

## AMERICA'S EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INDUSTRY Where It Fits and Why It Matters

School systems require three things to fulfill their educational mission.

- **Learning environments.** Traditionally brick-and-mortar schools; increasingly include virtual learning environments and networks.
- **Learning facilitators.** Teachers and other instructional staff, including coaches, tutors, and teacher's aides.
- **Learning resources.** Traditionally print textbooks; now include a wide variety of products in all media.

All three dimensions are vital to the nation's educational system. School systems spend most of their money providing them.

- Learning environments require substantial one-time investments to build and 20% of the operating budget to maintain.
- Learning facilitators command more than 50% of the budget.
- Learning resources absorb only 10% of the budget, yet *they are the primary means by which standards-driven curricula are put into a form with which teachers facilitate learning.*

The **educational resources industry** is the community of companies, organizations, and individuals that make, sell, and support these resources. Their products and services generate nearly \$6 billion in annual revenue. Industry members are responsible for the following major functions:

- Soliciting views of educators and learners about their needs
- Developing product concepts including instructional design
- Researching and developing the content
- Testing the product for instructional efficacy
- Preparing the product for print or digital application
- Selling the product
- Delivering the product
- Providing service before and after the sale
- Maintaining a company, brand or product identity by which educators may be assured of an appropriate fit to their needs
- Providing other functions required for company operation: supply chain, order fulfillment, financial, HR, IT, legal and administrative

Through such resources teachers are able to

- engage students
- deliver standards-based instruction, and
- differentiate instruction to suit a variety of learning styles, all with the assurance of accuracy and quality.

The scope of resource types is broad and constantly evolving.

- Comprehensive core curriculum programs
- Learning management systems
- Supplemental books, reference books, workbooks, magazines
- Classroom print
- Manipulatives
- Software
- Videos
- Websites
- Interactive white board content
- Handheld device and tablet applications
- Assessments and assessment tools