

The identification of the seven sectors of the distance learning industry builds on earlier work by the Office of Technology Assessment (1991)¹ and Roberts & Associates/Associés (1993)².

The seven sectors are:

1. Hardware and equipment sector
2. Enabling applications software sector
3. Content and learning programs sector
4. Telecommunications and electronic delivery systems sector
5. Learning settings sector
6. International education and training sector
7. Industry specialists sector

1.3.1 Hardware and Equipment Sector

This sector supplies equipment for learning such as whiteboards and audio cassette players as well as more complex electronics equipment such as personal computers and liquid crystal display (LCD) screens.

1.3.2 Enabling Applications Software Sector

This sector supplies software tools and applications which enable learning. Applications such as wordprocessing, graphics and spreadsheets; conferencing software and learning management software.

1.3.3 Content and Learning Programs Sector

This sector supplies the learning program content. It covers the entire content of a program and also components of programs in areas as diverse as technical skills training and adult literacy.

¹ Office of Technology Assessment, "Worker Training" US Congress, Washington DC, 1991

² Roberts & Associates/Associés. The Impact of Information and Communications Technologies on Postsecondary Education, CERI/OECD Report, 1993.