Learning How to Learn: A Guide to Learning Management Systems

Learning Management

Configio®
by **community**brands

Top performers have learned the secret for continuous growth to stay ahead in their industries: learn often, learn well.

Organizing your company's training content can be a daunting task if you don't know which factors to prioritize. From compliance to learner validation and user experience, any number of factors can make or break your company's internal training efforts.

In 2015 alone, the online learning market reached over 100 billion dollars. A Learning Management System (LMS) can be used as a complete solution to not only organize your online and in person training content, but also instill the kind of feedback mechanisms that allow your teams to learn effectively without wasting time figuring out what to learn and how to learn it.

Training material can range from simple online videos or powerpoint presentations to elaborate and engaging multimedia experiences. With such a diverse scope for content, it is important to understand if your courses comply with the proper standards.

Integrated support for content standards

SCORM (Shareable Content Object Reference Model) is a set of specifications used for web-based shareable content. It guides how learning content should be broken down into modular, re-usable e-learning objects that can be handled with ease. In the aviation industry specifically, the AICC (Aviation Industry CBT [Computer-Based Training] Committee) provides specific guidelines for the development, delivery and execution of training material. The LMS you choose must subscribe to the necessary SCORM and AICC standards so your content can be easily imported from other platforms.

User friendliness

As more training moves from classical instructor-led classrooms to mobile and web-based platforms, the ability to access course material in your browser of choice will make it easier for learners to get to the content quickly. The content player that showcases your training material should be able to handle all kinds of media such as interactive videos, assessments, content lists, surveys, and much more. Content players built with HTML5 not only make training material accessible in any web browser, but also across all devices allowing learners to access content conveniently.

Affordability

According to an April 2015 survey, LMSs have the greatest impact on overall cost of training, and the average annual spending by companies is $70,614. Companies have the tendency to lowball their expected cost by 59%, so it is important to find an LMS that is affordable in order to not go over budget.

Once an LMS passes these criteria, there are several other factors you must consider. Below is a list of 5 aspects that indicate how strong an LMS is and what it can do for you.

1 Training Management

Learners should be able to see at a glance their upcoming courses, as well of those that are in progress and in the past. Creating course sequences enables your learners can follow specialized tracks so that their development is managed. Allowing students the option of signing up for in-person training in lieu of web-based training can present a diverse alternative so students can make the decision that is right for them. Additionally, adding rest periods within the training whenever required can ensure that your learners can retain information better and are not overloaded with information.

2 Content Management

Students should be able to see an overview of the coursework, due dates, exams, essays and other course content quickly along with any prerequisites they might need. Once in a course, students should be able to easily download relevant files, handouts, or documents that they need during the training so you can provide updated. Ultimately, being able to track which documents were downloaded also allows you to gauge the effectiveness of the downloadable content you are providing.
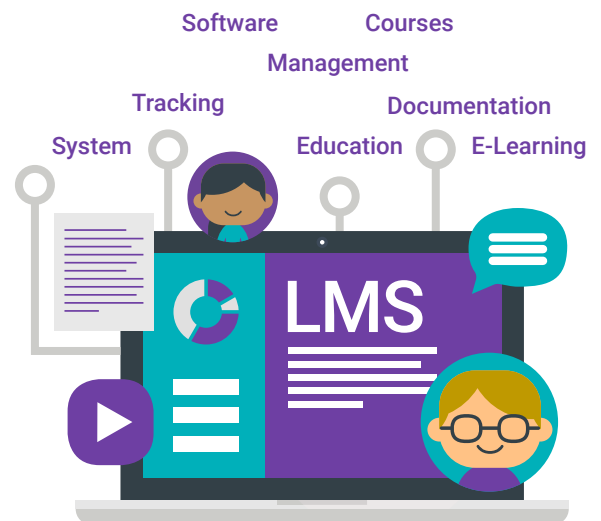
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Evaluations

A sure-fire way to gauge if your learners have grasped the central themes of the training content is by using evaluations to their full extent. Christopher Pappas writes that effective assessment strategies that include feedback mechanisms lead to effective performance improvements. Exams consisting of questions selected randomly from a larger pool should not only get graded immediately, but also allow for instructor approval and reviews if necessary. Adding instructor overrides and time limits introduces the kind of challenge that engages students with the material even better. Don't want the traditional multiple-choice style questions? Adding essay questions with a simple Word-style text editor can allow you to test your learners in diverse ways.

4

Learner Validation

Tracking how many students are participating in online training can be a great metric to understand learner engagement and effectiveness of training initiatives. Successful completion of training should also be met with automated handling of certificates that should be accessible to the learners immediately either individually or as a bulk email.

5

Feedback & Notifications

Engaging your learners by sending them notifications about upcoming courses, either as a text message or email can ensure that learners sign up for courses in time. This proactive strategy allows you to build excitement around new content early on and can lead to much higher participation from students. Students that have unfinished or unattended course material, should be able to receive prompts and notifications guiding them back to their open items can help redirect diverted focus and drive better engagement in a way that is convenient for learners.

The takeaway
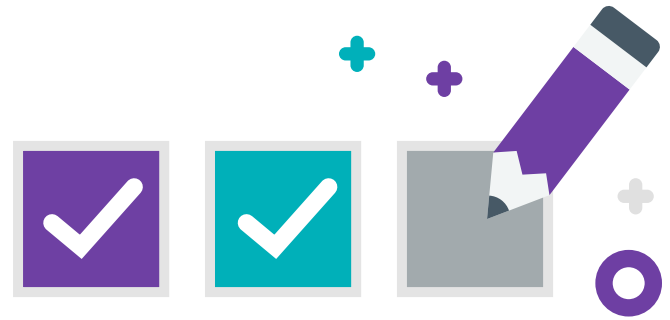
Online learning is taking over the industry as the go-to method for growing your company's training efforts. Students want to be at their desks and learn at their pace to feel completely engaged. Learning Management Systems can help you organize and manage your online training strategy to boost team engagement, and ultimately employee productivity.

➡ Are your training efforts not reaching learners effectively?

➡ Are your students having trouble finding what to learn and how to learn it best?

➡ Are you unable to pinpoint content or learning strategies that aren't working?

Using a strong LMS can help you build the perfect training ecosystem to lead your company into the future.

Learn more

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