



How Cinch Improves Your Training Efficiency

Majid Tahir, Director of Product Development of the Cinch platform

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At many organizations, creating, sharing and distributing training content has become increasingly complex. Content is required to be updated more frequently and larger teams are responsible for creating and maintaining content. As the burden on training teams grow, organizations can leverage Learning Content Management Systems (LCMS) as part of their training tool set. In this white paper, we discuss how using the Cinch LCMS platform will lower your overall costs and drive efficiency.

Cinch enables real-time content authoring in the cloud

An LCMS manages your content and a Learning Management System (LMS) manages your users. Cinch LCMS enables authors to create content in a centralized cloud repository and load that content in any LMS through SCORM or xAPI. Since the learning content is stored on the cloud, Cinch enables authors to create and update content quickly and efficiently without requiring a package re-upload to your LMS. Any admin managing content changes can appreciate the efficiency this feature brings. Let's lay out the steps in updating content with Cinch and without Cinch.

Steps to Modify Content without Cinch

- **Locate the correct content source files** - Significant time is wasted for organizations having to search through large content repositories. There could be multiple content creators having source files on multiple computers requiring time to verify which file is the latest version. Sometimes employee turnover results in lost source files and high ramp-up time to modify content files.
- **Make content updates.** - Content updates are typically made using complex software such as Storyline or Captivate. Typical e-learning authoring software requires specialized software skills that only trained instructional designers possess.
- **Export and test your SCORM package** - All modern content authoring tools will export a SCORM package: a file containing all the course files/media/text. Any content change, no matter how minor, requires a new SCORM package to be exported. A diligent training admin will spend time regression testing the full course to ensure that nothing in the course changed unintentionally. The time to fully regression test a course is highly dependent on the complexity of the course, but it can be a significant amount of time even if the actual change is minor.
- **Upload the SCORM package to your production LMS environment.** - The last step in this process is upload your package to your LMS. LMS uploads are typically finicky and result in downtime as your content is replaced.

The process of updating content without Cinch is fragile, error prone, and highly manual. Many enterprise clients spend up to four weeks to make even minor content changes when Cinch is not involved.

Now let's see how content would be improved through using Cinch:

Steps to Modify Content with Cinch

- **Log into Cinch** - All the training content is created and stored on the cloud and your organization can have as many logins as they need. In Cinch, simply navigate to your course to begin editing.
- **Make content updates** - Cinch has robust authoring functionality that enables any admin to make changes. No specialized design or software skills are required. Make your change and preview your course just as the learner will see it without interacting with the LMS.
- **Save and Deploy** - As soon as you confirm and save your changes, learners will see the updates. No need to download a new SCORM package and re-upload to the LMS. Cinch only deploys the content that you have changed so regression testing of the entire package becomes unnecessary.

Clearly, content management through Cinch is more scalable and efficient. Content can now be changed in a few minutes rather than hours, days, or weeks.

LMS vs LCMS: Which does your organization need?

It is key to understand that Cinch does not replace an LMS. They perform distinct functions:

Functions of an LMS

- Manage users
- Keep track of user progress
- Where learners go to access training

Functions of Cinch LCMS

- Content Authoring
- Perform real-time content updates
- Provide API access to content

Typical LMS	Cinch Platform
Limited feature set	Scalable architecture to handle future needs
Limited third-party integration	Can integrate best in class third-party integration
Limited customization	Integrate new technologies as your enterprise needs grow
Most LMS's use outdated standards	Combine SCORM, xAPI, and other standards

There is a clear delineation of functionality between the LMS and the LCMS: The LMS manages users while the the LCMS manages the content. LMS systems typically do not have robust content creation and storage engines. They do not allow organizations to brand content such as a training modules to match every branding guideline element.

Many times, training modules need to perform complex actions such as pushing data to a Learning Record Store (LRS) or to a Customer Relations Management System (CRM) such as Salesforce. Cinch will empower an organization to create a custom HTML/JavaScript training module and pull in learning content from centralized learning repository.

Our recommendation is that if your content has multiple authors, changes frequently, or takes too long to long to update or create, your organization will greatly benefit from Cinch.

Using Custom Wrappers or Templates

You can certainly use a content authoring tool such as Storyline or Captivate to create custom content. However, there are some downsides. Change management can quickly become unscalable. You will need an instructional designer on staff or a vendor who is familiar with complex authoring tools to create and maintain your content. Even a small text change will require your instructional designer or vendor to make the change and re-upload to the LMS. If you have a team of content authors, this adds an additional level of complexity as you'll need to make sure the team has the latest files before making their changes. This can be change management nightmare as each upload to LMS will require a full regression test to ensure the training module has not been changed in unexpected ways.

Cinch enables your organization to use custom templates or wrappers that will pull in your content via state of the art APIs. This methodology ensures that your e-learning wrapper is separated from your content thereby making modifications to either the wrapper or the content fast, efficient and less error prone. In addition, templates can be reused with a click of a button rather than having to recreate your wrapper for each new course. This software principle is known as "separation of concerns." Separation of concerns will lead to highly maintainable wrapper code that is reusable.

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Is it worth adding a new tool to my workflow?

It is always a challenge to add yet another tool to an existing workflow. But the gain in efficiency you get by storing your content on the cloud and creating a custom experience for your users will outweigh the difficulty of adding a new tool. Cinch makes this process even easier by pulling in LMS and other third party data such as completions, in progress numbers, and attendees directly in your Cinch dashboard so that your interaction with LMS is even further limited.



If content is stored in the LCMS how does that work with SCORM?

Cinch provides an innovative solution to this problem. Through Cinch, admins can create a light-weight SCORM or xAPI package that can be uploaded to your LMS. The light-weight package does not contain any of the content but that content is dynamically loaded when the learner launches the course through the LMS.

How do I create e-learning templates?

Cinch is all about options. If you have very custom needs and a desired user experience, you can create your own HTML/JavaScript SCORM template. The development team at Cinch can even help you create your template for you as we have an experienced e-learning development team that has built many of e-learning templates.

Summary: How will an LCMS add efficiency to my training team?

Here is how Cinch can add significant efficiency to your training team:

- If you need to update a live training module, simply make your content change in Cinch and your change is immediately live.
- No need to do full regression tests or re-upload SCORM packages to the LMS. Your changes can be pushed out to your users in minutes rather than days.
- Free up your team to create valuable content rather than managing the LMS. Create custom training module with all the branding, functionality, and user experience that you desire. No longer are you limited by the features of your authoring tool or your LMS.
- No need to have the specialized software skills required by content authoring tools to maintain content. If you can use the web, you can use Cinch.

If you would like to learn more about Cinch and how it can help your team improve e-learning inefficiencies, please contact us at sales@acumenity.com and we'd love to set up a demo or just answer any questions you may have.