

An Introduction to ESRI Training and Education

Transcript

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Welcome to our ESRI Instructional Series Podcasts, *An Introduction to ESRI Training and Education*.

My name is Mark Stewart, and I am the manager of Training Delivery for ESRI in Redlands, California. In this podcast, I would like to provide an overview of the many training solutions ESRI offers, and discuss how ESRI users can use our online training and education Web site to find the most appropriate training for their needs.

It has long been said that *people* are the most important component of a GIS, for without knowledgeable and creative operators, the system fails to meet its objectives, no matter how good the software, data, hardware, and procedures are. One way that we can help ensure success in our GIS efforts is to invest in training ourselves and our staff in the best use of the technology that makes up our systems. Fortunately, ESRI provides a wide variety of training solutions that fit both different learning styles and training budgets.

Perhaps the best known style of training is the traditional instructor-led method. ESRI offers a wide variety of instructor-led courses that explain GIS concepts, explore GIS applications, and teach people to use ESRI software products and related technologies. Instructor-led classes combine personal delivery by an expert instructor, hands-on exercises, and class participation, to create a rich learning environment. ESRI offers instructor-led courses at numerous training centers throughout the United States, including our corporate headquarters in Redlands, California, and at all of our regional office locations.

If you have a number of staff that need to be trained at the same time, courses can also be hosted at individual client sites, allowing us to bring training directly to you at a reduced cost.

For people who like to learn at their own pace and control their own learning environment, ESRI's Web-based training options provide the perfect solution. These options include complete Web-based courses on our ESRI Virtual Campus, live and archived training seminars, and our instructional series of podcasts.

ESRI Virtual Campus courses combine interactive exercises, conceptual material, and instructional resources in a dynamic way that allows students to learn from anywhere with an Internet connection. In addition to offering convenient access to a wealth of educational

resources, ESRI Virtual Campus courses also offer an economical alternative to the cost of traditional instructor-led training, and many offer the first learning module of the course free of charge.

Students looking for smaller chunks of affordable training in a Web-based format have been very pleased with ESRI's live training seminars. These free one-hour Web seminars, offered monthly, feature presentations and demonstrations on focused topics by subject matter experts. Attendees can ask questions and get answers in real-time. For those unable to attend the live presentation, each seminar is archived and available for access any time at no charge.

This podcast is an example of our final Web-based training option. With ESRI Instructional Series Podcasts, you can access free ESRI software training on demand. You can download and listen to these short audio recordings on your compute, or take them with you on your mp3 player. Instructional Series Podcasts provide training that fits easily into your schedule. In each podcast, an expert discusses a topic, such as improving workflow, tricks for optimizing a geodatabase, and updates on new software features.

ESRI's newest training solution is the Virtual Classroom, which combines the focus of an instructor-led course with the convenience of Web-based training. Students can remain productive while they learn, and organizations can save on the cost associated with employee travel. Each Virtual Classroom course includes nine hours of training on a focused topic, delivered by a live instructor, in three consecutive half-day sessions over the Internet. Morning and afternoon sessions allow students to schedule the training that best fits their workday. Small class sizes support communication among students and with the instructor. Expert instruction, convenience, and an interactive classroom-like environment are making this one of our most popular training methods.

Of course, understanding the different types of training solutions that ESRI offers is only part of the story. The ESRI Training and Education Web site, at training.esri.com can help you find the right training solution to fit your needs. This website provides comprehensive explanations of the various training delivery methods discussed in this podcast, and allows you to search for training solutions in a variety of ways. The Course Catalog tab allows you to search for training by course title, software product, training format, or by using keywords. Each course found in a search is linked to a complete course description, which provides details on the content of the course, the

intended audience, and any suggested prerequisites. If you are unsure what training you need, the Recommended Courses link in the Course Catalog tab can help. This tool prompts you with questions regarding your training goals. As you supply the answers, the tool conducts a search of the ESRI training solutions and presents a list of recommended courses. From this list, you can investigate each course further to find the ones most relevant to you.

Another way to determine the right training for your needs is to use our learning pathways. Learning Pathways, which are accessible from the Course Catalog tab, are a logical collection of instructor-led and Web-based courses designed to help ESRI software users achieve success. Each learning pathway provides high-quality, relevant training on a particular subject area. After completing a learning pathway, students will receive a certificate of completion, demonstrating that they have finished the number of classes required by that pathway.

All of your ESRI training, including those courses which are part of a learning -pathway, can be tracked and managed through the My Training tab on the Training and Education Web site. This tab allows you to see training you are currently registered for, as well as training you have completed. You can monitor your progress through Learning Pathways, print Web course certificates, and contact ESRI to resolve mistakes in your training history.

As I mentioned at the beginning of this discussion, well-trained people are the most important component of any geographic information system. ESRI is committed to providing the high-quality training solutions necessary to prepare you and your staff to meet your GIS goals.

I hope you found this overview of the training options we offer, and our training and education Web site helpful, and I hope we see you in class very soon. If you have further questions regarding training, please do not hesitate to contact the ESRI Learning Center in Redlands, or your local ESRI regional office. Thank you again for tuning in to this session of our ESRI Instructional Series Podcasts and stay tuned for future broadcasts.