

White Paper

The Business Value of Oracle Guided Learning

Sponsored by: Oracle

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

High-performing organizations recognize that their staff need the talent, skills, and support to leverage new technologies. Simultaneously, the shift to a hybrid workforce is requiring entirely new workstyles and skill sets for both workers and their managers. In addition, organizations are increasingly deploying embedded artificial intelligence (AI)-driven dynamic learning and digital adoption platforms that support unique learning requirements in the flow of work. For these organizations, talent is a source of competitive advantage.

Oracle Guided Learning (OGL) is an in-application digital adoption platform that provides step-by-step guidance for users when using and managing Oracle Cloud applications, including HCM, ERP, SCM, and CX Fusion Cloud. This role-based training package, based on Oracle best practices, helps train and act as a rich learning resource for HR professionals, sales representatives, IT teams, finance directors, and other professionals that rely on various Oracle applications for their day-to-day work.

To evaluate the real-world effectiveness of Oracle Guided Learning, IDC conducted in-depth customer interviews that explored the value and benefits for organizations using the platform. Some of the areas we examined were Oracle Guided Learning's ability to improve the efficiency of IT professionals and assist end users with Oracle-based applications. IDC's analysis found that these companies realized significant value from the Oracle offering by:

- Fostering more productive and efficient IT team operations related to cloud adoption and migration, as well as Oracle application use, management, and updates
- Increasing the productivity of the internal training teams responsible for providing resources to IT staff and end users
- Reducing reliance on help desk staff for routine issues affecting system performance by empowering end users with self-service tools

Business Value of OGL Highlights

- 549% three-year ROI
- 3.2 months to payback
- 40% more productive cloud/application adoption
- 52% faster cloud migration and adoption
- 39% more efficient application update teams
- 63% reduced repeat calls to help desk
- 17% more efficient policy enforcement
- 30,700 additional productive hours gained
- 28% more efficient training teams

- Increasing overall levels of productivity experienced by the end users while ensuring robust policy compliance

As the importance of cloud-based applications increases, organizations must help their employees keep up with the changing features and improve employees' efficient use of their new tools. By doing this, organizations can maximize the business value of their applications.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

As the pace of technology advancement accelerates, the skills that both IT and line-of-business users need to effectively do their jobs also accelerate. Critical skills are changing almost as quickly as the enterprise applications that help drive business growth. A great example of this revolves around cloud-based applications, which are frequently updated with important changes, new features, or improved integration. As features are added or processes change, employees must discard old ways of performing their jobs and quickly and consistently adopt a new approach.

According to Carnegie Mellon University¹, up to 80% of problems related to applications are derived from configuration errors, capacity problems, or user-related mistakes. The cost of those errors can be measured in money, time, and frustration for line-of-business and IT employees and clients.

Simultaneously, the expanding hybrid workforce, with fewer people working daily in a fixed office environment, requires new workstyles and skill sets for both workers and their managers. And at the same time, the importance of enterprise applications and their effective use is increasing as organizations accelerate their digital transformation and quickly pivot to changing business conditions.

When employees need reminders, or help with a new process, typical learning approaches of instructor-led training or e-learning aren't focused enough or rapid enough. Often, when an employee needs specific assistance, or has limited time, employees will seek immediate advice from colleagues or supervisors. But organizations don't have the same "sneaker network" or "water cooler" support that was common in the past.

To overcome these problems and maximize the value of enterprise systems during and after deployment, organizations are increasingly deploying embedded learning tools and digital adoption solutions that support unique learning requirements in the flow of work. For these organizations, employee productivity can be enhanced, and the value of an organization's technology investment can be maximized.

OVERVIEW OF ORACLE GUIDED LEARNING

Oracle Guided Learning is an in-application digital adoption platform that provides step-by-step guidance for users when using and managing Oracle Cloud applications, including HCM, ERP, SCM, and CX Fusion Cloud. This platform provides administrators the ability to build tailored role-based content and deliver this seamlessly to their users within the application, helping accelerate cloud adoption and empower employee action. OGL delivers role-based guides and features that can be customized to each business process to allow users to seamlessly use Fusion apps and be continuously updated and informed of key process and application updates. As cloud apps are

¹ Pertet and Narasimhan, *Causes of Failure in Web Applications*, CMU-PDL-05-109, December 2005

upgraded, feature updates are sent to employees within the application, helping prevent confusion or disruption.

OGL includes several valuable features for learners including:

- Step guides, which are automatically generated, configured, and documented within workflows, customized by role and task
- Intuitive messaging prompts such as beacons and smart tips to modify and shape user behavior to complete transactions
- A context-aware search widget that acts as a gateway to information repositories

For administrators, it includes the opportunity to include company-created content or policies that are searchable or delivered proactively to employees as in-app messages. This feature can also be used to distribute messages to teams or broad sections of the enterprise. OGL also includes analytics to help reveal how employees are leveraging the guides and how employees are performing.

THE BUSINESS VALUE OF ORACLE GUIDED LEARNING

Study Demographics

IDC conducted research that explored the value and benefits of using Oracle Guided Learning to optimize IT education and learning resources. The project included 10 interviews with organizations that were using the Oracle offering. Interviewed managers all had experience with and knowledge about its benefits and were asked a variety of quantitative and qualitative questions about its impacts on their IT operations, core businesses, and costs.

Table 1 presents study demographics. The organizations that IDC interviewed had an average base of 164,970 employees and average annual revenue of \$36.5 billion, indicating the involvement of several large organizations. In terms of geographic distribution, six companies were based in the United States, with the remainder in the United Kingdom, Germany, and the Netherlands. A variety of vertical markets were represented, including the manufacturing, transportation, education, financial services, government, healthcare, hospitality, and telecommunications sectors.

TABLE 1

Firmographics of Interviewed Organizations

Firmographics	Average	Median	Range
Number of employees	164,970	120,500	3,000–600,000
Number of business applications	66	45	5–250
Number of external customers/users	53.2 million	11.0 million	12,000–182.5 million
Organizational revenue	\$36.5 billion	\$6.52 billion	\$870 million to \$172 billion

TABLE 1**Firmographics of Interviewed Organizations**

Firmographics	Average	Median	Range
Countries	United States (6), United Kingdom (2), Germany, and the Netherlands		
Industries	Manufacturing (2), transportation (2), education, financial services, government, healthcare, hospitality, and telecommunications		

Source: IDC interviews, October 2021

Selection and Use of Oracle Guided Learning

The organizations that IDC interviewed described typical usage patterns for Oracle Guided Learning. They also discussed the rationale behind choosing it as an optimal means of enhancing training operations and staff performance related to Oracle operations and application use. Interviewed study participants cited a variety of reasons for their choice such as OGL's ability to effectively support migrations from on-premises IT to cloud-based applications. They also appreciated how the offering was able to maintain user interest via user-friendly features and proximity/access to specific tasks and procedures built into with Oracle Fusion Cloud. Study participants made detailed comments on these benefits:

- **"How-to" guide for users:** "We looked for an in-system tool that could train and could give users a walk-through experience. Guided Learning provided that."
- **Helps successful transformation from on premises to cloud:** "We looked at the scope of the transformation we were undertaking and the scope of the training that would be required with the number of internal and external users affected by the change. We are in the process of moving our operations from Oracle 12 On Premise to the cloud."
- **More convenient training programming and user experience:** "We found that HR training and the training technology function over a four-year period affected where we placed a training video for tasks within our HR technology system. We learned that the closer we placed the video to where a user would need to act, the higher the consumption rate. We also found that the number of calls to our HR help desk went down significantly. We wanted to find a way to get the training materials to people more effectively, and that led us to look at Oracle Guided Learning."
- **Helps make IT more user-friendly:** "We wanted something to help us use the system and provide guidance when needed. It's helping us train end users globally."

Table 2 provides a snapshot of Oracle Guided Learning usage across all companies at the time of interviews. On average, there were 52,700 employees using the Oracle offering (32% of the employee base) along with 223 contractors and 1,333 external users. Additional metrics are presented.

TABLE 2**Usage of Oracle Guided Learning**

Oracle Guided Learning Usage	Average	Median
Number of sites/branches	977	130
Number of geographical locations (countries)	31	16
Number of employees	52,700	14,000
Number of contractors	223	0
Number of external users	1,333	0

Source: IDC interviews, October 2021

Oracle Guided Learning: Business Value and Quantified Benefits

IDC's Business Value methodology evaluates and quantifies the benefits for the companies studied in adopting Oracle Guided Learning as a core element of IT education. OGL helped the interviewed companies foster more productive and efficient operations for IT teams responsible for maintaining and managing Oracle applications, especially teams related to cloud adoption and migration and application management. It also increased the productivity of training teams responsible for providing resources to IT staff and end users while reducing reliance on help desks. These improvements helped companies increase overall levels of end-user productivity while also ensuring robust IT policy compliance. Study participants commented on these core benefits:

- **Easier to communicate changes:** "OGL maximizes the time of our trainers. We can send a new employee into Guided Learning. They can get hands-on training without one of us looking over their shoulder. It also increases our ability to communicate and allows us to use pop-ups to send out scripts that need to go out at the last minute. More people get access to the information in a timelier manner."
- **Ease of use and accessibility:** "We have seen a benefit for training. We can show salespeople how to use Guided Learning, and training can be done live. You are not referencing materials that they need to go back to review. Similarly, usage of the tool can also be done actively and in real time. People do not have to go back and look something up or contact someone. It breeds self-sufficiency."
- **Reduces human errors:** "It has been a tremendous communication tool and works in an intuitive way, preventing items from being done incorrectly and causing a lot of issues. Our HR help desk has seen tremendous improvement. We used to get 2,500 tickets a week. That has been reduced by 300-500 per week."
- **Better communication with employees:** "Smart tips are super beneficial, informing end users at the place it needs to be shown how to fill in information correctly. We never had that before. We also now have the ability to have messages appear on the screen when you log in. It can be for all users or certain users, say in a particular country. Before it was more passive. You

had to hope the user would look at the message. Now the message appears, and they are required to read it."

Improved IT Skill Sets and Resources for IT Staff and End Users

Uncertainties and volatilities in today's business climate have underscored the importance of skills for IT staff and end users alike. Tools that emphasize professionals to "pull" the training that they need is often complementing more prescribed, scheduled training. Enterprises increasingly expect education to support employee growth and business value realization. As a result, training approaches offer an increased opportunity to let learners self-select the training content they need in specific situations and the learning paths they need to support individualized professional growth.

Oracle Guided Learning has been designed to address these challenges.

Study participants confirmed that use of OGL helps their IT teams be more adaptable to changing conditions while enabling better application adoption. They also noted that it improved the process of rolling out application/system updates to large numbers of end users. OGL also reduced help desk demands by empowering end users to solve issues on a more real-time and situational basis. Participants commented on these benefits:

- **Allows IT to be more adaptable:** "People had concerns about operating in a cloud as well as operating with more streamlined processes. Guided Learning is a tool that helped our employees change and adapt. They were nervous about using a cloud system, but when we showed them Oracle Guided Learning, it increased their comfort level ...It has been an asset for change management."
- **Can enable better application adoption through ease of implementation:** "The key is application adoption and expedited usage. The field-level guidance is one of the key selling points of the solution. Compared to more traditional alternatives of training guides, slides, and documentation, OGL is easier to use, understand, and implement across different countries and offices."

The rollout of new technologies means rapid change for IT organizations and renders continuous skills development essential. The value provided by Oracle Guided Learning extends to both IT teams and end users. IDC evaluated both groups, first looking at OGL impacts on cloud and application adoption teams. In this subgroup, OGL helped companies optimize their investment in Oracle technologies by providing up-to-date and relevant instruction and guidance. IT teams that have easy access to situation-relevant training become more effective as they routinely apply new skills and knowledge on the fly.

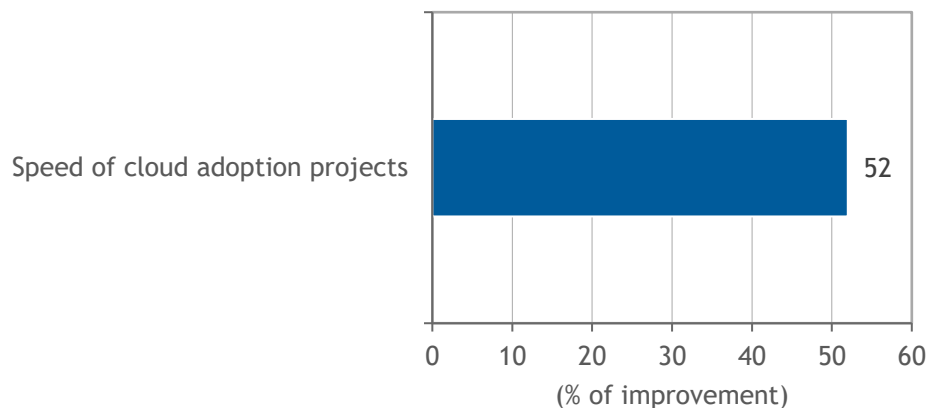
Interviewed companies reported that Oracle Guided Learning helped their cloud/application adoption teams push out needed resources to the wider organization more easily. Table 3 quantifies these improvements. As shown, average productivity for cloud/application adoption teams increased 40%. On average, these teams of 26 FTEs would free up 10.3 FTEs to work on other adoption projects. This resulted in a very substantial annual staff time savings of \$1.03 million per organization.

TABLE 3**Cloud and Application Adoption Team Impact**

	Without Oracle Guided Learning	With Oracle Guided Learning	Difference	Benefit (%)
Equivalent productivity level, equivalent FTEs	26	15.7	10.3	40
Staff time value per year	\$2.60 million	\$1.57 million	\$1.03 million	40

Source: IDC interviews, October 2021

Oracle Guided Learning is designed to provide role-relevant knowledge on demand to ensure consistent in-app messaging and communication and optimize processes and workflows at scale. Using these capabilities, cloud and application adoption teams can work more effectively to complete a greater number of projects. IDC quantified this benefit and calculated a 52% improvement in the rate that cloud adoption projects could be completed (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1**Cloud and Application Adoption Project Agility**

Source: IDC interviews, October 2021

Study participants also reported that Oracle Guided Learning made it easier to roll out application system updates to large numbers of users. As one study participant noted: "There are pop-ups on the home page helping people find the information they need. For example, we used Guided Learning for rolling out a whole system for all our employees. This was started in 2020 and was a welcome tool for employees and managers to bring them into the system. We started with 3,600 users, and now we have 200,000."

Table 4 quantifies these improvements. As shown, average employee efficiency related to completing application updates increased 39% after adoption. This resulted in an average annual productivity-based business value of \$285,800 for each organization studied.

TABLE 4**Application Update Team Impact**

	Without Oracle Guided Learning	With Oracle Guided Learning	Difference	Benefit (%)
Equivalent productivity level, equivalent FTEs	7.4	4.5	2.9	39
Staff time value per year	\$737,500	\$451,700	\$285,800	39

Source: IDC interviews, October 2021

Application management was identified as another key area where OGL made a substantive contribution. For this category, study participants reported that the learning system helped IT organizations push out cloud and application workloads to the wider organization more easily. As shown in Table 5, after adoption, average efficiency increased 32%. These improvements translated into an average annual business value of \$264,600 for each organization.

TABLE 5**Application Management Team Impact**

	Without Oracle Guided Learning	With Oracle Guided Learning	Difference	Benefit (%)
Equivalent productivity level, equivalent FTEs	8.4	5.7	2.6	32
Staff time value per year	\$835,700	\$571,100	\$264,600	32

Source: IDC interviews, October 2021

IDC then looked at how Oracle Guided Learning impacts the information available online for business end users. The accessibility of this resource throughout end-user communities empowered end users with practical information for dealing with computer performance issues in real time. As a result, fewer users needed to rely on their help desks.

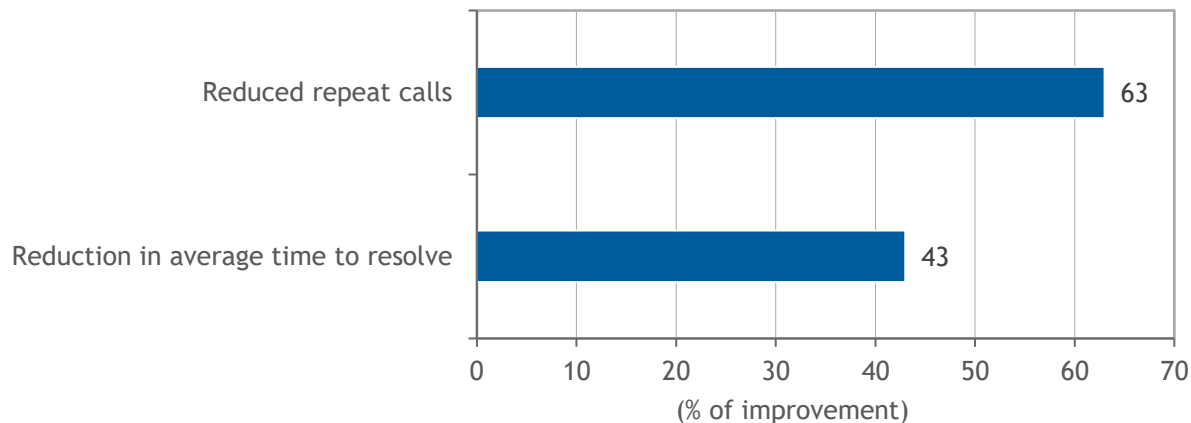
As one study participant noted: "The questions coming in from team members are changing. In the past, typical questions were: 'What do I need to do?' or 'How do I do it?' The help desk team may have provided some questionably written guidance or may have actually walked the person through the process step by step. But this proved very time and labor intensive. What happens now is that when they get those kinds of questions, the response is to refer them to OGL."

"Today, the process is much quicker, and it is very much trying to put the onus back on the user. The help desk is still there if they need additional support, but the first option is for the user to engage with the tool."

Help desk metrics are shown in Figure 2. After adoption, help desk staff experienced a substantial reduction in repeat calls (63%). Further, when problems did arise, they were able to resolve them 43% faster on average.

FIGURE 2

Help Desk Impact



Source: IDC interviews, October 2021

The Business Impact of Oracle Guided Learning

Improving cloud-based application performance and other areas through Oracle Guided Learning had direct and measurable impacts on the business performance of interviewed companies. Study participants reported that they were able to improve key aspects of their business operations given the benefits to IT staff and end users described previously. As an example, they appreciated OGL's ability to integrate with configure price quote (CPQ) software and ensure that policies were followed while reducing error counts. They also noted that use of OGL was less disruptive to the workflows of professionals and senior management than previous approaches since it is designed to provide resources at the point of need. Study participants commented on these benefits:

- **In-application, in the flow-of-work integration:** "OGL has been a good investment and is well integrated with CPQ. The users can walk through learning about CPQ directly in the system, getting up to speed on new versions and upgrades. The communication features have all been worth it."
- **More efficient processes:** "On the [accounts payables] side, it goes back to the perspective of routing for payment. We get an invoice and then validate it, code it, and get it approved and route it for payment. With the aid of Guided Learning, we use the product more fully to begin with. We are seeing some of the benefits of the efficiencies earlier than we anticipated."
- **Less disruptive for staff:** "It allows us to disrupt operations less. It decreases the need to take operations away from the bedside, so to speak. Staff has information at the point of need to complete an HR-related task or transaction."
- **Senior management that can work efficiently and effectively:** "We want our officials to get into Oracle and get out as quickly as possible. We want them following policies for the government and for the economy. We want them to spend time on their work, not on the HR platform. Guided Learning helps our staff get in and get out as quickly and efficiently as possible."

Policy compliance is another key area where improvements were identified. Interviewees noted that OGL made it easier for employees to follow IT-related policies and other guidelines. As one interviewee noted: "For the finance group, Smart tips have been key for us in communicating policy changes, taxes, and various other complicated processes such as those involved in hiring a foreign student. We can use Guided Learning to help finance ensure that business managers are implementing the correct information and following policies. OGL helps minimize errors."

IDC measured improved policy compliance in terms of productivity. As shown in Table 6, after adoption, average productivity levels increased 17%, translating into an average annual business value of \$27,700 for each organization.

TABLE 6**Policy Enforcement Impact**

	Without Oracle Guided Learning	With Oracle Guided Learning	Difference	Benefit (%)
Equivalent productivity level, equivalent FTEs	2.3	1.9	0.4	17
Staff time value per year	\$163,300	\$135,600	\$27,700	17

Source: IDC interviews, October 2021

Given the challenges of digital transformation, IT organizations need to foster continuous skills development to cope with rapid change. This means that training departments need to be at the forefront of new approaches that can guide the end-user community with new skills and knowledge. After adoption of Oracle Guided Learning, interviewed organizations reported that their training teams could spend less time developing Oracle-specific content. This allowed them to shift their focus to other needed training content while increasing productivity.

Table 7 quantifies these impacts. As shown, after adoption, average FTE productivity levels for training teams increased 28%. This improvement translated into an average annual business value of \$30,900 per organization.

TABLE 7**Training Teams Impact**

	Without Oracle Guided Learning	With Oracle Guided Learning	Difference	Benefit (%)
Equivalent productivity level, equivalent FTEs	1.6	1.2	0.4	28
Staff time value per year	\$112,400	\$81,500	\$30,900	28

Source: IDC interviews, October 2021

Improvements in training resources, Oracle application performance, and other benefits as described had positive downstream impacts for the overall productivity for line-of-business end users who relied on Oracle applications in their day-to-day work. Interviewed companies reported that, with Oracle Guided Learning, these end users had easy access to supporting information about the Oracle applications they routinely used, which served to boost their productivity.

IDC quantified these impacts and calculated that interviewed companies gained back 16.4 hours of productive time per user annually as shown in Table 8. Over time, this amounted to a substantial business value of \$1.14 million for each organization annually.

TABLE 8**End-User Impact**

Enhanced User Productivity	Per Organization
Number of users impacted	1060.7
Average net productivity gains	1.50%
Productivity hours gained	30,700
End-user impact, FTE equivalent per organization per year	16.4
Value of end-user time	\$1.14 million

Source: IDC interviews, October 2021

ROI Summary

Table 9 presents IDC's return on investment analysis for study participants' use of Oracle Guided Learning. IDC projects that interviewed companies will achieve three-year discounted benefits worth an average of \$4.87 million per organization (\$9,230 per 100 employees) through improved application performance and better IT team/end-user productivity as described. These benefits compare with total three-year discounted costs of \$750,200 per organization (\$1,420 per 100 employees). These levels of benefits and investment costs are projected to result in an average three-year ROI of 549% with a break-even point occurring in approximately three months.

TABLE 9**Three-Year ROI Analysis**

Three-Year ROI Analysis	Per Organization	Per 100 Employees Who Benefitted from OGL
Benefit (discounted)	\$4.87 million	\$9,230
Investment (discounted)	\$750,200	\$1,420
Net present value (NPV)	\$4.11 million	\$7,810
ROI (NPV/investment)	549%	549%
Payback period (months)	3.2	3.2
Discount	12%	12%

Source: IDC interviews, October 2021

CHALLENGES/OPPORTUNITIES

While the benefits can be great, deploying enterprise applications is hard: systems and processes are complex, users don't like change, and change can introduce risk. And for cloud-based applications, change is frequent. These factors and others conspire to undermine the business benefit of a new technology.

The most successful organizations increase the benefits they receive and reduce the inherent risk of system changes by helping their employees better use their business-critical systems and keep them well informed of process or policy changes.

IDC research has found that the business return on enterprise applications is improved when combined with these straightforward practices:

- **Consistently describe the business value and intentions of the technology and new processes.** Training on systems can easily become a feature and function parade. However, end users (and IT staff) can more easily adopt new technologies and change in general, if they understand the business benefit the change is expected to deliver.
- **Focus on high-priority processes.** While all areas of the business contribute to success, some roles, functions, or geographies are in a position to have greater impact. Focus training and communication efforts in those areas, and then leverage that knowledge and goodwill to provide training to other areas as necessary.
- **Describe and celebrate the performance standards expected of users.** Leaders of deployment initiatives must strongly advocate that user performance will impact the success of the technology initiative. This should include a strong statement of the target performance standard users should attain in order for the initiative to be successful.
- **Leverage utilization tools to monitor adoption.** This insight can be developed into indicators of adoption and can be triggers for additional interventions.

CONCLUSION

By leveraging trusted and role-based information, Oracle Guided Learning (OGL) can help organizations improve the use and adoption of their cloud-based Oracle applications.

IDC calculates that organizations interviewed for this study that leverage Oracle Guided Learning can realize about \$5 million in benefits over three years from:

- Creating a more productive and efficient IT team
- Increasing the productivity of the internal training teams responsible for providing resources to IT staff and end users
- Reducing end-user reliance on help desk staff
- Increasing end-user productivity
- Helping ensure policy compliance

As the importance of cloud-based applications increases, organizations must help their employees keep up with the changing features and improve employees' efficient use of their new tools. By doing this, organizations can maximize the business value of their applications.

APPENDIX

Methodology

IDC's standard Business Value/ROI methodology was utilized for this project. This methodology is based on gathering data from organizations currently using Oracle Guided Learning as the foundation for the model. Based on interviews with organizations using Oracle Guided Learning, IDC performed a three-step process to calculate the ROI and payback period:

1. **Gathered quantitative benefit information during the interviews using a before-and-after assessment of the impact of using Oracle Guided Learning.** In this study, the benefits included security staff time efficiencies, development productivity gains, reduced costs associated with risk, and higher revenue.
2. **Created a complete investment (three-year total cost analysis) profile based on the interviews.** Investments go beyond the initial and annual costs of using Oracle Guided Learning and can include additional costs related to migrations, planning, consulting, and staff or user training.
3. **Calculated the ROI and payback period.** IDC conducted a depreciated cash flow analysis of the benefits and investments for the organizations' use of Oracle Guided Learning over a three-year period. ROI is the ratio of the net present value (NPV) and the discounted investment. The payback period is the point at which cumulative benefits equal the initial investment.

IDC bases the payback period and ROI calculations on a number of assumptions, which are summarized as follows:

- Time values are multiplied by burdened salary (salary + 28% for benefits and overhead) to quantify efficiency and manager productivity savings. For purposes of this analysis, based on the geographic locations of the interviewed organizations, IDC has used assumptions of an average fully loaded salary of \$100,000 per year for IT staff members and an average fully loaded salary of \$70,000 per year for non-IT staff members. IDC assumes that employees work 1,880 hours per year (47 weeks x 40 hours).
- The net present value of the three-year savings is calculated by subtracting the amount that would have been realized by investing the original sum in an instrument yielding a 12% return to allow for the missed opportunity cost. This accounts for both the assumed cost of money and the assumed rate of return.
- Because IT solutions require a deployment period, the full benefits of the solution are not available during deployment. To capture this reality, IDC prorates the benefits on a monthly basis and then subtracts the deployment time from the first-year savings.

Note: All numbers in this document may not be exact due to rounding.

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