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How to Integrate an LMS and an LXP

To maximize learner engagement
and training adoption

Having both formal and informal learning within the same platform is key to not only driving learner engagement, but also **upping your training adoption.**

92% of organizations ¹ now use at least one learning management system (LMS), with 11% using three or more. The learning experience platform (LXP) market, focused on informal learning, is growing by more than 50% each year ², so the ability to integrate an LMS and LXP will only become more significant in the coming years as organizations realize the benefits of combining formal and informal learning to address the skills crisis of the next decade.

¹ Learning Technology 2019, Brandon Hall Group.

² Learning Experience Platform (LXP) Market Grows Up: Now Too Big To Ignore, 2009. Josh Bersin.

92%

At least one learning management system

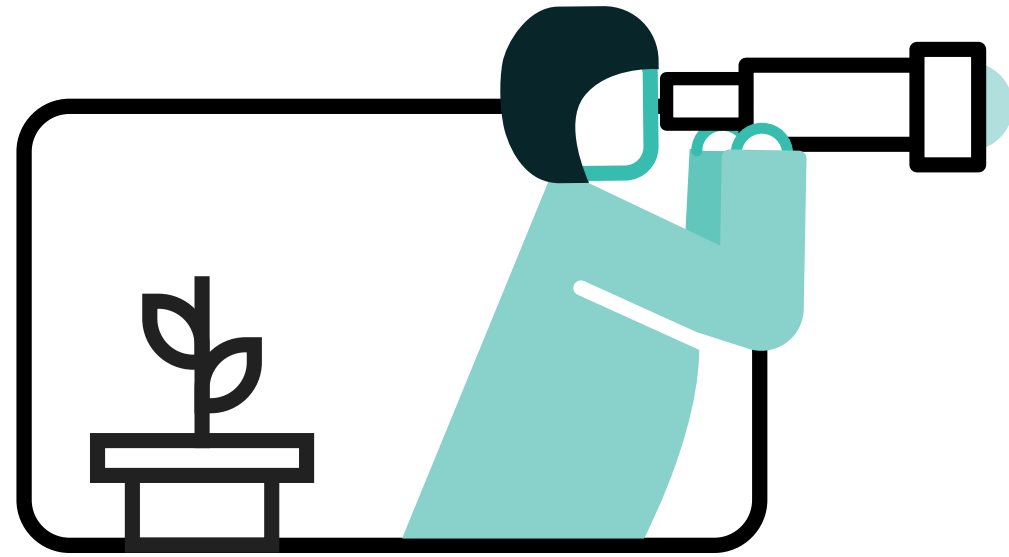
11%

Using three or more learning management systems

50%

The learning experience platform (LXP) market, focused on informal learning, is growing by more than 50% each year





Building an intentional learning culture

An intentional learning culture means treating every moment as a potential learning opportunity. Building an intentional learning culture means encouraging curiosity, growth mindsets and self-directed learning across your organization.

According to McKinsey, intentional learners possess five key skills:

1. Setting small, clear goals

Small, tangible goals ensure that curiosity is used as an effective tool rather than a distraction

2. Removing distractions

Intentional learners protect time for learning. This could be as simple as blocking out dedicated time on your calendar to learn.

3. Actively seeking feedback

Priming others to tune into the skills and behaviors you are currently developing helps them give you more meaningful feedback. Receiving feedback gracefully is a skill in itself, as it ensures others feel comfortable sharing their honest thoughts with you.


4. Deliberately practicing skills

Practice often means learning through failure. Your practice sessions shouldn't be so difficult that they're demotivating, but equally shouldn't be so easy that they don't stretch you.

5. Reflecting regularly

Reflect before, during and after a task for the best outcomes. Beforehand, think about what you want to achieve. During the task, recognize and correct any mistakes. Afterwards, think about what went well, what you can improve on next time and what you want to attempt next.





For HR and learning teams, increasing training adoption and maximizing learner engagement are top priorities in organizations of all sizes, and creating an intentional learning culture can play a vital role in this process.

Training encompasses everything from vital compliance training to soft skills and behavior change, and learner engagement is all about making the most of the training you offer and harnessing the benefits of collaboration, better communication and peer-to-peer learning.



What is a learning management system (LMS)?

A learning management system (LMS) is a platform providing a framework for delivering learning content. This includes the hosting, delivery and tracking of training materials as a minimum, but the most sophisticated learning management systems can do much, much more.

Learning management systems are typically used to house e-learning courses, multimedia content, PDFs, ebooks and more, and can be organized into structured programs or course catalogs to help guide learners through a set learning path.

An LMS may be used alone or as part of a blended learning program, with other systems or alongside face-to-face, synchronous learning.

What is a learning experience platform (LXP)?

A learning experience platform (LXP) focuses on the experience of learning, or “learning in the flow of work.” Typically, an LXP will focus more on informal, social learning activities, which often complement structured, formal learning programs.

Activities generally supported by an LXP include content creation and curation, asynchronous discussions and communication, private or public groups and the ability to collaborate with teammates across the organization.

An LXP can be used as a standalone learning platform, but is more commonly integrated with an LMS to support both formal and informal learning, giving organizations the best of both worlds.



6 ways to integrate your LMS and LXP

Whether you're just getting started on your LXP journey or you're still wondering whether or not you need one, here are six ways you can integrate your LMS and LXP to maximize the benefits of both systems.



1

Support learners enrolled in a formal course with social learning

2

Make it easier to find the right content

3

Supplement your internal learning with external content

4

Learning in the flow of work

5

Enhance knowledge transfer across the organization

6

Obtain richer insights into engagement with data and reporting



1.

**Support Learners Enrolled
in a Formal Course with
Social Learning**

Support learners enrolled in a formal course with social learning

Imagine you're a global retailer with millions of employees worldwide. Every month, you welcome thousands of new employees to your organization, which requires an extensive onboarding program, which may comprise health and safety training, product training, information on processes and workflows, ethics training and soft skills training.

While structured learning will play a vital role in your onboarding program, social learning can significantly improve the process. Creating an area on your LXP for new employees helps them connect with others, clarify areas of confusion and make important connections in their early days and weeks. Adding experienced employees to the group will ensure the new employees have trusted sources of information to consult to ensure consistent and accurate knowledge transfer.

The informal learning supported by your LXP can “wrap around” your formal LMS courses. If your LXP and LMS are fully integrated, you could set up collaborative workspaces in your LXP alongside each formal learning program in your LMS, giving learners an opportunity to clarify any areas of confusion, share additional resources and discuss the program's content. This ensures that formal learning is supplemented with informal learning, both immediately after the course and over time.



2.

**Make it Easier to Find
the Right Content**



if 80% of a team has “liked” a video shared by a colleague, the algorithm is more likely to recommend this to the remaining 20%

Make it easier to find the right content

One of the major benefits of an LXP is the ability to surface learning content from your LMS. Every learning team understands the struggle of boosting learner engagement levels, and there’s little more disheartening for a learning professional than seeing a course you’ve poured your energy into with very low uptake.

Connecting your LMS and LXP gives your existing content a whole new lease of life. The recommendations engine will help surface courses relevant to a learner’s previous experience, skills, interests and role, which should help boost engagement and completion rates

while also exposing employees to useful content which they may not have found by themselves.

An LXP improves over time as engagement levels increase, so “likes” and engagement from peers can also help to surface the most valuable, interesting content according to the community. For instance, if 80% of a team has “liked” a video shared by a colleague, the algorithm is more likely to recommend this to the remaining 20%, and there is a better chance that they will also find it useful than simply browsing the full content catalog with no guidance.



3.

**Supplement Your
Internal Learning
with External Content**

Supplement your internal learning with external content

45%

of organizations don't work with external SMEs³

29%

don't work with third-party trainers

Learning teams can only do so much. 45% of organizations don't work with external SMEs³, and 29% don't work with third-party trainers, placing a huge amount of pressure on the learning and HR team themselves to churn out high-quality, valuable content to meet a wide range of learning needs.

Organizations will spend, on average, 20% of their training budget on procuring third-party content⁴. An LXP can help reduce this spend by replacing formally procured third-party learning with crowd-sourced content. We are social creatures, and people generally like to help their colleagues and share useful

information. An LXP creates a space for employees to share the interesting news article they read on the way into work, the thought-provoking video they spotted on social media or the case study for an organization facing similar challenges as your own.

This also reduces the strain on learning teams, who don't need to constantly duplicate content that already exists in the world, allowing you to focus on more specialized content. Additionally, employees are empowered to create their own resources and curate "playlists" of content, facilitating collaboration and peer-to-peer learning. The more your employees can

share among themselves, the less third-party content you may need to procure, which can reduce your costs and help you better understand what your people really find useful. If you're signing expensive contracts for access to e-learning content catalogs, but you find that your people are mostly sharing videos and podcasts, this gives you a crucial insight into what's resonating and what isn't, meaning you can spend your precious training budget where it will have the biggest impact.

^{3,4} Learning & Development Benchmarking 2019, Brandon Hall Group



4.

**Learning
in The Flow of Work**

Learning in the flow of work

51%
of organizations
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to executing their
learning strategy.

A massive 51% of organizations⁵ say that a lack of dedicated time for learning is a barrier to executing their learning strategy. Telling employees that they need to complete an hour-long e-learning course or two-day workshop may be met with an eye roll, but virtually everyone has time to dip into an LXP for five minutes a day to check for updates, respond to questions and add a link, video or resource for discussion.

With an LXP, joining a conversation is as easy as responding to an email or an instant message. Your employees can be notified whenever they receive a response to a post or when new content is available, meaning they can check in when they have downtime throughout the day. Posting a comment or scrolling through a workspace is a much smaller time commitment than completing a full e-learning module, and helps embed learning in the flow of work.

Your LXP also helps you build on the benefits of your formal learning. Instead of going six months or a year between learning activities, employees can keep

their skills and knowledge fresh with the ease and convenience of the LXP. This “spaced learning” model benefits employees, who will retain more of their formal learning with constant reinforcement, and the organization as a whole, as peer-to-peer learning supports formal training at a minimal cost.

Used in collaboration with your LMS, your LXP helps maintain the habits, knowledge and behaviors gained through formal learning with a “little and often” model that makes learning a daily habit. A busy employee simply doesn't have time to take a formal learning course every time they need to learn something new, so introducing an LXP alongside your LMS makes learning more accessible to those who may otherwise be too busy to engage in learning activities.

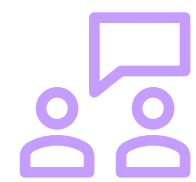
⁵ Learning Strategy That Drives Performance 2020, Brandon Hall Group



5.

**Enhance Knowledge
Transfer Across the
Organization**

Enhance knowledge transfer across the organization



“two heads are better than one”

If your people have a question about something they encounter in their formal learning, where do they go? They might make a note to ask their manager later, but otherwise, it's highly likely that any questions they have will go unanswered. Integrating your LMS with your LXP completely changes the way knowledge flows throughout your organization, making it much quicker and easier for employees to get their questions answered and for others to weigh in on the conversation.

Collaborative workspaces, such as those found in Totara Engage, are ideal for igniting and maintaining conversations. Workspaces can be set up around specific training topics, roles, locations, learning goals and more, and give employees a dedicated space to share ideas, questions

and solutions. They are ideal for asynchronous communication for groups across different locations or time zones, and they allow anyone to have their say and give and receive information.

As the saying goes, “two heads are better than one,” and in a collaborative workspace, you may have tens or even hundreds of employees working together to solve problems and help each other. Experts can be @mentioned within posts and comments to request their expertise, and workspace members can “like” a post to give it extra credibility. It speeds up the transfer of knowledge and allows employees to connect with people with whom they may not otherwise cross paths, helping to break down knowledge silos and raise standards across the organization.

On top of this, workspaces aren't just valuable for active posters and contributors – they're also highly beneficial for “lurkers” who consume information, but don't post themselves. Not everyone will be an active participant in your workspaces, but that doesn't mean that everyone can't benefit. Over time, your LXP becomes an organic hub of information, and lurkers can read through previous conversations, search for their topics of interest and benefit from “ambient updates” simply by logging into their account.



6.

**Obtain Richer Insights
into Engagement with
Data and Reporting**

Obtain richer insights into engagement with data and reporting



Which “power users” influence others to interact with content?

LMS reporting is vital for any learning and HR team wishing to understand how people are progressing with their learning. Typically, a learning team will want to identify trends in completion rates, progress through learning programs, where people are succeeding and struggling, assessment scores and learner numbers.

LXP reporting adds a whole extra layer of fascinating information to LMS reporting. Formal and informal learning go hand in hand, and with LMS reporting alone, you’re only getting half of the picture. LXP reporting allows you to collect information on what learning content is actually resonating with your people (according to likes and shares), how many people are engaging with content, the types of content driving engagement and who your most active or “influential” users are.

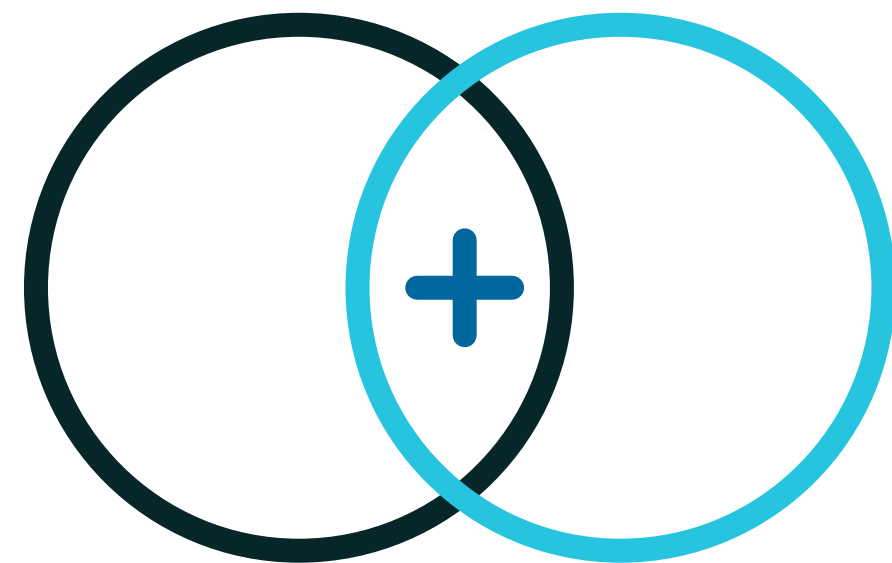
Combining data from your LMS and LXP gives you a powerful insight into formal and

informal learning across your organization. Which courses are people sharing? When a course is shared, what is the impact on completion rates? Do workspaces with more active conversations lead to better scores in their associated course assessments? Which “power users” influence others to interact with content? What are the most popular topics? What are the most popular content formats? Revealing the answers to all of these questions (and many more) will give your learning and HR team a much better understanding of how your employees are learning and engaging in real time.



Benefits of an integrated LMS and LXP

If you already have an LMS, you may be wondering why you can't just get an LXP and use them separately. Of course, this is an option – but you'll be missing out on all sorts of benefits if you don't opt for an integrated LMS and LXP.



The benefits of an integrated platform include:

- Supporting your formal learning with long-term learning in the flow of work
- Surfacing underutilized formal learning with smart, personalized algorithms
- A more consistent, streamlined user experience across both systems
- Better working relationships between coworkers and internal subject matter experts
- Increased exposure to relevant, high-quality content
- Reduced learning administration as employees create and curate their own content
- Faster skills acquisition and knowledge transfer
- More effective asynchronous communication, including a permanent record of useful discussions
- Targeted spaces for different groups, e.g. by role, location, skills, prior and current learning experience or goals
- More holistic reporting encompassing both learning and engagement activity (and the relationship between the two)





What results can I expect?

Following a turbulent couple of years, organizations must commit to raising the skills and engagement of their employees. With better learning comes more engaged, higher-performing people, which will have a significant impact on your organization's culture as your people feel better connected with their colleagues and feel that their voices are heard.

Integrating your LXP with your LMS will significantly enhance the learning experience for your employees. Learners will be able to find relevant workspaces and peer-sourced resources alongside their formal

learning, ensuring learning becomes an integral part of their working day. Instead of taking a workshop or one-hour e-learning course once a year, they can dip in and out of the site whenever they need answers, to crowdsource ideas or to catch up on what's going on in other teams.



Perform

Advanced performance management that drives sustained productivity and skills growth



Engage

the user-friendly Learning Experience Platform (LXP) that engages and unites your workforce

Learn

The world's most powerful and flexible Learning Management System (LMS) trusted by thousands of organizations

On top of this, you can also integrate your platform with a performance management system such as Totara Perform. This additional integration provides managers and your C-suite with a clear line of sight of the relationship between learning (both formal and informal) and performance improvement, which helps everyone better understand the needs and behaviors of your people.

Learning and engagement work in tandem to improve the level of the other. For instance, employees who partake in more learning will become more engaged, and more engaged employees will feel more inclined to improve their skills - and, ultimately, performance - with more learning. This raises loyalty, motivation and productivity across your organization, and proves to your employees that you are committed to their development.





Ready to select your next learning platform?

Get in touch to find out how we can help you build a learning platform that best suits your organization's needs.

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