

The Brave New World of Integrated LMS

What are your choices if you refuse to accept a "tolerable" learning management solution? In the past, you were forced to live with an LMS that might have been acceptable but far from optimal. The modern learning ecosystem is born out of the understanding that learning happens everywhere, all the time.

Optimal learning is not possible without integrated learning management systems. LMS without integration is a world full of compromises that learning organizations can no longer accept as the norm. The desire of organizations to expand and customize learning platforms created what we call the "LMS ecosystem."

Historically, LMS vendors defined what buyers should expect from a learning management system. If the LMS did not include a feature you wanted, you had a few options: you either accepted the lack of options, paid extra for customization or hoped that a future version would include the feature you want. Integration, for the most part, was not an option. High implementation and maintenance costs coupled with the lack of mobile and social capabilities were additional weaknesses. Due to cultural, financial and political reasons, to switch from an existing LMS was nearly impossible for most organizations. The incremental approach to LMS enables learning organizations to adjust to quickly changing user requirements without completely replacing a current system.

Several trends gave rise to the incremental LMS:

Because of cloud technology, the reduced cost of application development enables vendors to transition from generalists to specialists. The cloud allows vendors to zoom in on a specific business problem instead of creating an all-purpose solution.

For traditional LMS vendors mobile is a lost opportunity, but for cloud vendors, mobile is a competitive advantage, enabling location independent learning. Traditional platforms struggled and mostly failed to work on mobile platforms while cloud LMS is a mobile-first solution.

Because traditional vendors underserved the learning needs of the extended enterprise, organizations introduced specialized learning solutions to work, in parallel, with an existing LMS.

In the past, an academic learning institution might have settled for the same learning platform as a for-profit business. The market no longer accepts generalist solutions to specific training needs.

Companies learned to think of LMS as a profit center. Incremental LMS is about driving revenues, accelerating growth, optimizing operations (to achieve higher profits not just minimize costs), expanding your reach and attain competitive differentiation.

Sales Learning and Coaching Technologies

Sales and learning technologies are essential for quicker onboarding, independent peer-to-peer training, mobile on-demand learning, optimized coaching and location independence while accelerating sales performance.

The primary function of LMS is to deliver and manage learning while keeping track of who has done what. Sales training and coaching technology, on the other hand, is more about the unique and complex needs of your selling environment. The emphasis is on location-independent on-demand peer-to-peer training.

Sales Learning and Coaching Technology Benefits

Remote Coaching and Feedback - Old-style LMS quizzing and testing is an outdated training method. Effective sales learning and coaching technology must enable managers to coach reps remotely. Video allows reps to practice messaging anywhere and receive supervisor feedback on the go.

Optimized Peer-to-Peer Coaching - The best sales reps never stop learning and the best sales organizations never stop coaching. With sales learning and coaching tech, sales managers do not have to be the only coaches. By implementing peer-to-peer coaching into your sales organization, you enable sales reps to learn from their peers. Peer-to-peer coaching takes the pressure off of your sales managers. Sales reps can create and share videos on closing techniques, common objections and best practices, to enable their peers to learn from "tribal knowledge." Sales coaching technology is a great tool to encourage competition among sales reps while it saves time for managers.

Location Independent - Mobile video sales training allows for collaboration and best practice sharing more broadly because reps in the field, as well as subject matter experts in the home office, can share videos. Compared to old school training methods, such as sales manuals, video training is quick and straightforward. It only requires a mobile phone. Both trainer and trainee can use the platform anywhere at any time.

Better Reinforcement - Managers can embed quizzes, provide scorecards and implement certification to allow for better reinforcement of training. On-the-go learning reinforcement is conveniently pushed to sales reps as needed without delay.

Real-Time Learning - Sales learning and coaching technology enables sales reps to consistently stay up-to-speed through more relevant eLearning courses because now they can include videos of actual practitioners in the field demonstrating how they sell.

Conclusion

No other word defines the current LMS ecosystem more accurately than "Integration." Because of the wide adoption of cloud technology and market demand for highly specialized training solutions the LMS ecosystem has evolved into an integrated environment. Through the integrated approach, the LMS ecosystem transitioned from "tolerable" learning management to learning management to the way it should be. That is learning designed for a specific purpose, department, company or industry. This new world of LMS is defined by choices and options where customers are no longer expected to settle for generic solutions to specific needs.

Sales learning and coaching tech aims to address the learning needs of competitive sales organizations, offering cloud-based location independent on-demand learning without compromises. Whereas traditional LMS is a painful world of compromises, integrated LMS is the brave new world of choices.