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E-learning platform/learning management system in education

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Abstract
The goal of making education easier, better and faster through automation has been around for decades. Beginning in the early 20th century with a rudimentary device that resembled a typewriter through today's sophisticated cloud based system. The history of LMS has been revolutionary. And today it stands as a successful e-learning technique which assists the instructor as well as the learner to attain the educational goals. The present research article discusses the Learning Management system in education, design, features, and role of instructor in LMS and the advantages and disadvantages of LMS.

Keywords: Platform/learning management system

Introduction

A Learning Management System (LMS) which is also known as "E-learning Platform," "Pedagogical Platform," or "Course Management System" is "a software application or Web-based technology used to plan, implement, and assess a specific learning process". Typically, a learning management system provides an instructor with a way to create and deliver content, monitor student participation, and assess student performance. A learning management system may also provide students with the ability to use interactive features such as threaded discussions, video conferencing, and discussion forums (Rouse, 2005). The focal point of an LMS is to furnish online courses or tutoring to learners, while overseeing students and maintaining track of their advancement and performance over a wide range of preparing exercises. Course content creation is not the function of an LMS. Instead tutors or lecturers create content which they then upload to the LMS for access by students.

Need of learning management system in education

With the rapid enhancement in science and technology, learning management system has become an effective and efficient technique in the field of education .LMS is a software application for documentation, learning, tracking, reporting in education or training programs. For those instructors using LMS during recent years has witnessed that LMS has upgraded very sophistically. A real innovation which has its worth in terms of time and efficiency. Learning management system is a framework that handles all aspects of the learning process. A learning management system delivers and manages instructional content, identifies and assesses individual and organizational learning or training goals, tracks the progress towards meeting the goals, collects and presents data for the organization as a whole. A learning management system delivers not only content but also handles registration for courses, course administrators, skills gap analysis, tracking and reporting. It should provide ability for blended learning. Blended learning means having an opportunity to combine multiple forms of learning including e-learning, simulation based learning and mobile learning and even classroom based learning.

Review of related literature and research

According to Araújo Júnior and Marquesi (2009) [3] a Learning Management System, widely spread as LMS and, hence the use of this acronym in this study may be defined, in the user perspective, as a virtual environment that aims to simulate face-to-face learning environments with the use of Information Technology. In an LMS, the interaction happens through devices that enable communication either synchronously or asynchronously, allowing the creation of different strategies to encourage a dialogue and active participation of students.

According to Lonn and Teasley (2009) [7] Learning Management Systems are web-based systems that enable teachers and students to share materials, to submit and return assignments and to communicate online. Meanwhile Almrashdeh *et al.* (2011) [1] point out that an LMS is software used to plan, implement and evaluate a specific learning process.

In LMS, mediation involves both the acquisition of

competences and communication skills of all teachers and students, and a greater concern to create interaction moments and practical application possibilities of collaborative work, with that learning process happening in a participatory manner. For that, the teacher relies on communication devices, such as chat rooms, forums, blogs, video blogs (Souza, 2005; Sartori & Garcia, 2009; Rosini, 2013) [10, 9]. To these authors, it is necessary to consider that an LMS must seek to get the best advances in technology available today, for reasons of efficiency and for enabling the maximum degree of interactivity and communication among users. Learning and collaborative work have become fundamental and technological advances should lead to the achievement of high interaction levels.

LMS Design Pattern
(Ankita Sharma & Dr. Sonia Vatta, June 2013) [2]:
These days Learning Management Systems is being adopted by many institutions to fulfill the needs and requirement. The users of LMS can be categorized into following:
1. **The learners**: They use the system for the educational process. The learners are the basic or the main users of LMS.
2. **The instructors**: The instructors are the teachers and the assistants who use the LMS to supervise, assist and evaluate the learners.
3. **The administrators**: The administrator can take the support of all the users of the system to keep a check on the proper operating status.

Design of learning management system
LMS can have the following features
a. Registration and Enrollment options to teachers and students.
b. Adding/Deleting Courses by the University/Educational Bodies.
c. Set the different User Roles and user account.
d. Setting the course calendar.
e. Upload and Retrieve Assignment and Resources
f. Forum module.

Role of the instructors in learning management system
Software makes e-learning possible but the people that manage social learning platforms are the factors that ensures the successful online learning experience. In reality, instructors have the ability to make or break an e-learning course. Most instructors welcome e-learning system with open arms because they understand that LMS are incredibly effective tool for the promoting education. It also reduces the workload of instructors as well as learners.

Functions of learning management system
- Course content delivery
- Student registration and administration
- Training event management system
- Curriculum and certification management system
- Skill and competence management
- Skill gap analysis
- Individual development plan

- Assessing and resulting
- Reporting
- Training and record management
- Courseware authority
- Resource management
- Virtual organizations
- Performance management system integration

a. Advantages of learning management system
1. Using the correct learning strategies, LMS can increase motivation of learners, promote learning, encourage interaction, provide feedback and support can be provided during the learning process.
2. A LMS supports content in various formats, e.g. multimedia, video, and text. (Sharma et al., 2013) [8]
3. Access to course material is at any time. Course material is updated and students can see the changes made in the particular field. Teachers can modify information according to the need of the student.
4. Improvement in teaching methodology and the outcomes of the learning are not guaranteed through learning management system.
5. Various activities are offered to the learners to make choices out of it.
6. Re-use of the learning activities can be done. By re-using content, time and effort can be saved and the cost of improving online content is also reduced.

b. Disadvantages of learning management system
1. Conventionally, LMSs tend to be course centered rather than student centered. At this time, a LMS does not accommodate a complete range of teaching styles.
2. Some trainers have weak computer and information literacy skills and lack the information management skills needed to successfully use a LMS to support their teaching. Teaching staff in this situation must not only learn how to operate within these environments but also develop a critical perspective of their use of the LMS in teaching in a variety of modes (Samsonov & Beard, 2005).
3. Many teachers are challenged to design and organize a mixture of learning activities which are appropriate to the needs of the student, teaching skills and teaching styles. (Dwyer & Dwyer, 2003).
4. It is very easy to convert existing poor teaching practices to a LMS.
5. Some current research suggests that online teaching leads to an increase in teacher workload (Dralle, A. 2007).

Conclusion
With the improvement of computer assisted instruction, LMS are gaining popularity as a convenient medium for delivering and managing teaching/training to the distant learners. LMS is an easy way to learn for different levels of learners. Improving the quality of teaching and learning, widening access to education, and reducing the cost of delivery are some of the motives behind LMS adoption.

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