

Expect More From Your LMS In A New Age Of Learning

AN EVALUATION GUIDE TO NEXT-GENERATION LEARNING MANAGEMENT

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Introduction

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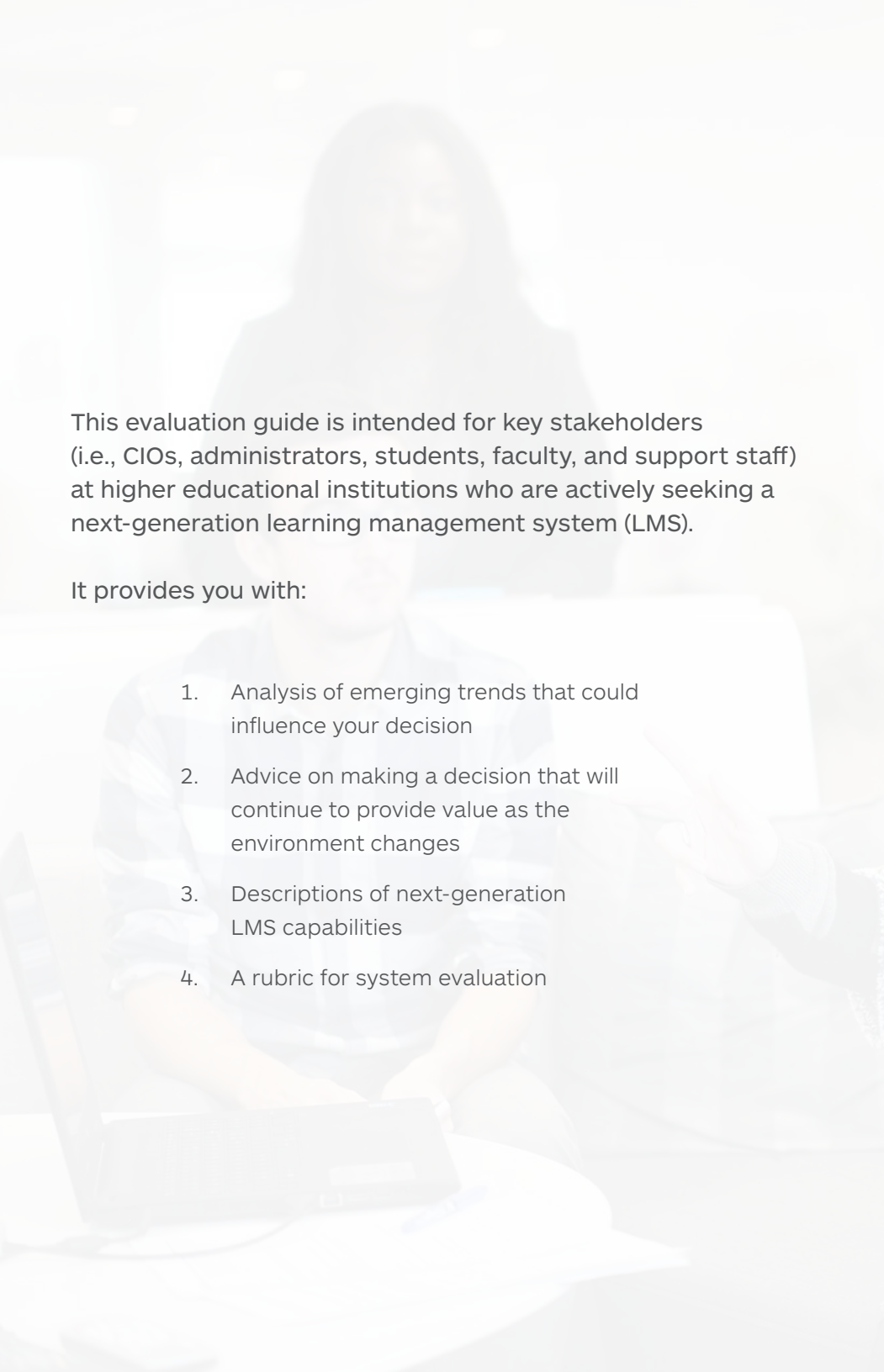


Education is experiencing a period of tremendous change. Educational institutions continue to face rapidly changing student demographics, globalization and economic influences, rising student costs and debt, pressures to partner with industry and government, and for some, failure to meet enrollment and revenue targets.¹

However, technology innovations such as adaptive learning, automated interventions, predictive modeling, dynamic digital content, mobile technology, social media, and unprecedented access to data are also presenting institutions with new opportunities to address these challenges. Educators are now forming partnerships and adopting technologies to translate their evolving needs into solutions that will support them today and into the future.

Who Should Use This Guide?

Who Us



This evaluation guide is intended for key stakeholders (i.e., CIOs, administrators, students, faculty, and support staff) at higher educational institutions who are actively seeking a next-generation learning management system (LMS).

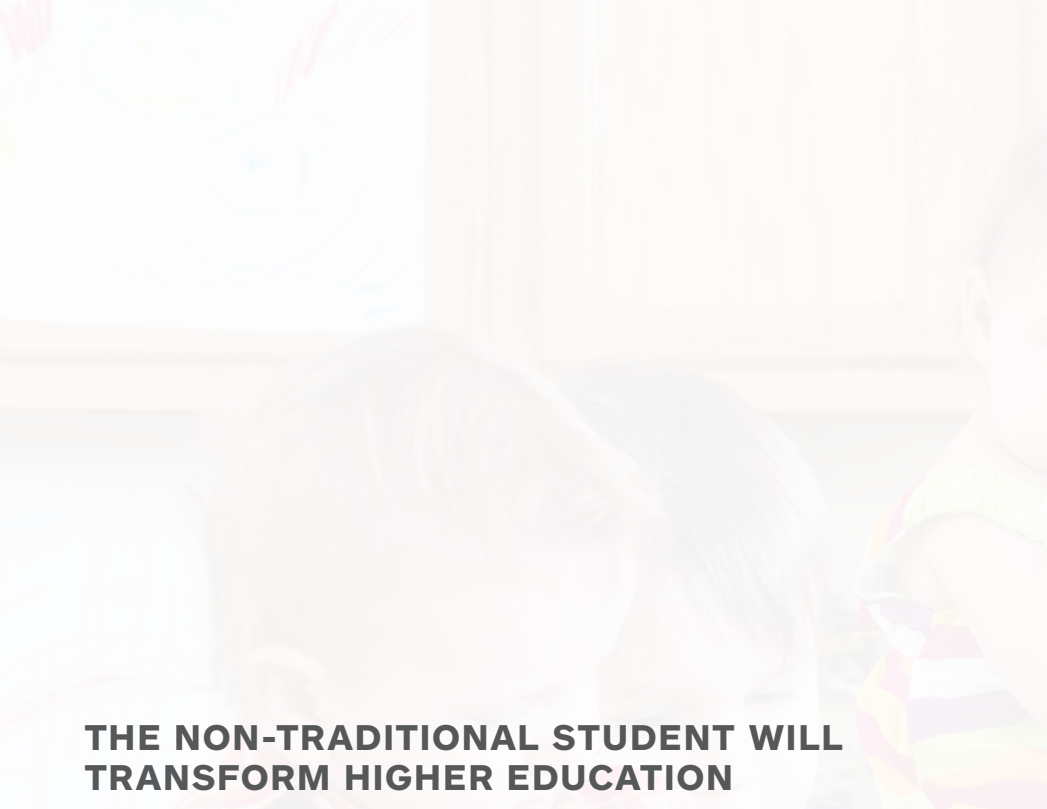
It provides you with:

1. Analysis of emerging trends that could influence your decision
2. Advice on making a decision that will continue to provide value as the environment changes
3. Descriptions of next-generation LMS capabilities
4. A rubric for system evaluation



Key Trends Impacting The LMS Market

As institutions start to evaluate next-generation LMS options, they should be aware of key trends impacting their decision-making process.



THE NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENT WILL TRANSFORM HIGHER EDUCATION

38% of all post-secondary students entering a fall semester today are adult learners, 25 years of age or older.² That percentage is expected to climb to 42% by 2020.³ This changing demographic has implications for the higher education system.

Students are often older and frequently hold down part-time jobs while attending school. They are often commuting. They are likely also taking care of other family obligations.⁴ Many will never see the inside of a college dorm room, preferring to interact with the campus through online learning programs and competency-based learning options.

Non-traditional students also come to the educational system with a consumer mindset. They want assurance that the time and money they plan to invest will be put to good use. For the adult learner, this often means graduating on time and with a marketable set of skills.⁵

²National Student Clearinghouse. *More Than One-Third of College Students Are Over 25*. National Student Clearinghouse, 19 Apr. 2012. Web.

³Weiss, Michelle R., and Clayton M. Christensen. "Introduction: Got Skills?" *Introduction, Hire Education, Mastery, Modularization, and the Workforce Revolution*. Clayton Christensen Institute for Disruptive Innovation, 2014. Web.

⁴Casselman, Ben. "Number of the Week: 'Non-Traditional' Students Are Majority on College Campuses." *The Wall Street Journal*. Dow Jones & Company, 6 July 2013. Web.

⁵Charbonneau, Leo. "The Rise of the 'non-traditional' Student." *University Affairs*. Universities Canada, 5 July 2013. Web.

New Learners Are:

TECH-SAVVY

Expect
Personalization

BUSY

Demand
Flexibility

SKILLED

Need to be able
to prove it



THE LMS WILL TRANSFORM LEARNING INTO A DIGITAL EXPERIENCE

As non-traditional students grow in number to represent the majority within the higher education landscape, the way learning happens will also change. Traditional classrooms will give way to online instruction.⁶

Tech-savvy students will expect a learning experience tailored 'just for them'. Next-generation learning management systems have the ability to transform learning into a digital experience by providing every student with an individualized learning path, by enabling flexible pacing, communication and collaboration, and by offering an adaptive learning style that breaks free of traditional "one-size-fits-all" learning models.

⁶[ibid.](#)

How A Next-Generation LMS Can Support These Learners:

**ALLOW PERSONALIZED
LEARNING PATHS**

**PROVIDING
FLEXIBLE PACING**

**SUPPORT
ADAPTIVE LEARNING**

CAMPUSES WILL SEEK TO REPLACE EXISTING LMS IMPLEMENTATIONS WITH NEXT-GENERATION SOLUTIONS

As educational institutions evolve their online learning models to support the demands of non-traditional student populations, they will likely find themselves restricted by conventional, first-generation LMS implementations that favor basic capabilities and the one-size-fits-all model.



LMS adoption rates may be high, but there is still room for improvement⁷

- Nearly 99% of institutions are running some form of LMS
- 85% of faculty use an LMS, with 56% using the system daily
- 83% of students use an LMS, with 56% using it in all or most courses
- Only 41% of faculty use the LMS to promote interaction outside of the classroom

⁷Brown, Malcolm, Joanne Dehoney, and Nancy Millichap. *The Next Generation Digital Learning Environment*. Rep. EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative, Apr. 2015. Web.

Many current LMS implementations fall short in attaining next-generation goals. This is because traditional learning management systems are built to administrate learning—not to help improve it. As a result, educational institutions that are evaluating an LMS using the traditionally narrow focus of an administrative tool are missing out on the opportunity to create a much more dynamic and engaged learning experience.

Fortunately, many higher education institutions are waking up to this missed opportunity. While the numbers vary, all indicators from analysts and industry experts point to the fact that change is definitely brewing within the educational market.

EDUCAUSE

15% of educational institutions intend to replace their LMS in the next three years, seeking something better.⁸

OVUM

56% of institutions are planning to replace, transform or enhance their LMS solutions over the same timeframe.⁹

THE CAMPUS COMPUTING PROJECT

According to a 2015 survey, 61.6% of campuses are planning to review their current LMS strategy.¹⁰

⁸Dahlstrom, Eden, D. Christopher Brooks, and Jacqueline Bichsel. *The Current Ecosystem of Learning Management Systems in Higher Education: Student, Faculty, and IT Perspectives*. Rep. EDUCAUSE Center for Analysis and Research, 2014. Web.

⁹Ovum Decision Matrix: Selecting an Online Learning Platform for Higher Education, 2015-16

¹⁰The 2015 National Survey of ELearning and Information Technology in US Higher Education. Rep. The Campus Computing Project, Oct. 2015. Web.

Delivering An Exceptional Learning Experience For A New Generation

“Delivering exceptional online learning will be the key differentiator for institutions in the future. In a global industry, institutions that differentiate on the academic experience and performance outcomes are likely to meet the ongoing expectations of the student population, attract and retain more students, and advance the institution's reputation in an increasingly competitive market.”

– Ovum, 2015

EDUCATIONAL LEADERS NEED TO BUILD STRATEGIES THAT EMBRACE THESE NEW STUDENTS, NEW MODELS OF EDUCATION, AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES DRIVEN BY THE NEED TO:



- ➔ **Increase productivity**
- ➔ **Improve student engagement**
- ➔ **Measure and improve learning outcomes**
- ➔ **Improve student retention and completion**

At its best, an LMS provides institutions with a way to deliver the teaching and learning experiences that ensure success for every student regardless of their background, point of origin, or learning style. An LMS should also provide faculty with the ability to scale their reach and offer individualized instruction to each and every student.

Experts in educational technology agree that a next-generation LMS is:¹¹

- **Informed** by a new learning-centered model that increasingly characterizes higher education practice
- **Digital**, as digital technology has become a component of virtually all teaching and learning practice
- **About learning**, tying together the student and the instructor
- An **ecosystem** that is dynamic, interconnected and supports an evolving community of students, instructors, tools, and content
-

¹¹Including
(Brown, Malcolm, Joanne Dehoney, and Nancy Millichap. *The Next Generation Digital Learning Environment. Rep. EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative. Apr. 2015. Web. Ovum Decision Matrix: Selecting an Online Learning Platform for Higher Education. 2015-16*)





THE POWER OF NEXT-GENERATION LEARNING

Moving to a next-generation LMS allows educational institutions to move beyond the administration of learning to enable learning itself. This shift directly translates into a more adaptive, anywhere, any time, any device learning experience for the student, which can lead to better student outcomes.¹²

For instructors, a next-generation LMS offers greater ability to provide personalized attention to students and better predictive powers to determine student success. It gives them the tools to communicate with students and design interventions that they can practically use in both small and large classes.

And at the institution level, a next-generation LMS can help schools attract and meet the needs of non-traditional students who need to reconcile their educational goals into a busy life, who want to learn at their own pace, and who bring experience and prior knowledge to the table.

What A Next-Generation LMS Should Include

Next Generation



Support for Open Standards and Interoperability



Analytics to Let Experts Act in Time to Influence Results



Flexible Ways to Teach and Engage Student



Reliable, Cloud-Based Delivery



Student Monitoring, Retention, and Intervention Tools



Communication and Collaboration Tools



Accessibility—Supporting Universal Design for Learning

These elements form a platform that liberates, rather than constrains, the design of learning experiences. All individuals, whether new to an LMS or a power user, need to be able to set up, deliver, and measure the learning experiences they require.

With the LMS envisioned like this—with flexibility, openness, and deep support for strong pedagogy—educational institutions can support the variety of students, delivery models, and approaches they are using today, or will need to adapt to in the future.

With respect to learning analytics, a next-generation LMS needs to do more than just open up its trove of data. Most institutions have more data than they can handle, and studies show instructors are not fully utilizing LMS tools and techniques to achieve desired educational outcomes.¹³ The LMS needs to facilitate turning this data into knowledge that your experts can act on.



Making The Right LMS Decision

Making the decision to replace, transform, or evolve your LMS has reverberations for administration, support staff, faculty, and students. As educational institutions embark upon their evaluation of next-generation LMS solutions, here is some advice to guide best practice decision-making to mitigate the subsequent ripples of change.

PUT YOUR GOALS FIRST, TECHNOLOGY SECOND

It is virtually impossible to select the right technology platform without first understanding your institution's business objectives and goals.

SHORT TERM GOALS

Improving key metrics related to student engagement or retention

Maintaining accreditation for a specific program

LONG TERM GOALS

The competitiveness of the institution and its programs, i.e., student acquisition

Broader system-wide and economic goals such as increasing the overall graduation rate

At the end of the day, your LMS decision-making process is laying the groundwork for your institution to be highly successful through the 21st century. Within the highly competitive educational climate, remaining with the status quo simply won't work as a strategy for the long-term.

CONSIDER EVERY STAKEHOLDER

When establishing your LMS evaluation committee, and when evaluating your solution options, it is critical that you take into consideration users at every level of maturity (from novice to power user) and the needs of all stakeholders.

STUDENTS



ADMINISTRATORS



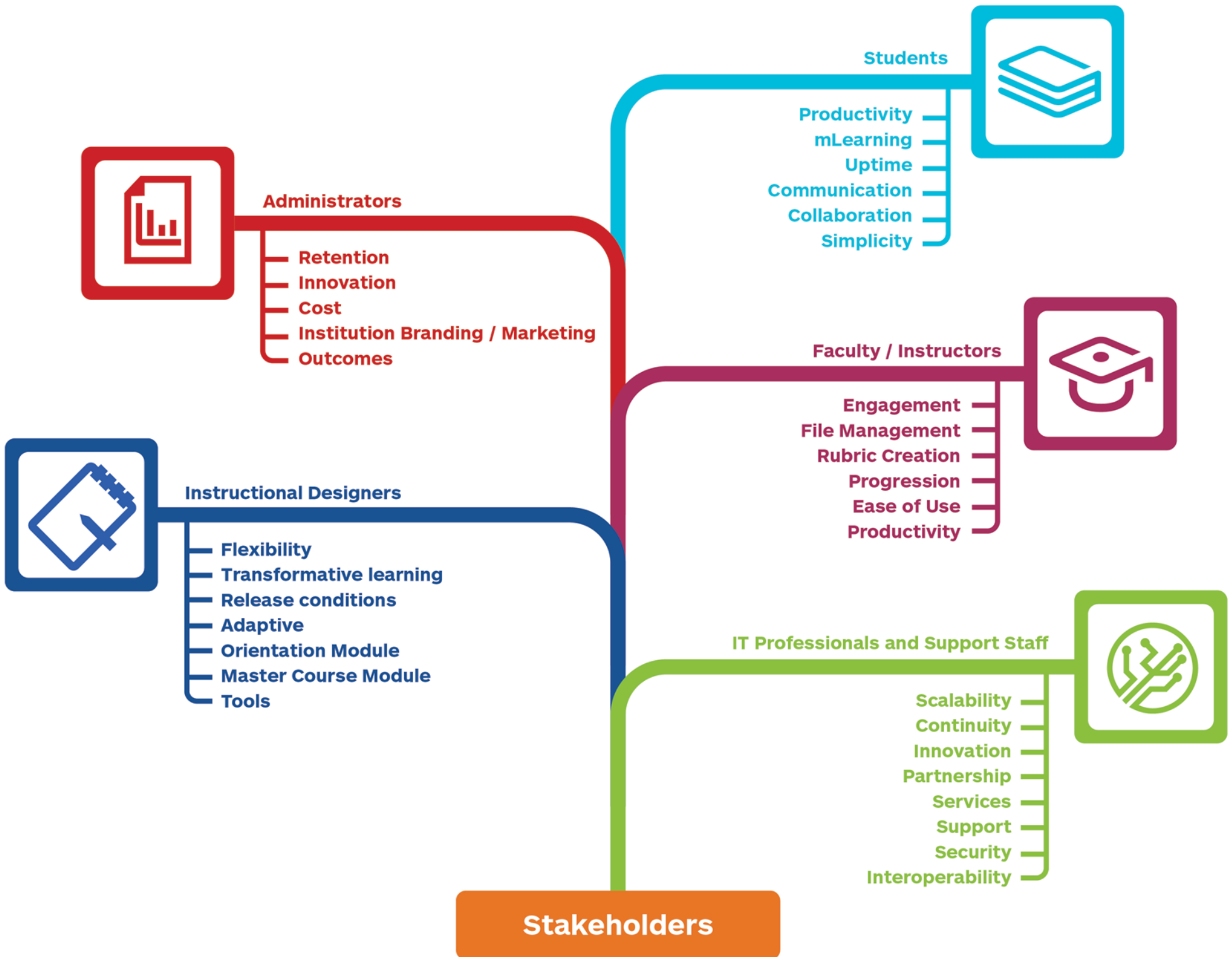
**FACULTY/
INSTRUCTORS**



**INSTRUCTIONAL
DESIGNERS**



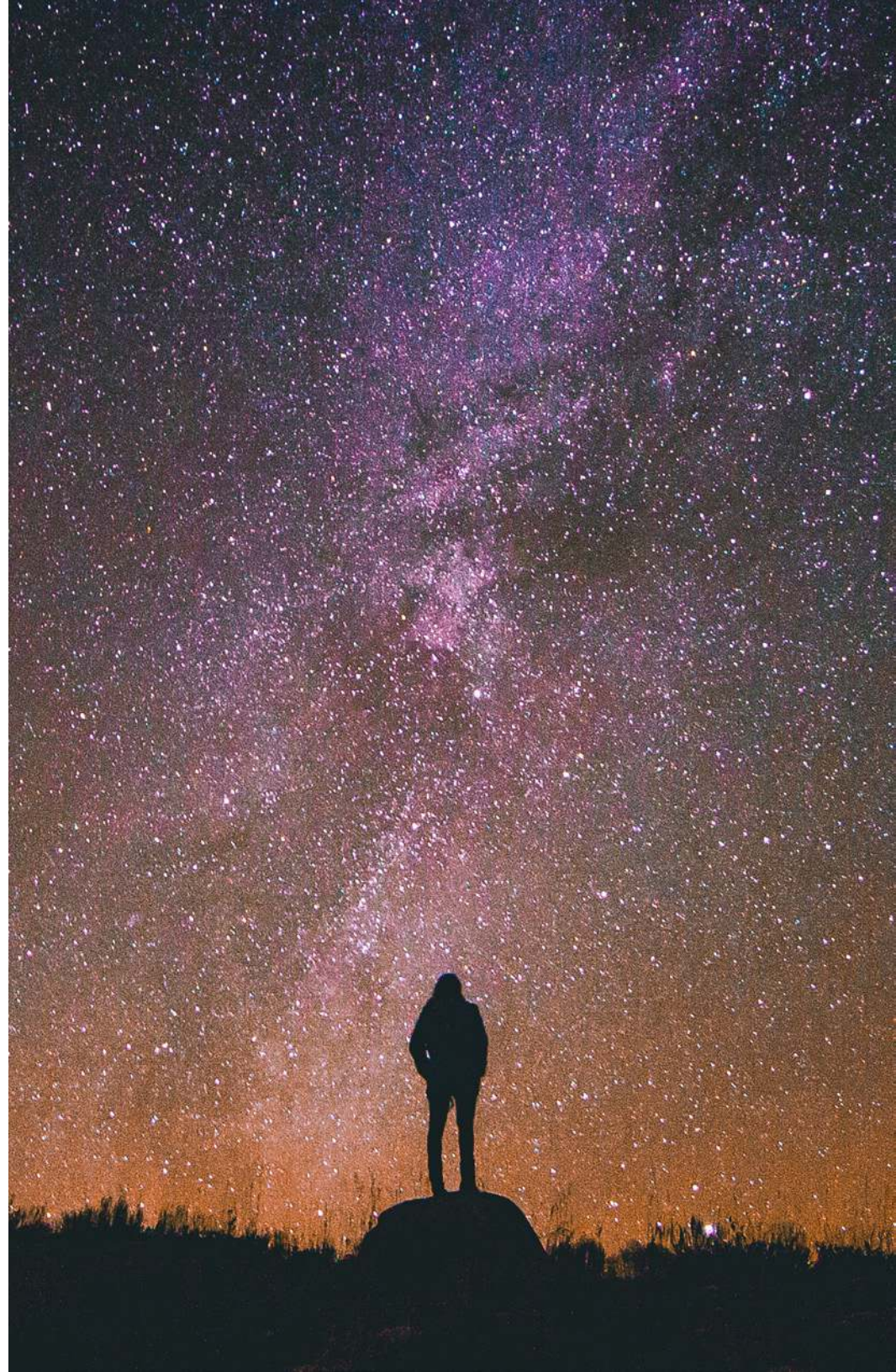
**IT PROFESSIONALS
AND
SUPPORT STAFF**



PUT THE FOCUS ON PERSONALIZED LEARNING

Teaching and learning are best done when delivery is individualized and the LMS is capable of supporting personalization at scale. It is important that your LMS evaluation options break free of the “one-size-fits-all model” and provide the flexibility to support every teaching and learning style including (but not limited to):

- Online
- Blended or hybrid
- Competency-based learning
- Project-based
- Self-paced
- Experiential



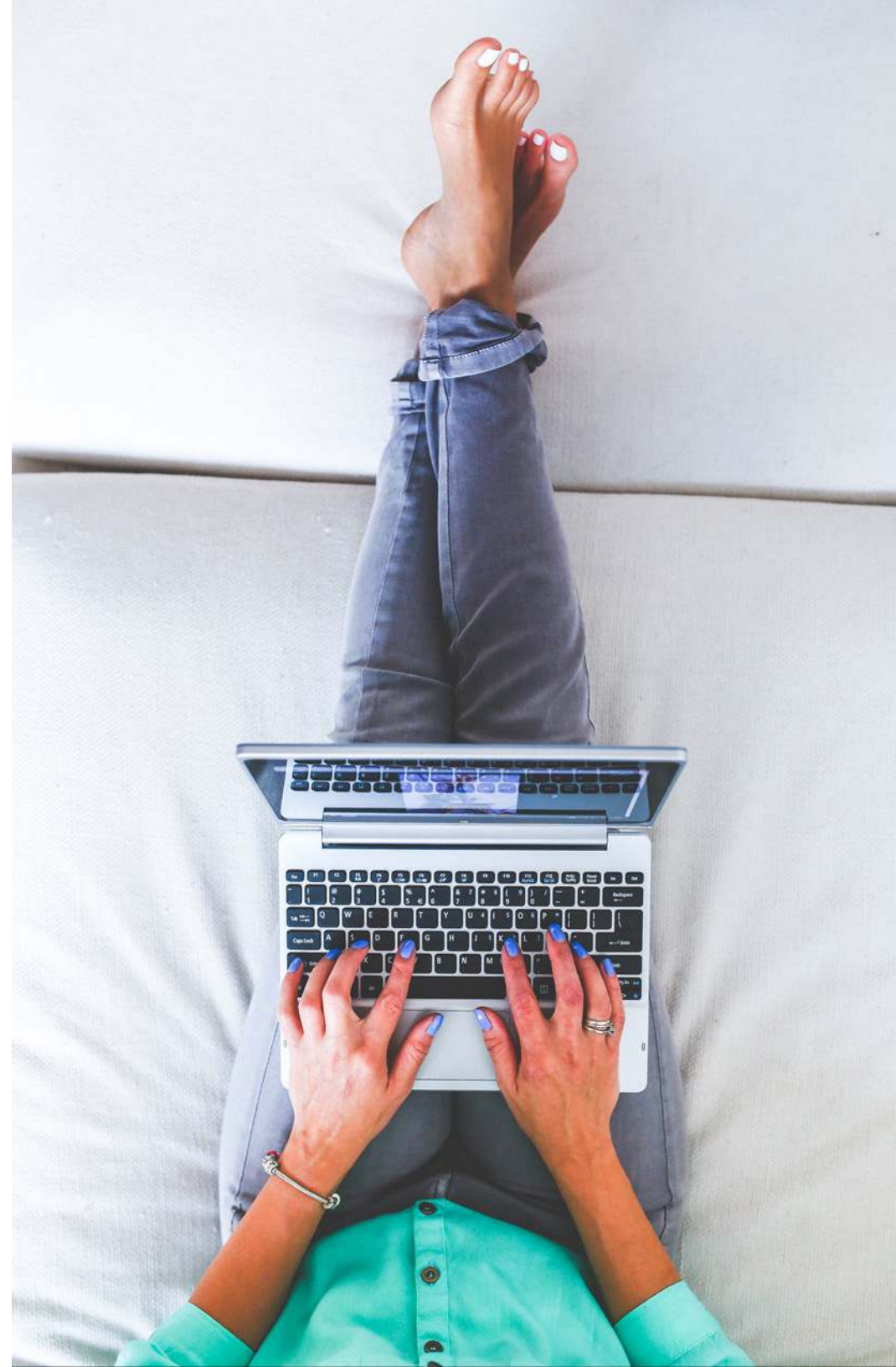
QUESTIONS FOR YOU AND YOUR TEAM AS YOU BEGIN YOUR LMS DISCOVERY

- 01 What are the business outcomes you are expecting your LMS to enable? How will you measure these goals?
- 02 Have you embraced, or plan to embrace fully online delivery?
- 03 Are you moving toward competency-based learning, outcomes-based management, or evidence-based learning?
- 04 What is your strategy around adaptive (personalized) learning?
- 05 How are you currently addressing the accessibility needs of instructors and students?
- 06 What strategies do you have to identify at-risk students and intervene to correct their course?
- 07 What is your analytics strategy overall—do you have a business intelligence tool you are currently leveraging today?
- 08 What are your requirements to support diverse needs—for instance, do you have a need to provide different learning experiences for different programs and faculty?
- 09 Is your instructional design process centralized, or decentralized at a program level?
- 10 How do you ensure quality control over your instructional and course design practices?
- 11 Do you need a templated approach that makes life simple for faculty and removes complexity from the LMS?
- 12 Would your faculty benefit from an automated way to scale their reach to students and drive better student engagement, for instance, the ability to send out notifications when certain criteria have been met (i.e. grade level reached, participation in discussion forums, frequency of access to course content)?

Capabilities To Look For In A Next-Generation LMS

RELIABLE, CLOUD-BASED DELIVERY

Industry analyst firm Ovum believes a next-generation LMS needs to be flexible and agile, enabling formal and informal learning, even when self-directed by the student.¹⁴ In a next-generation world where institutional boundaries are “meaningless,” cloud delivery and open standards should be considered table stakes for any LMS provider.

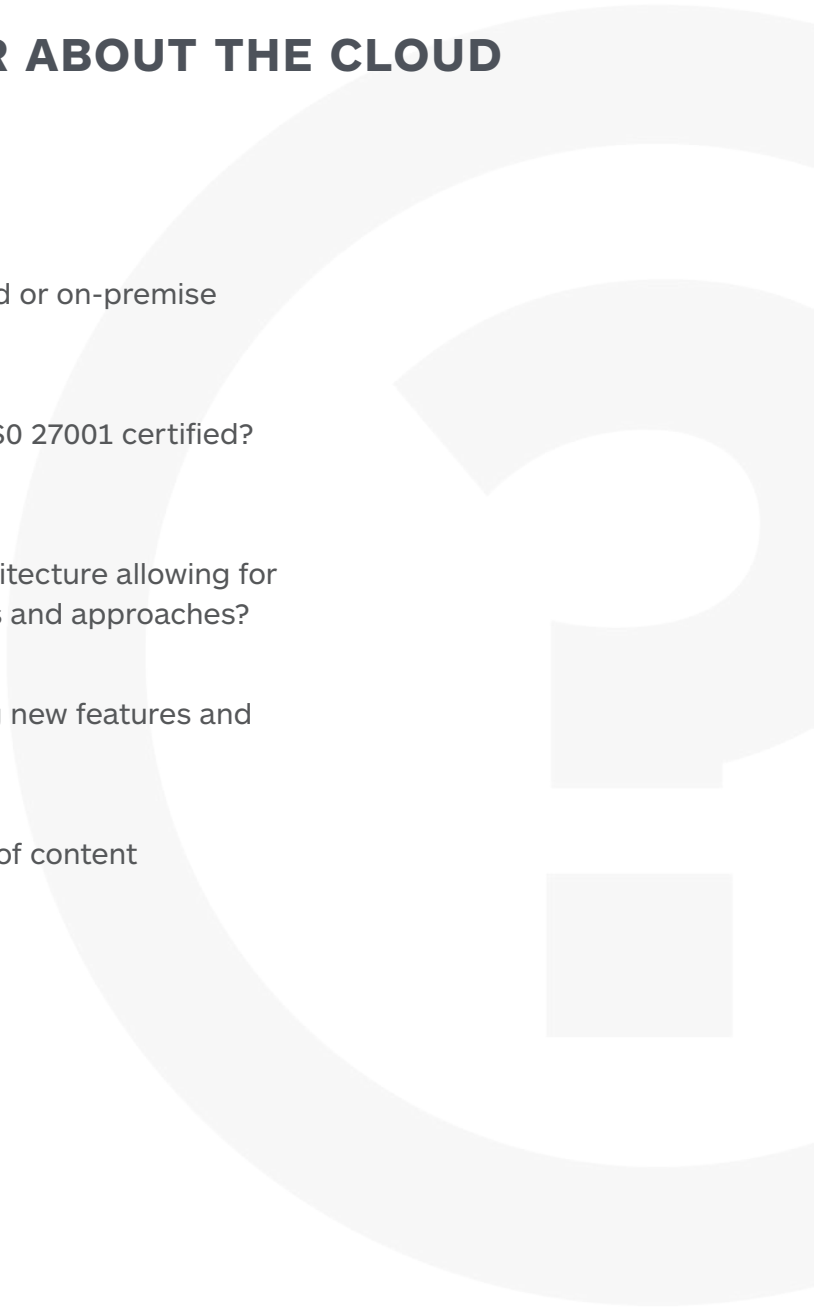




CORE CLOUD FUNCTIONS

- Highly available (99.9% uptime goal), immediate, scalable, and secure
- Simple, customizable interface
- Ability to individualize and personalize content based on role
- Universal mobile access
- Offline sync
- Social and collaborative tools, including course- or role-based discussion threads, blogs, chats etc.
- Product updates delivered automatically through the cloud

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR LMS VENDOR ABOUT THE CLOUD

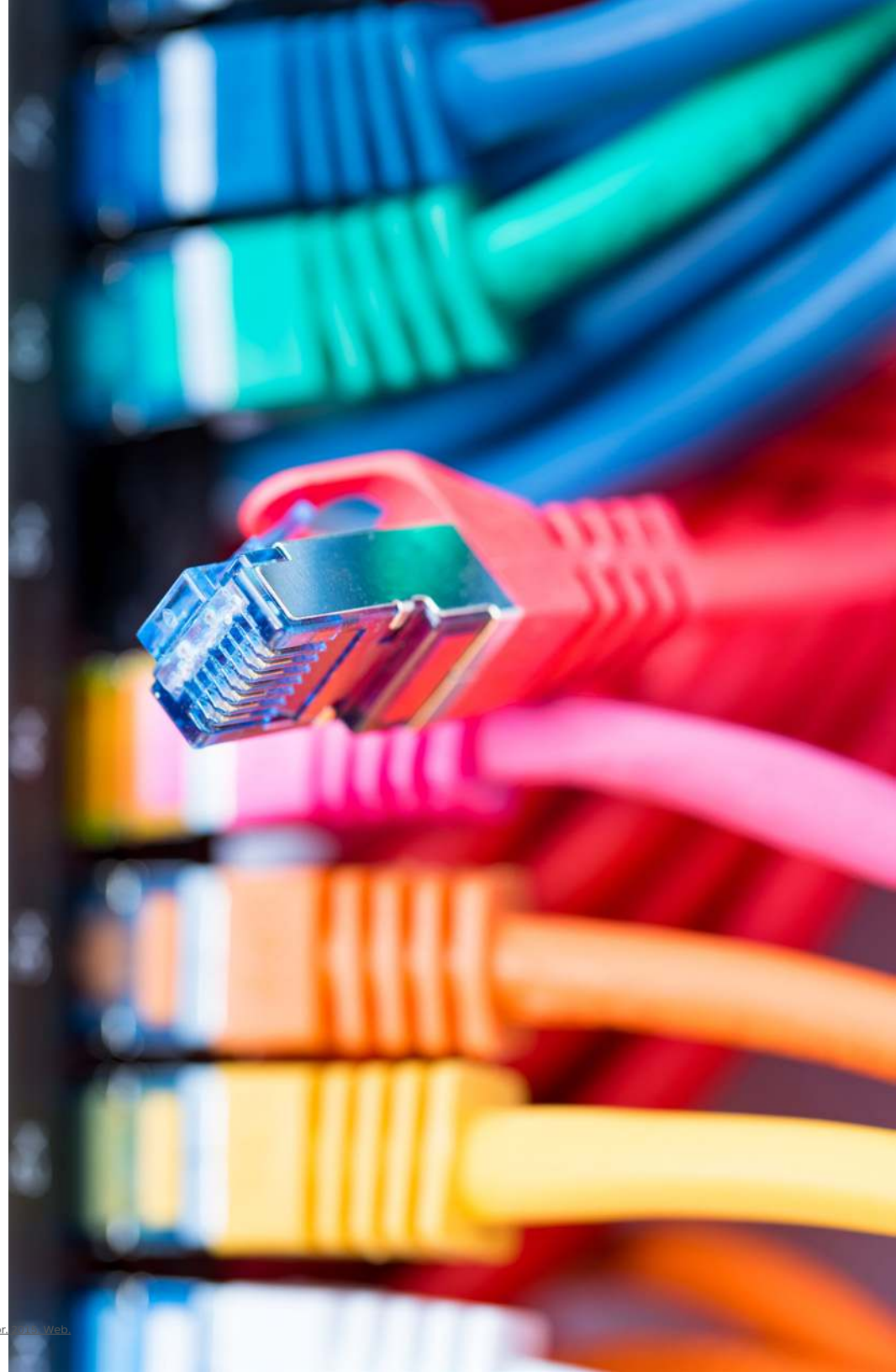
- 01** Does the LMS vendor offer the option of hosted or on-premise cloud support?
 - 02** Are the vendor's data centers and processes ISO 27001 certified?
 - 03** Does the LMS vendor offer a microservice architecture allowing for easy and rapid adaptation to new technologies and approaches?
 - 04** What is the vendor's track record for delivering new features and innovations in their cloud offering?
 - 05** Does the LMS vendor support personalization of content based on role?
- 

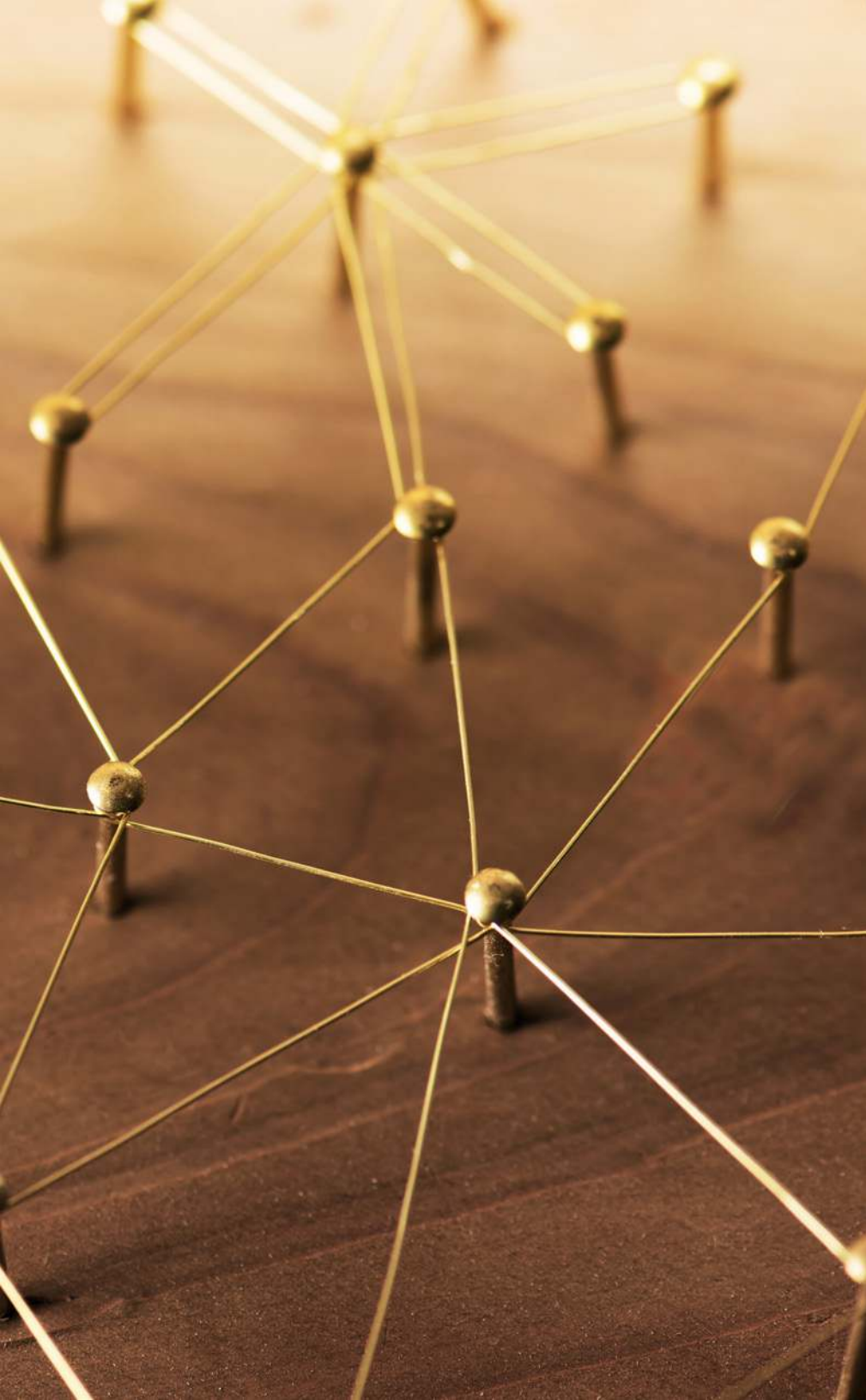
SUPPORT FOR OPEN STANDARDS AND INTEROPERABILITY

Interoperability is the lynchpin of a next-generation LMS. Its purpose is to offer an open platform with the ability to integrate tools and exchange learning content and data.¹⁵ By leveraging open standards, an LMS can support faculty and students with a wide variety of tools to enrich the learning process. Interoperability allows information such as course content and learning-related data to be shared across learning tools, applications, and various LMS solutions.¹⁶

¹⁵Brown, Malcolm, Joanne Dehoney, and Nancy Millichap. *The Next Generation Digital Learning Environment. Rep. EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative. Apr. 2013. Web.*

¹⁶"Seamless, Rapid Integration of Innovative Learning Applications and Tools." LAT. IMS Global Learning Consortium Inc. n.d. Web.





KEY FUNCTIONS OF INTEROPERABILITY

- ➔ Ability to accept and exchange curricular content in common formats
- ➔ Ability to extract and manipulate LMS data
- ➔ Extensive Application Program Interface (APIs) and developer community
- ➔ Ability for users to quickly and easily add tools to the learning environment without IT support
- ➔ Ability to aggregate, integrate, and analyze learning data from a variety of sources
- ➔ Support for interoperability standards such as:
 - IMS LTI
 - IMS Caliper Analytics
 - IMS Common Cartridge
 - IMS Learning Information Services (LIS)
 - Sharable Content Object Reference Model (SCORM)
 - Open Archives Initiative
 - Protocol for Metadata Harvesting (OAI-PMH)
 - Search/Retrieve via URL (SRU)
 - Search/Retrieve Web Service (SRW)

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR LMS VENDOR ABOUT INTEROPERABILITY

01 Is your vendor certified for IMS Basic Learning Tools Interoperability (LTI)?

02 Is it easy to customize tool availability, roles, and permissions within the LMS?

03 Can end users easily access external learning tools directly from within the LMS?

04 Does the vendor provide the ability to whitelist and blacklist access to third party applications available via the educational app store?

05 Can the educational app store contain both LTI applications, and those developed using native APIs?

06 Can content be integrated from multiple sources and found via a single search?

07 Is your vendor ISO 27001 certified for security? Does it have any history of vulnerability?

08 Can the LMS both emit and receive IMS Caliper Analytics events?

09 Does the LMS support SCORM, IMS Common Cartridge, and other content exchange formats?

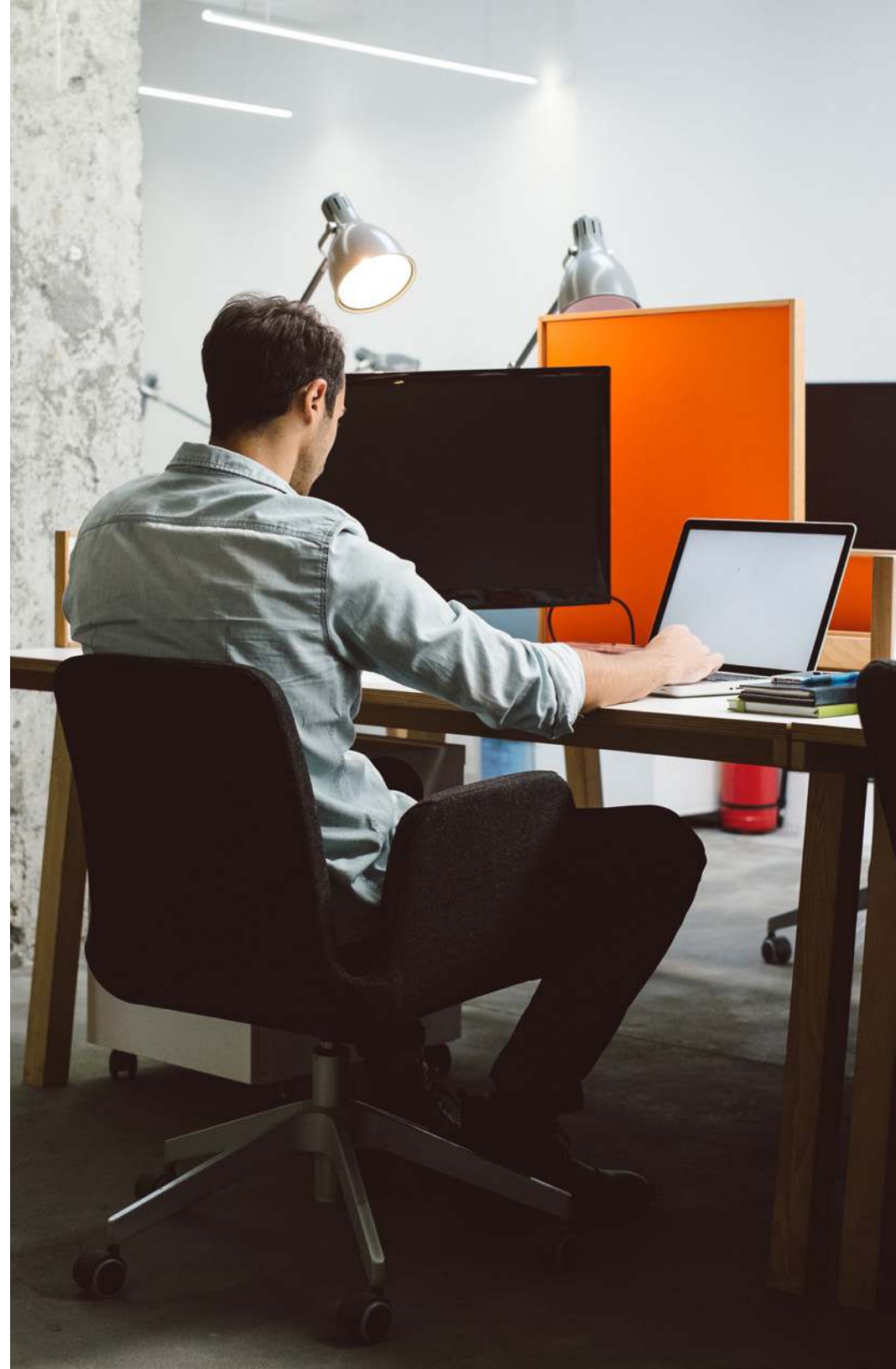
10 What major advancements have customers of vendor LMS created using their APIs?

11 How does the vendor support extensions and customizations to the core LMS via APIs?

ANALYTICS TO LET EXPERTS ACT IN TIME TO INFLUENCE RESULTS

Broad and deep use of an LMS by students creates a goldmine of data for educational institutions. The accumulated “big data” can help educators understand and fine-tune the learning process, provide real-time insights, and reveal patterns related to student performance. Institutions can track critical key performance indicators related to student engagement, retention, and graduation rates. The more extensive the use of an LMS, the richer the data gathered.

However, data alone is not enough. Most institutions already have more data than they can possibly put to use. How an LMS provides the insights that allow users put that data into action should be the critical decision factor.





**THREE LEVELS OF INSIGHT
PROVIDED BY A NEXT-GENERATION LMS**

- Student empowerment
- Continuous instructional improvement
- Institutional oversight

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR LMS VENDOR ABOUT ANALYTICS

- 01** Can your LMS track and predict student performance and outcomes, spot at-risk behaviors, and provide automated triggers to help instructors step in early with appropriate interventions?
- 02** Can your faculty and experts customize dashboards to show them the most important data and indicators for their specific use?
- 03** Can the LMS aggregate and capture streamed student data from across the entire learning ecosystem (learning apps, content publishers, online learning tools, other LMS solutions)?
- 04** Does your LMS vendor offer “Big Data” expertise and guidance in areas such as change management, data governance, and data science allowing you to maximize your understanding and insight?

FLEXIBLE WAYS TO TEACH AND ENGAGE STUDENTS

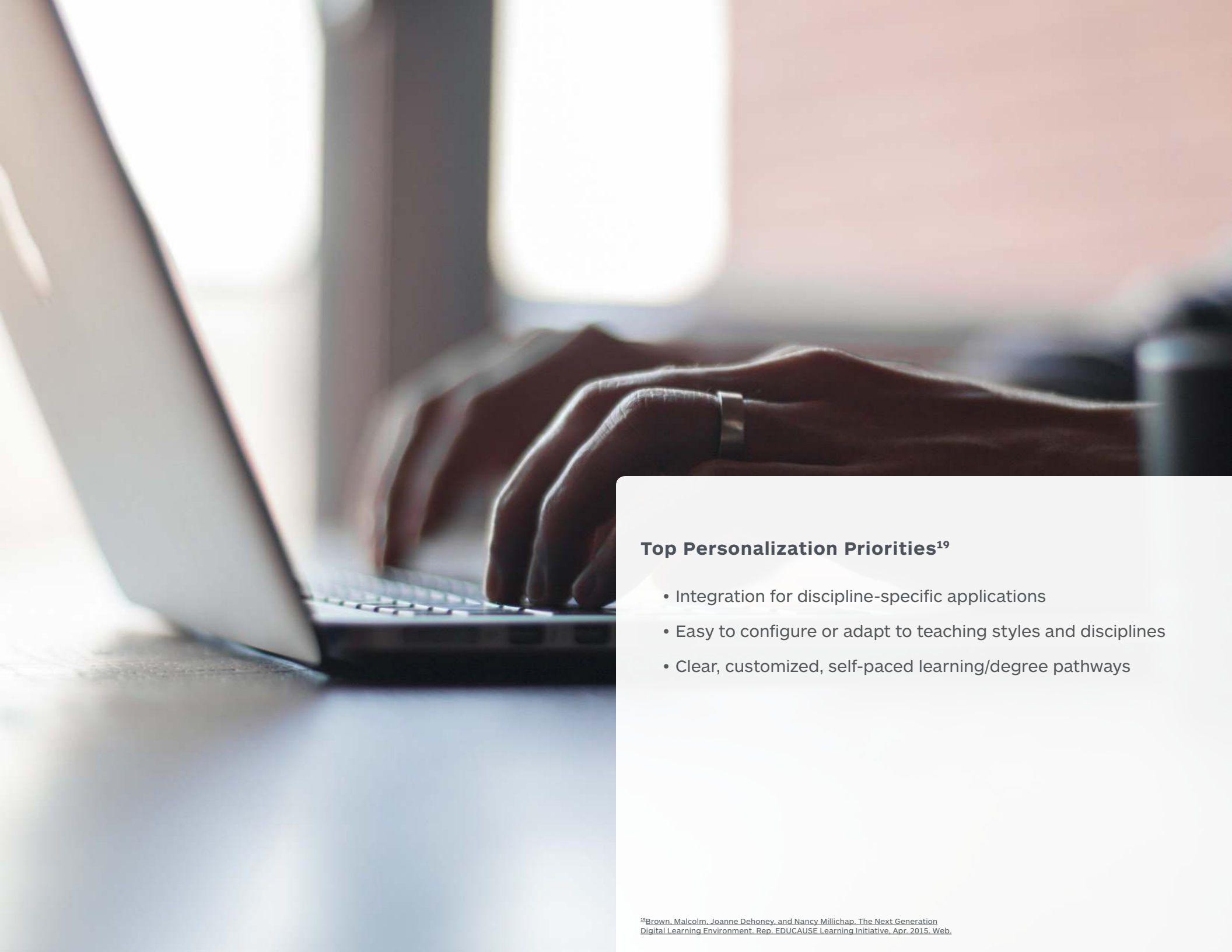
The LMS shouldn't constrain what types of learning experiences educational institutions can deliver. It needs to be designed to be flexible enough to support a variety of models, from online and blended to competency-based education (CBE) and everything in between. The LMS must support differentiating and personalizing the experience as part of the design of the course itself. Instructors need to have ways to scale their individual attention and expertise to make this realistic.

At the 2014 EDUCAUSE Annual Conference, 50 thought leaders from the higher education community came together to prioritize 56 desirable qualities of a next-generation LMS. The top ten priorities all relate to personalization. In addition, more than 2/3 of students, or 69% surveyed by EDUCAUSE, said they would be interested in an LMS feature that supports them in reaching their personal education goal.¹⁸



¹⁸Brown, Malcolm, Joanne Dehoney, and Nancy Millichap. *The Next Generation Digital Learning Environment*. Rep. EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative, Apr. 2015. Web.

¹⁹Dahlstrom, Eden, D. Christopher Brooks, and Jacqueline Bichsel. *The Current Ecosystem of Learning Management Systems in Higher Education: Student, Faculty, and IT Perspectives*. Rep. EDUCAUSE Center for Analysis and Research, 2014. Web.



Top Personalization Priorities¹⁹

- Integration for discipline-specific applications
- Easy to configure or adapt to teaching styles and disciplines
- Clear, customized, self-paced learning/degree pathways

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR LMS VENDOR ABOUT PERSONALIZATION

- 01** Can the LMS support different teaching and learning models (CBE, online, blended, self-paced, professional development) simultaneously?
- 02** Does the system recognize individual behaviors and address those differences individually? To what extent?
- 03** Can a student be progressed based on what they know?
- 04** Can the student be given choice and agency over their learning?
- 05** How are reflective practices encouraged in learning activities?
- 06** What methods are provided to create game-based or simulation activities to augment traditional content?



STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

When students are curious, passionate about their subject matter, and optimistic about their future, they are considered engaged. And typically, when students are engaged and feel that intangible sense of “belonging” to a classroom and to the school, they perform better academically. Conversely, disengaged students are at risk of “fading away” within the school system; performing poorly and prone to failure.

Over the last few decades, educators have begun to prioritize student engagement, recognizing it as a necessary condition for learning and achievement. Many higher education institutions now cite student engagement as a policy goal and institutional priority.

Ways an LMS Can Boost Engagement

- Innovative online learning models to drive increased levels of self-paced, self-directed learning
- Greater levels of personalization in learning paths
- Calendar reminders for due dates on quizzes and final assignments
- Personalized teaching assistance
- Gamification to motivate and reward action

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR LMS VENDOR ABOUT STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

- 01** Can the LMS support the use of gamified tasks and badges as engagement incentives?
- 02** Does the LMS provide students with opportunities to interact with each other and with instructors?
- 03** Does the LMS have the ability to incorporate dynamic content such as video, animations, and graphics?
- 04** Can students define when, where, and how they learn?
- 05** Can instructors easily create customized learning paths and differentiate instruction for students based on their individual needs?
- 06** How does the LMS support student choice in their learning path?

STUDENT MONITORING, RETENTION, AND INTERVENTION TOOLS

It is critical to understand where students are at—and what could potentially cause them to underperform. Just as crucial as recognizing who/what makes up this risk is the ability to act.

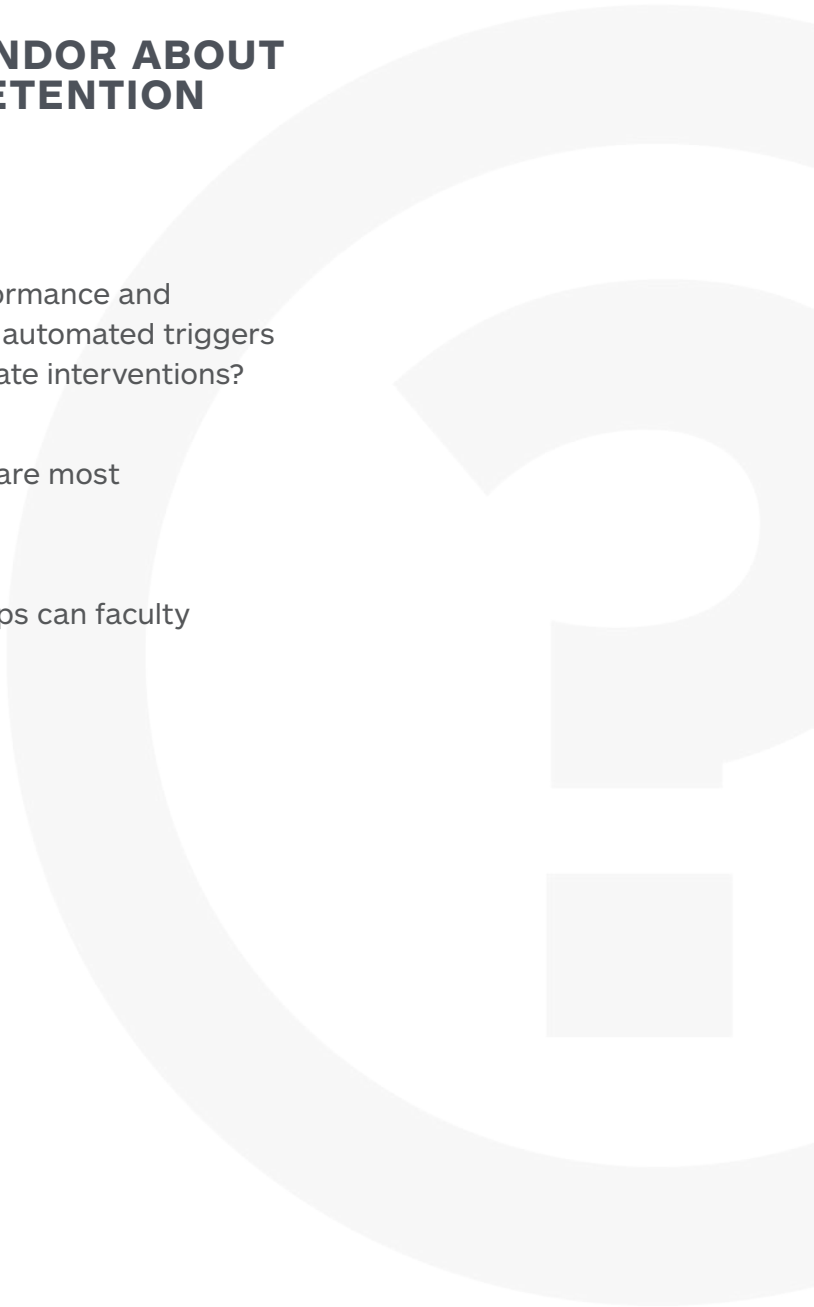
The LMS should intelligently determine who needs attention and automate highly personalized ways of intervening, communicating progress, and assisting with gaps in knowledge.

Top Monitoring and Retention Functions

- Customizable dashboards
- Drill down from class-view into individual student details
- Predicting at-risk students
- Automated interventions, personalized to an individual



QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR LMS VENDOR ABOUT STUDENT MONITORING AND RETENTION

- 01** Can your LMS track and predict student performance and outcomes, spot at-risk behaviors and provide automated triggers to help instructors step in early with appropriate interventions?
 - 02** How does the faculty decide which elements are most important for course success?
 - 03** Once an at-risk student is identified, what steps can faculty take to intervene?
- 



COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION TOOLS

Collaborative learning is based on the principle that students can enrich their learning experiences by working together to solve a problem, complete a task or create a product.²⁰

According to EDUCAUSE, in a next-generation LMS, support for collaboration must be a lead design goal, not an afterthought. It also means collaboration must move outside the four walls of the classroom, fostering instructor-to-student and peer-to-peer interactions outside of the context of the course.²¹

Key Communication and Collaboration Functions Include the Ability To:

- Inform
- Connect
- Support
- Collaborate
- Reflect

²⁰CL1 - More Information: What Is Collaborative Learning? CL1 - More Information: What Is Collaborative Learning? n.d. Web.
²¹Brown, Malcolm, Joanne Dehoney, and Nancy Millchapp. The Next Generation Digital Learning Environment. Rep. EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative, Apr. 2015. Web.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR LMS VENDOR ABOUT COLLABORATION

- 01** Does the LMS provide students with timely information, i.e., important dates and events and reference materials essential for keeping them on track and to increase success rates?
- 02** Does the LMS provide instructors with the ability to create an individualized nurturing connection?
- 03** Can it help instructors scale their ability to reach more students effectively?
- 04** Can students choose which tools they use to interact with others and create content?
- 05** Can students access an ePortfolio directly within the LMS where they can create and share reflections on their work with peers and prospective employers?
- 06** Do students have lifelong access to ePortfolio content?
- 07** Are students able to use the LMS to reflect upon their learning experience as they happen?
- 08** Does the LMS support crowdsourcing of content?

ACCESSIBILITY—SUPPORTING UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING

Technologies should never limit learning opportunities. A next-generation LMS should be highly adaptive, providing pathways for individualized instruction. It also should eliminate barriers to learning for all individuals, ensuring students and instructors are able to participate in the digital learning process. The LMS should not only be accessible; it must encourage best practices to ensure the learning experiences created within the LMS are accessible as well.

Key Accessibility Functions

- Keyboard-only navigation
- Screen magnification, zooming, and color contrast technologies
- Captioning capabilities for multi-media
- Screen reader support
- Templates for creating accessible content
- Ability to create multiple ways to access and interact with learning materials and assignments



QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR LMS VENDOR ABOUT ACCESSIBILITY

- 01** Does the LMS vendor support adaptive learning, allowing instructors to easily replace learning content with learning paths that continually adjust and guide students?
- 02** How does the LMS aid in the use of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) practices?
- 03** Does the LMS vendor make it easy for students and teachers who are dyslexic to read in the learning system?
- 04** Does the vendor design its platform in accordance with Section 508 Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)?
- 05** Does the vendor offer an Accessibility Interest Group?
- 06** Does the vendor embrace a broad definition of accessibility, including VPATs for any third party extensions used by the LMS?
- 07** What certifications and auditing are done to ensure accessibility?
- 08** What mobile experiences are available to students?
- 09** What support does the LMS have for doing work offline?

What To Look For In An LMS Vendor

LOOK FOR

VENDOR MISSION AND VISION

Education is a calling. To take on a challenge as critically important to society as educating its citizens an LMS vendor must be committed to it and aligned to the values of educators. An educational institution and its LMS vendor should also share a definition for success.

- What is the vendor's track record for innovation? What have they produced in the last 2-5 years? Past innovation is a great predictor of future
- What percentage of the vendor's resources are being poured back into Research & Development?
- Is the LMS vendor in control of how it serves its customers—or are investors?
- How does the LMS vendor define success?





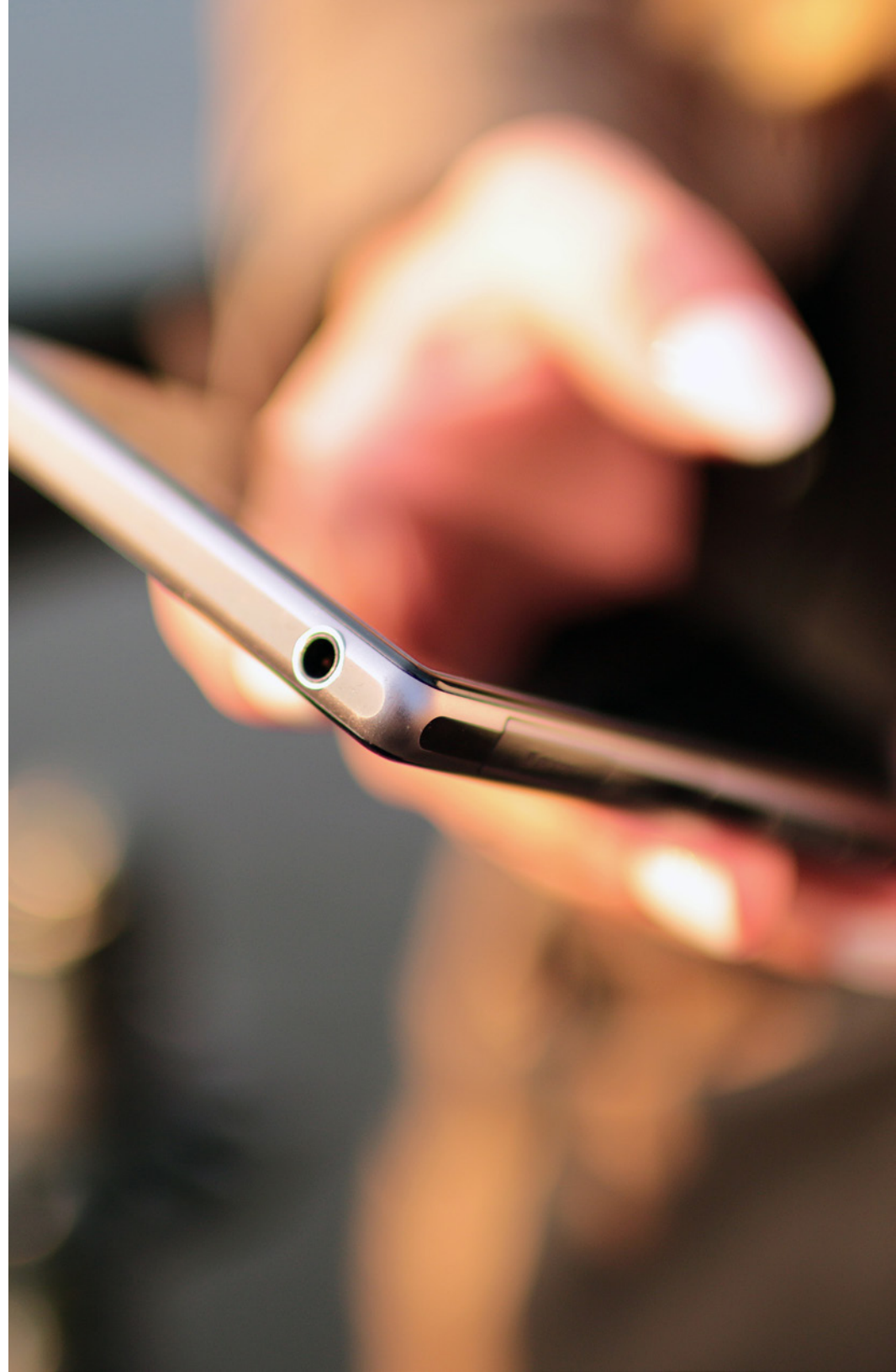
A COMMITMENT TO CUSTOMER PARTNERSHIP

- Does the vendor take the time to understand your institution's goals and objectives and ensure alignment of the LMS strategy to those goals?
- Does the vendor employ and tap into the expertise of educators who are at the forefront of learning theory and practice?
- What opportunities do customers have to influence the roadmap?
- Does the vendor offer an annual opportunity for the customer to gather and share their accomplishments, best practices, and learnings?
- Is the vendor able to demonstrate evidence of long-term customer retention and success with its platform?
- Does the vendor engage in joint research and development projects with its customers?

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AND SUPPORT

Realizing your LMS strategy takes more than tools, a vendor should bring to the table specific expertise within the educational market and a team with expansive knowledge in learning methodologies, instructional models, and design.

- Does the vendor offer advisory consulting services to help educational institutions achieve their goals and objectives, for instance, change management expertise, strategic planning around new instructional models, best practices in instructional design?
- Is the vendor able to assist in the clean migration of existing course materials?
- Does the vendor have the expertise to assist in the ground-up construction of curriculum?
- Can the vendor offer course uplift services to create examples of next-generation 'digital native' courses that can accelerate curriculum updates?
- Does the vendor offer 24/7 global support with multi-lingual capabilities?



The Rubric

A HELPFUL GUIDE IN MAKING YOUR NEXT-GENERATION LMS DECISION

Navigating the rapidly changing and increasingly unpredictable environment in education requires institutions to take a more innovative approach to teaching and learning. This means leveraging technology as a crucial foundation for executing teaching and learning strategies in more efficient and cost-effective ways. Bringing this more engaging and outcomes-centric vision to life requires both a new set of tools and a better understanding of how they're capable of working together. Using a rubric to compare solution differences and prioritize needs can help guide the path your institution must take to ensure it meets every stakeholder's needs as the demand for, and expectations of, online learning continue to evolve.

Capability	Next-Generation LMS	Y/N
Accessibility		
Accessibility and Accommodation Standards	National Federation of the blind (NFB) for vendor product	
	Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) for vendor product	
	VPAT for integration vendors for core LMS functionality	
	Product designed in accordance with VPAT and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)	
	WCAG accessible content templates integrated into content authoring	
	Accommodations in product design for screen reader usage	
	Screen magnification, zooming, and color contrast	
	Screen reader support for individuals who are blind or low vision	
	Keyboard-only navigation	
	Dyslexia reading font	
	Access to an accessibility interest group	
	VPAT compliance for third party tools	
	Closed captioning capabilities for native video	
Adaptive Learning	Ability to replace content with continually adjusting learning paths	
Mobile Access	Mobile support for browsers and native mobile applications	
	Offline mobile support	
User Preferences	Times displayed in user's own time zone	
	Individuals can choose their own culture and locale	
Universal Design for Learning	Can the LMS support courses created within UDL principals	

Capability	Next-Generation LMS	Y/N
Pedagogy		
Flexible Delivery	Ability to support a design quality control process	
	Supports progression by grade or competency	
	Ability to determine next learning activity based on performance or actions taken in previous activity	
	Tools to support proactive and timely communication to recognize student progress and provide feedback	
	Ability to determine learning path using pre-assessments	
	Ability to choose pacing (i.e., time-bound, rolling enrollment, mastery-based)	
	Automated remediation based on specific objectives	
	Automated recognition of progress and communication of next steps	
	Support for certifications	
	Course spaces can be made public or private	
	Support for multiple assessment types	
	Ability to grade face-to-face activities	
	Multiple feedback options (i.e., audio, video, or text)	
	Course activities can be created within LMS, or integrated from an application store or other integrations	
	Course designs can be shared and templated for re-use	
Student-centered	Reflection opportunities can be embedded into learning activities	
	Students can collect, collaborate on, and present evidence of work, practical skill demonstrations, or project work	
	Students can be given choice over learning paths or method of assessment	
	Students retain access to ePortfolio materials for life	
	Personal calendar integrated with course events and allows personal to-dos	
	Mobile application to manage workload across courses	

Capability	Next-Generation LMS	Y/N
Pedagogy (continued)		
	Students can use their own applications or services to create content and integrate them into the LMS	
	Synchronous and asynchronous group workspace for students	
	Ability to integrate with social networking profiles	
Game-Based	Integrated game-based activity authoring	
	Integrated scenario activity authoring	
	Ability to provide recognition of achievement via awards, badges, or certificates	
Student Monitoring and Retention		
	Customizable course dashboard based on instructor preference	
	Detailed student progress available from course dashboard	
	View student risk breakdown by area (i.e., assessment, participation, or social)	
Communication Planning	Ability to communicate with students from course dashboard	
	Automated personalized emails based on completion of activities	
	Automated personalized emails based on not completing an activity by a certain date	
	Automated personalized emails based on being above or below a performance target	
Platform & Interoperability		
Standards Support	Support for IMS Caliper Analytics	
	Support for IMS LTI Outcomes Management	
	Support for IMS Common Cartridge and IMS Global Thin Common Cartridge	
	Support for IMS LIS	
	Support for OAI-PMH	
	Support for SRU/SRW	
	Access to streaming event data via APIs	

Capability	Next-Generation LMS	Y/N
Platform & Interoperability (continued)		
	Open access to data that is updated regularly	
Content	Ability to search for and integrate content from any source	
	Users can share and rate content	
	Ability to separate repositories for different sub-units of the organization	
	Ability to allow student access to self-serve repositories	
Application Store	Application store available for instructors to search and deploy applications to their course(s)	
	Ability for administrators to whitelist and blacklist applications in the application store	
Security	End-to-end ISO 27001 certification	
Learning Analytics		
	Ability to predict at-risk students using statistically significant methods	
	Course recommendation for students to meet degree program requirements	
	Ability to recommend content based on current level of competency and personal preferences	
	Longitudinal reporting on usage of the LMS	
	Longitudinal reporting on outcomes and/or grades across programs or the organization	
	Ability to report on student engagement	
	View curriculum and assessment alignments	
	Ability to report on performance against outcomes	

Capability	Next-Generation LMS	Y/N
Branding & Configuration		
	Ability to create unlimited roles at any level of the organization	
	Freedom to change the look and feel of the LMS at any level of the organization	
	Ability to create different organizational structures at different levels of organization (i.e., by department, faculty, semester, or cohort)	
	Instructors can choose to design their own layout or adopt templates	
Customer Partnership		
Advocacy	Vendor has an active user community	
	Opportunity to participate in customer advisory boards	
	Customers have a voice in influencing roadmap	
Advisory and Consulting	Change management advising services	
	Content services	
	Instructional design services	
	Adoption acceleration services	
	Provides competency-based education quick-start services	
Training and Support	Customized services and training tailored to each customer	
	Availability of a library of free, customizable training materials and resources	
	Branded end-user helpdesk	

ABOUT D2L

D2L is the software leader that makes the learning experience better. The company's cloud-based platform—Brightspace—is not a common one-size-fits-all learning management system (LMS). It's easier to use, more flexible, and smart. With Brightspace, you can personalize the experience for every learner to deliver real results. The company is also a world leader in learning analytics: its platform predicts learner performance so that you can take action in real time to keep them on track. Brightspace is used by learners in higher education, K-12, and the enterprise sector, including the Fortune 1000. D2L has operations in the United States, Canada, Europe, Australia, Brazil, and Singapore.

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