7 Steps to Guide Your Learning Platform Buying Decision

Ready or not, it's time to adapt your learning program for the digital world. In order to be set up for success, you need a long-term eLearning strategy or you risk being left behind.

But how do you know which technology is best? Here's a 7-step guide to help inform your learning platform buying decision.

1 Map out the needs of your organization and your learners

Think about why you need an LMS and how the technology will impact your bottom line. Re-evaluate your current learning technology, and keep in mind that modern learner's needs are very different from those of the past.
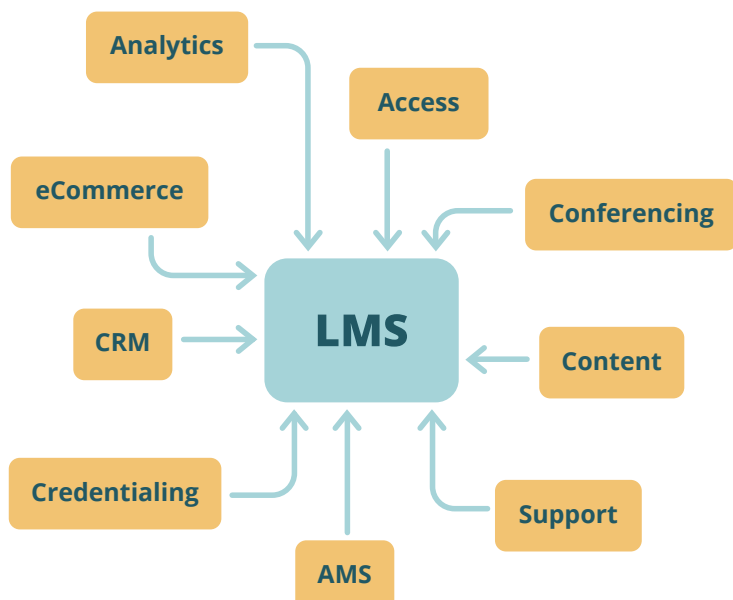
> The half-life of many of today's professional skills is 2 ½ to 5 years.
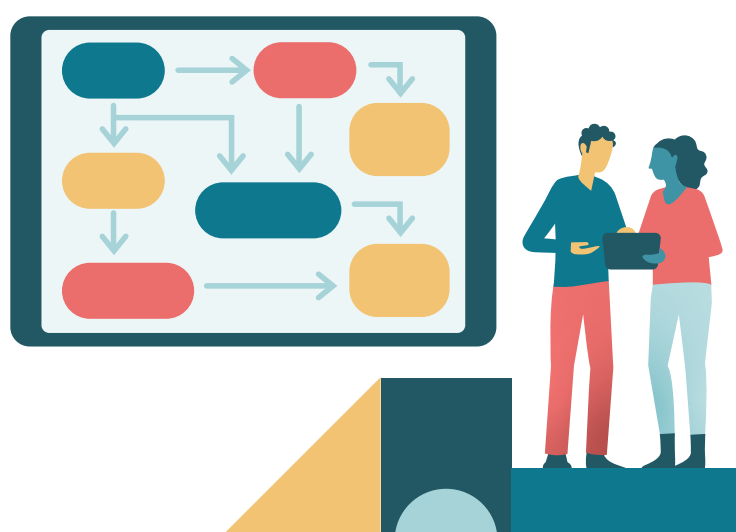
2 Talk to your IT department

An LMS is a sophisticated learning software. Your IT team can help you understand how it will fit into your learning ecosystem and how the LMS will integrate with other systems.

Analytics · Access · eCommerce · Conferencing · CRM · **LMS** · Content · Credentialing · Support · AMS

3 Make a list of must-have LMS features

Be forward-thinking when you consider which features you need in your new learning technology. What does your product roadmap look like? How will your business grow and scale? Set yourself up for long-term success, not just short-term results.

Features to consider:

- Live classes/webinars
- Data and analytics
- Omni-channel delivery
- Gamification
- Discussion & social tools
- Native Learning Content Management System (LCMS)

4 Research LMS vendors

You're now ready to research different LMS platforms. As you talk to providers, you want to understand the features you are curious about and also ask about their product roadmap. Understanding their product roadmap is important because as your organization grows, you will need an LMS that can grow right along with you.
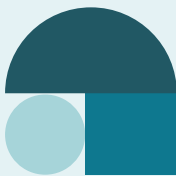
> Almost half of dissatisfied LMS customers reported they needed a feature they didn't purchase.*

5 Get a demo

Throughout the demo, think about:

- Who is the end-user of your learning platform?
- How tech-savvy are your instructors/admins?
- What data analytics do you need from your learning technology?

> The second most-cited reason for a poor LMS experience: It's too hard to use.*

6 Ask the vendor how to implement your use cases

If you're happy with the user experience you saw during your demo, then you'll need to understand exactly how the vendor's software will work with your specific use cases. Every learning technology will handle your use cases differently. Remember: it's not **what** they can do but *how* they do it.

7 Choose a long-term partner, not a short-term vendor

The right LMS partner will be invested in growing your business and giving you a great return on your investment. Is there a team dedicated to your success? Will they work on a business model that makes sense for your growth? Is this partner going to enable you and not hold you back? Be confident that the partner you choose can meet your needs today and well into the future.