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ASTD Releases State of the Industry Report

Despite economic challenges businesses invested \$130 billion in employee learning and development.

(Alexandria, VA) – November 12, 2009 – The American Society for Training & Development ([ASTD](#)) announces the release of its *2009 State of the Industry Report*, a comprehensive look at the training and development investments, practices, and trends for 2008. Key findings show that employee learning and development withstood the challenges of the difficult economy in 2008 with U.S. organizations spending \$134.07 billion in 2008, or an average of \$1,068 per employee.

Despite the worst economic conditions in several decades, business leaders continued to allocate substantial resources to the learning functions in their organizations. While spending was reduced slightly in 2008 – the average expenditure per employee of \$1,068 was down 3.8 percent from the 2007 level of \$1,110 – learning professionals took on more responsibility, increasing the number of employees to whom they were responsible and looking for ways to operate efficiently. Employees accessed an average of 36.3 hours of formal learning content, slightly down 2.9% from 2007's 37.4 hours, but still representing a meaningful amount of resources allocated to each employee for workplace learning and performance.

Data in the *2009 State of the Industry Report* came from 301 organizations, including members of the [ASTD Benchmarking Forum](#) and [ASTD BEST Award winners](#). For more than a decade ASTD's *State of the Industry Report* has provided insightful, actionable findings on the strategic and operational activities of learning functions across the globe.

More key findings from ASTD's *2009 State of the Industry Report* include:

- \$88.59 billion was spent on the internal learning function in U.S. organizations.
- \$45.48 billion was allocated to external services in U.S. organizations.
- Learning expenditures as a percentage of payroll increased in 2008 to 2.24 percent, up from 2.15 percent in 2007.
- Percent of the learning budget allocated to external services was 22.0 percent, down from 25.2 percent in 2007, and continuing a downward trend that began in 2004.
- The average number of employees per learning staff member was 253 in 2008, up from 227 the previous year.

- The average cost per learning hour used decreased 7.1 percent, from \$56 in 2007 to \$52 in 2008, which means learning professionals were operating efficiently and managing learning content without incurring additional overhead.

The *2009 State of the Industry Report* shows that despite tough economic times learning professionals adapted and continued to deliver, even increasing the number of formal learning opportunities despite having fewer resources. It also reveals a commitment on the part of business leaders who understand that an ongoing financial and operational commitment is required to leverage human capital to its fullest.

To read the full report, go to www.astd.org. To schedule an interview to discuss the findings, please contact Kristen Fyfe.

About ASTD

ASTD (American Society for Training & Development) is the world's largest professional association dedicated to the training and development field. In more than 100 countries, ASTD's members work in organizations of all sizes, in the private and public sectors, as independent consultants, and as suppliers. Members connect locally in 133 U.S. chapters and with 30 international partners. ASTD started in 1943 and in recent years has widened the profession's focus to align learning and performance to organizational results, and is a sought-after voice on critical public policy issues. For more information, visit www.astd.org.