Evaluating E-learning by identification of relevant issues in
Instructional Web Based Environments:

"The hope that surrounds e-learning is with us today. Soon, while the Web will endure and evolve, the excitement about e-learning as the next great killer application is likely to fade."

(Rossett in Rosenberg 2001, p.xiii)

In 1922 Thomas Edison stated that the motion picture would replace textbooks (and perhaps the teacher) in the classroom but it seems that he was better off as an inventor than in predicting what the future had in store. Film was the first truly teaching technology to be utilized as an e-learning utility and television really got educators excited but in spite of everything including a few extraordinary successes such as Sesame Street educational TV did not bring about the expected learning utopia. Different formats of computer software tried to achieve the desired effect but they failed as well.

The WWW and Internet technologies have brought fresh perspectives and new hopes to more effective teaching and learning thus explaining why whenever e-learning is considered the first thing that crops up is the Internet. But changing the medium does not suffice, what is required is a change in the underlying teaching/learning principles.
The Internet and the WWW offer more than just audio visual stimuli the way TV and other media do. Internet applications also offer a degree of interaction and stimulation to learn not offered by other media making Internet tools particularly useful only if properly employed.

The hype of e-everything ranging from e-commerce to e-marketing and even e-learning has even got to the heads of educators who are rushing to provide courses on line without any specific pedagogical outlines. The ever expanding student population, level of expertise sought for, diminishing teacher to student ratio and the promise of huge profits are producing an ever increasing amount of Web based courses all the time. Unfortunately much of what is being provided in not different from traditional packet system that has been available as printed matter in correspondence courses.

What is therefore required is that e-learning or better, web based training is revisited in the light of learning theories including Gestalt and Cognitive approaches hopefully reaching stages where besides utilizing blended teaching approaches e-learning would (if required) ultimately and exclusively procure exclusive Internet Based Training setups.

Unless learning how to harness it and use it to the full, gaining know-how for even better future teaching and learning platforms then we would be experiencing the familiar boom, and soon, the aftermath of the overemphasis of a novel technological product that never reached its expectations to be forgotten and replaced by something new.