Does E-Learning Match the Hype?

E-learning—computer-based training delivered over the Internet—has been hyped as a radical innovation in employee development. Advantages of this training method are significant, but adoption has been slow in the distribution field.

E-learning benefits include:

- **Cost.** E-learning typically offers significant cost savings over traditional training and non-learning expenses, such as travel, are reduced or eliminated.

- **Convenience.** Courses are accessible 24/7, at work, at home or on the road.

- **Self-directed.** Employees learn at their own pace and can skip or repeat sections, as well as store and subsequently retrieve course information.

- **Interactive.** E-learning accommodates different learning styles through text, audio and graphics.

- **Individualized training.** Supervisors or students can define individualized objectives and establish milestones to mark different levels of achievement.

- **Ongoing feedback.** Pre- and post-skill assessments measure progress for the learner and supervisor or training coordinator. Poor performance may automatically trigger a review of needed material.

- **Retention.** Studies indicate higher learning retention rates.

- **Broad catalog.** A wide array of pre-packaged course is available from ASA University.

Like any self-study program, e-learning requires a highly-motivated learner to overcome the lack of human interaction and instructor involvement.