

## ***Technology-Based Learning & Services in a One Stop***

### **Case Study – Eastern CT Workforce Investment Board (EWIB)**

#### **A Snapshot of Demand, Utilization Rates & Cost**

##### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board (EWIB), a small, leading-edge WIB, has experimented with technology-based learning and services over the last six years in order to serve the greatest number of customers. This case study tracks the utilization and cost of these services and compares the costs of the eTraining component with the selected aspects of the recent California One-Stop Cost Study. The implications and highlights of this Case Study are summarized below:

##### **DEMAND EXCEEDS AVAILABLE RESOURCES:**

- In the first six-months of 2009, 5,201 new, universal access customers were served through EWIB's four One Stop Career Centers with 51% receiving staff assisted services
- Due to pre-ARRA WIA funding limitations, only 1%, or 52 new customers entered WIA training services which is consistent with national training rates. The recent ARRA funding will increase training opportunities but will not allow WIBs to train more than 5% of One Stop customers.

##### **eTRAINING IS A FLEXIBLE, COST EFFECTIVE SERVICE FOR AN ESTIMATED 30% OF ONE STOP CUSTOMERS:**

- eTraining can successfully serve Wagner Peyser and/or WIA Self-Service and Staff-Assisted customers including the recent high influx of skilled workers
- Of the 5,201 universal access customers, 14%, or 725 customers participated in the eTraining initiative
- eTraining customers successfully completed 3,792 courses in a 90 day period in diverse , high-demand areas including Desktop Computing, IT, Health and Business
- The cost per completed course/learning module under eTraining was \$22 and the cost per customer was \$131
- The cost of eTraining compares favorably to the cost of the more traditional workforce services detailed in the California One Stop Cost Study
- Expanding eTraining to also allow self-directed access to eTraining will free up staff to assist those most in need of staff assistance and could further reduce the unit cost to \$12 per completed learning module and \$75 per customer

This Case Study supports the expanded use of technology-based learning in the public workforce system as promoted by the Employment and Training Administration in TEGL 17-07

<http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEGL17-07.pdf>

**BACKGROUND** – Over the last six years, the Eastern CT Workforce Investment Board (EWIB) has expanded technology-based services to jobseekers served through its network of four One Stop Centers in Eastern CT and is one of the leading WIBs in the country investing in these services.

The purpose of this case study is to present a snapshot and preliminary analysis of the utilization and cost efficiencies of this service, as well as present some additional approaches to expanding services which are now under consideration. This Snapshot focuses on the eTraining component of EWIB’s technology initiative. For the cost analysis section of this paper, the California One Stop Cost is used as a baseline and benchmark. The CA Study, the first of its kind in the Nation, included an extensive activity-based cost study of services provided through twenty-two One Stop Centers in California. A complete copy of this study is available at <http://www.cwib.ca.gov/resources/reports>

**Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board (EWIB)** – EWIB is one of five Regional Boards established in CT as mandated by the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998. The Board serves 41 municipalities in Eastern CT through a network of four CTWorks-East One Stop Career Centers. EWIB has been successful securing a significant amount of alternate funding with WIA representing just 23% of contracted revenue. EWIB’s annual WIA allocation, however, is the smallest in CT.

The PY 08, pre-ARRA, WIA formula funding is as follows:

WIA Adult	\$475,085
WIA Dislocated	781,431
WIA Youth	645,945
Total WIA –	\$1,902,461

**Customers served through EWIB CTWorks Centers – January-June 2009** – For the purpose of this snapshot and analysis, the six-month period from January to June of 2009 was selected. The data comes from the statewide CT MIS system. All data focuses on **new** customers during this period for Eastern CT.

**TOTAL NEW CUSTOMERS SERVED IN CTWORKS CENTERS East – January to June 2009**

Total New CTWorks East Customers (Wagner Peyser) = 5,201 as profiled below.

- UI Claimants = 3,651 or 70%
- Veterans = 393 or 7.5%
- Educational levels
  - Less than HS 1,725 or 33%
  - HS Grad 2,273 or 44%
  - College Grad 1,198 or 23%

WIA as a subset of these Customers:

Total New WIA Adult & Dislocated Customers = 2,479 or 48% of total customers

Total WIA New Adult & Dislocated Enrolled that received training = 52 or 1% of total customers

**Technology Based Services provided to all Customers – January to June 2009 in all Workshops including Computer Basics, Job Search on the Internet, Email for Job Seekers, Web-based Career Exploration and Assessment, and Getting Started with eTraining.**

Total Number of Workshops = 203. Total Customers Attending TBL Workshops = 1,689. Approximately 20% of customers attended more than one workshop. A single count of new customers attending TBL Workshops is 1,351 or 26% of new customers.

- Number of eTraining Getting Started Workshops 69
- Number customers attending eTraining Workshops 725 or 14% of New Customers.

**DESCRIPTION OF EWIB'S eTRAINING INITIATIVE** - As a result of shrinking financial resources, the increasing demand for services in Eastern CT, and the redistricting of the state's WIB areas, in 2003, EWIB began piloting a number of different approaches to providing technology-based services to jobseekers. As noted above, only 1% of customers could access WIA-funded training given budget limitations. EWIB made a concerted effort to mount an eTraining program that could provide skill upgrading to the largest possible number of customers. The following describes the current eTraining program that has evolved and was operational as of January 1, 2009.

**eTRAINING PROGRAM SUMMARY**– All customers of the Career Centers are eligible for eTraining including Wagner Peyser, self-service WIA adults, and enrolled WIA Adults, Dislocated and Youth. Customers must have intermediate or advanced computer skills, have access to a high-speed Internet connection either at home, a library or the Career Center and have a skill that she/he wishes to upgrade or learn. In contrast to the other Technology Workshops, customers must be referred to the eTraining Getting Started Workshop by Center staff or through attending another technology workshop. The eTraining Workshop is not part of the public calendar which allows for self registrations. All customers must participate in the 90 minute "eTraining Getting Started" Workshop in which customers select at least three courses to start their learning plans and become familiar with navigating the website. Upon completion of the workshop, customers are issued a 90 day license with unlimited access to over 6,000 short, self-paced courses from Skillsoft (Business, Desktop Computing, IT) or Medcom (Health and Medical). Customers can choose and add any number of courses or any learning track from Industry-Recognized Certifications in HR, Project Management, IT, Desktop Skills, Customer Service or medical courses. Each Skillsoft course averages 3 hours, and Medcom courses average one hour. Customers may also take objective skill assessments from Provet Kenexa which average 40 minutes each. Customers must compete at least 1 course within the first 14 days or the license is deactivated at no cost. Only customers completing at least 6 courses are eligible for an additional 90-day license, if funds are available.

**Scope and Methodology:**

This analysis covers the 5,201 new customers that were served in EWIBs Career Centers between January 1 and June 30, 2009. Of these new customers, 580 or 11% of all new customers were issued an eTraining license and all completed their 90 day eTraining experience by September 30, 2009 (90 days after the June 30 end date of this analysis). An additional 47 customers were approved for extensions during this period bringing the total number of licenses to 627. The difference of the 725 attending workshops and the 580 licenses is explained by 5% of customers opting out of the service at the workshop and 15% being deactivated as a result of the 14 day rule which requires at least one course be completed within the first 14 days.

A successfully completed learning module (Skillsoft, Medcom or Prove IT) was determined to be the unit of measurement or outcome to be measured and analyzed. The assumption is that each completed learning module adds value to the customer’s skill set and their employment/career advancement potential. When sufficient data is available, future analysis will include outcome measures such as employment, retention and earnings.

**eTraining Outcomes**

**Based on 627 Licenses Issued Jan to June**

	<b>Courses Completed</b>	<b>Avg. Time each course</b>	<b>Total Hours</b>
Skillsoft	2,113	3 hrs	6,339
Medcom	1,065	1 hr	1,065
Prove IT	614	40 minutes	409
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,792</b>		<b>7,813</b>

The following selected cost data was taken from the CA Study to provide a baseline and methodology for a cost analysis of eTraining:

**Median Cost and Range of Cost Per-Unit of Service**

**From CA One Stop Cost Study**

<b><i>Unit of Service</i></b>	<b><i>Median Cost Per</i></b>	<b><i>Range</i></b>
Per Universal Client	\$166	\$33 - \$554
Per Universal Visit	\$41	\$8 - \$146
Per Coaching and 1-on-1 assistance Event	\$20	\$20 - \$145
Per Workshop	\$942	\$135 - \$5838
Per Client Attending Workshop	\$118	\$23 - \$612

**Comment:** The wide range of Workshop cost is because some Workshops were 1-2 hours and others were several days.

**EWIB Activity-Based Cost for eTraining**

<i>Unit of Service</i>	<i>Cost Per</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
Per Coaching and 1-on-1 assistance Event To refer to eTraining Workshop	\$20	CA Study	725	\$14,500
Per Workshop	\$295	EWIB Actual	69	\$20,355
Per Client Attending Workshop	\$28	EWIB Actual		
Cost of each Managed License *	\$75	EWIB Actual	627	\$47,025
<b>Total Cost</b>				<b>\$81,880</b>

**\*Cost of Managed License:** EWIB contracts with a third party to manage the eTraining program. This managed service includes issuing and tracking all licenses, technical support to end users, and monthly activity reports.

**Cost per completed learning module - \$81,880/ 3,792 completions = \$22**

Additional cost calculation:

Avg. Cost per eTraining Customer \$81,880/ 627 = \$131

**NEW APPROACHES TO eTRAINING UNDER CONSIDERATION BY EWIB**

EWIB is exploring new approaches to expanding this successful and cost-effective effort. One approach is to implement a self-directed or self-service track. A significant number of potential customers have the computer savvy to explore the eTraining courses and planning tools, identify at least three courses to begin their learning plan and submit an online application for a license. One possible target group is the vast number of new UI claimants that do not visit the Career Centers. For example, only 3,651 or 19% of the average of 19,000 active UI Claimants in the Region visited a One Stop Center in the 6-month timeframe. The self-directed track could also apply to many walk-ins and would free up the limited staff to provide additional staff assistance to those in need of intensive support. Adopting the self-directed approach would eliminate the Workshop and Referral cost detailed above and, assuming the same level of customer activity, would further reduce the per completed learning module cost to \$12. The cost of self-directed would only be the cost of each Managed License.

**Self- Directed Cost per completed learning module (\$47,025/ 3,792 completions) = \$12.**

**Self- Directed Avg. Cost per eTraining License \$47,025/ 627 = \$75**

EWIB has funded eTraining primarily through WIA universal access funds but is exploring the use of other funds such as state general revenue and the new ARRA RES funds allocated to the state.

## CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

WIBs and One Stop Career Centers across the country are confronted with a growing demand for workforce services. Staff and financial resources are stretched and limited. Conservatively, 30% of One Stop customers have basic computer skills and can benefit from some components of technology-based learning. The Employment and Training's TEGL 17-07 promotes the use of technology based learning in the public workforce system and provides a vision and strategies to implement and expand these services. <http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEGL17-07.pdf>

The cost effectiveness of technology-based learning is documented in this case study and summarized below.

### CA One Stop Cost Study:

Median Cost per universal access customer = \$166

Median Cost per universal access visit = \$41

### EWIB Case Study:

Average Cost per eTraining customer served in a One Stop = \$131

Average Cost per eTraining customer self-directed (online) = \$75

ETA's recent **TOOLS FOR AMERICA'S JOB SEEKER CHALLENGE** provides an excellent resource and clearinghouse for workforce professionals to identify technology tools to enhance and expand services to job seekers in your community. See <http://www.dolchallenge.ideascale.com/>

### NOTES:

This Case Study was prepared by the Employment & Training Institute Inc. [www.etiworks.com](http://www.etiworks.com) in collaboration with the Eastern CT WIB (EWIB) [www.ewib.org](http://www.ewib.org) , December 15, 2009.

The eTraining services used by EWIB and referenced in this report are offered through Metrix Learning and US Wired for Education [www.metrixlearning.com](http://www.metrixlearning.com) . This site provides links to detailed descriptions of the 6,000 plus courses available to EWIB customers.