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WHITEPAPER

THE GREAT EIGHT
Top Things To Consider When Selecting A Learning Management System

Finding a Learning Management System (LMS) that best fits your company design, business goals, and budget can be a daunting task. There are countless options when it comes to product selection and determining what best fits your company needs is not easy. Before implementing learning in your organization through a LMS there are certain things you should consider when evaluating your options.

1 | INTEGRATION WITH EXISTING IT INFRASTRUCTURE

Migrating or implementing new technology is often a IT headache. It is therefore crucial to examine how a LMS will integrate with your existing IT infrastructure. To do so you will have to have a good understanding of what you already have. Is there an existing HR Info System (HRIS) you want the LMS to integrate with? Can the LMS incorporate your Active Directory to easily provide access to the right people? Is it possible to input and extract data from the LMS to existing systems? Furthermore, leadership will need to consider how much additional training is necessary to administer and support the LMS, as this could drive up costs. Ultimately, your goal should be to minimize the disruption, whether migrating away from an existing LMS or launching a new project.

2 | EASE-OF-USE & ACCESSIBILITY

A common challenge organizations face is encouraging their employees to utilize educational materials through the use of a LMS as they are often not user friendly. Learning is a very personal experience and everyone learns differently. After implementing the LMS how do you ensure that it actually gets used? How do you measure effectiveness within the workplace and amongst users? To drive usage and learner engagement it is essential that the LMS is intuitive for both end -users and designers. Consider choosing an LMS where you can customize the look and feel to best fit the way your organization works. For example, if your company is currently using Office 365 consider a LMS built on top of the Microsoft tool. Users will already be familiar and comfortable with the interface and will not require a large amount of training. Not only will this increase administrative and user adoption, but will also help your company or department reduce implementation costs and time.

3 | SCALABILITY & ADAPTABILITY

When researching LMSs it may be easy to forget that this is not a one-time solution – a LMS should grow and evolve organically to match company growth. The LMS needs to be scalable and should adapt to a changing business environment. Processes should be automated. Onboarding and off-boarding must happen quickly and efficiently. When hiring new employees the LMS should be the center of knowledge and training for your organization. Your LMS needs to evolve as your business evolves, continuously adding value to support organizational performance and reaching business goals. Its positive impact should increase over time.

4 | VENDOR SUPPORT & SERVICE QUALITY

LMS vendors often fail when it comes to providing continuous support and good quality service. Though excellent support may be offered during implementation, post-execution is often a different story. Since the LMS will grow along with the company support services should continue beyond the initial install and lines of communication to the vendor should be open constantly. Does the vendor have a HelpDesk or support hotline? What are response times? Is additional training offered? Does the vendor have a customer team designated to support your specific needs?

5 | TRACKING & REPORTING CAPABILITIES

To determine whether your investment in a LMS is helping you achieve team goals and impact organizational success it must include tracking and reporting capabilities. Does the LMS offer dashboards to track progress and can you export results for analysis? Additionally, what does the LMS offer to support personal career development? Consider a LMS that provides users with a personalized overview of their progress within the organization to drive engagement and motivation. As a learner, certificates and milestones should be a standard feature of any LMS. Tying learning to competencies and skills is an important feature to have as it will allow your organization to monitor its current and future state.

6 | FUTURE LOOKING

By design a LMS implementation makes an organization look to the future and position itself for opportunity. It should be a tool that enables leadership to determine what must be accomplished across the organization to achieve success right now, next year, in five years and beyond. What skills do you need to develop and acquire to perform critical tasks and meet future goals? You should not expect to change to another LMS in two to three years but rather, seek a LMS that will provide you with the opportunity to plan for the future.

7 | MOBILITY & ALIGNMENT

Today's business environment demands constant access to information, including access to educational resources. Because of this you should consider what platforms the LMS is available on. Is it in the cloud? Is it mobile? Are your users able to access information from anywhere on their preferred platform and at any time? Furthermore, as an IT application a LMS should touch all components of the organization including IT, HR, Operations, and Management. To realize the company's total value everything must be connected and synchronized.

8 | COLLABORATION & SOCIAL LEARNING CAPABILITIES

Two crucial aspects of a LMS are its collaboration and social learning capabilities. It should be interactive – a two-way network that allows leadership to provide feedback and allows learners to collaborate and compete. Is there a variety of content? If not, can you easily import your own content? How is the content delivered? Are there gamification tools, dashboards or badging to drive engagement and retention? As much as 80 percent of our learning happens in an informal manner and it is therefore essential to provide a social environment where this type of learning can take place.

Though there are many other aspects to consider when deciding on the right LMS we found these eight are key to selecting a LMS that will act as a powerful tool in your organization. It is important that the functionality and benefits of the LMS you select not only supports the business outcomes you want to achieve now, but can also evolve to support the company's future growth. The positive impact a LMS has on performance can occur rapidly and provide strategic organizational value. If properly implemented and utilized, it can act as a catalyst to tighten the alignment of your organization and concentrate focus on its present state and where your company needs to be in the future. Ultimately choosing the right LMS will help your organization define, deliver and manage training to drive ongoing success.

About IMMERSION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

Immersion Technology Services (ITS) creates Business Infrastructure Transformation solutions for its clients. We provide services in three segments, focusing on the critical intersections of high performance enterprise solutions; identity governance and administration (IGA), cloud computing, collaboration, infrastructure consolidation, and enterprise education.

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