that’s smaller than a course.” However, learning objects are much more complex than a piece of content. Arranged together for an instructional purpose, learning objects form the foundation of a learning path.

To help explain learning objects, how and when they should be used, and the kinds of learning objects that e-learning suppliers are developing, *Learning Circuits*, ASTD’s Online Magazine All About E-Learning, and SmartForce teamed up to produce a 14-page guidebook called “A Field Guide to Learning Objects.” It’s part of a *Learning Circuits* series of field guides providing in-depth coverage of a single topic vital to e-learning. ASTD’s *Field Guide to Learning Objects* may be found here: <http://www.learningcircuits.org/fieldguides.html>.

Mortimer says, “For years, the e-learning industry has anticipated the day when learners could personalize, assemble on the fly, and access e-learning on demand. Development teams would be able to build content a single time, store it electronically, reuse it, and deploy it in different formats with a simple button click. A small content piece—a learning object—would establish the foundation upon which these capabilities rest.”

In addition to ASTD’s *Field Guide to Learning Objects*, a May 2002 *Learning Circuits* article by Tom Barron reviews the findings from a survey conducted by the Learning on Demand program of SRI Consulting Business Intelligence, which researches e-learning trends, in conjunction with *Learning Circuits*. Survey results show a substantial interest in learning object methodologies from training professionals and others in a wide range of industries. Results of the survey may be found here: <http://www.learningcircuits.org/2002/may2002/barron.html>.

An April 2002 *Learning Circuits* article called “(Learning) Objects of Desire: Promise and Practicality” by Lori Mortimer explains the learning object concept and the technologies and standards that define, create, and use it. The full article may be found here: <http://www.learningcircuits.org/2002/apr2002/mortimer.html>

More information on learning objects and many other e-learning topics is available at www.learningcircuits.org.

About ASTD

ASTD is the world’s leading association of workplace learning and performance professionals, forming a world-class community of practice. ASTD’s 70,000 members come from more than 100 countries and 15,000 organizations - multinational corporations, medium-sized and small businesses, government, academia, consulting firms, and product and service suppliers.

Founded in 1944, ASTD is now a global force, widening the industry’s focus to connect learning and performance to measurable results, and is a sought-after voice on critical public policy issues.

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