**ITI 440, IT & Learning**

**ASSIGNMENT REQUIREMENTS**

**Project 1:  Corporate Product Comparison Report**

DUE: WEDS. 3/28

Your Project 1 assignment asks you and your team members to act as information professional decision-makers in a corporation, and develop a thorough product comparison evaluation of four different enterprise LMS solutions. The audience for this report is a corporate CIO Boss.

This report must contain the following items:

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| **Assignment components** | **Points** |
| **Step 1: Needs analysis** | (6 points) |
| **Step 2: Product requirements definition** | (4 points) |
| **Step 3: Product Vetting** | (3 points) |
| **Step 4: Product evaluation** | (8 points) |
| **Step 5: Product selection** | (4 points) |

**Step 1: Needs analysis (6 points)**

1.     Develop a **business use-case scenario** for organizational workforce training, discuss the use case, the business need, and the “orientation” and culture of the employees who have the learning need. Consider the **“drivers”**for this business need. For example:

      Your leadership discovers a new area of business growth in the coming years and needs to build upon this, requiring an updating of expertise within the organization —a *strategic* driver.

      Department communicative and knowledge-building interactions between workers across 2 different departmental communities of practice need greater platform support, to enhance productivity for the whole collective company—an *operational* driver.

      Your old LMS for new hire on-boarding and summer internship trainings has become out-dated and requires an entire upgrade —a *technical* driver.

Fully develop your business case!  Your needs analysis should specify all details **in at least 1 page single-spaced**.

**Step 2: Product requirements definition (4 points)**

Requirements form the basis of your LMS selection criteria. The clearer and more complete your LMS requirements, the easier it is to evaluate products. If you are an instructional designer, you may find that writing LMS requirements is somewhat similar to writing instructional objectives. Try to focus on what learners or administrators must be *able to do* with the LMS. Each requirement should express a learning need, not a technical solution. Each requirement should be discrete, without repeating or overlapping other requirements, and you should write it at the same broad-based level of detail. **For the purposes of this assignment, please identify 10-12 requirements.**

Organize your requirements into THREE CATEGORIES: **functional, technical, and cost**. **Functional** requirements describe what the system must be able to do from a learning management perspective. **Technical** requirements describe how the system must fit into the broader IT enterprise infrastructure. **Cost** requirements describe how the system matches up with your organization’s budget considerations, constraints, and expectations. This could take a few pages.

**Note** – while I list this as Step 2, you may want to complete Step 3 first, and then back-track to Step 2 once you are more familiar with the possible tools, features and activities that Enterprise level LMS solutions support*.*

**Step 3: Product Vetting (3 points)**

There are hundreds of LMS products available in the marketplace. Narrow your choices to a short list of 4 products. Identify eight-to-ten distinctive requirements that can help you rule out non-qualifying products. For example, not all LMS products support multiple languages. If this is critical for you, this makes the requirement for multi-language support a good vetting criterion. Similarly, not all products comply with specific accessibility and security regulations; also good vetting criteria. There are many different price ranges for products. Ballpark licensing costs are another good vetting criterion.

Once you have defined a set of vetting criteria, you can research product web sites and/or contact vendors to inquire about their product’s support for each vetting criterion. Select the 4 products which meet the most vetting criteria. You will evaluate these products in more detail.

*Resources*:

      <http://www.forbes.com/sites/joshbersin/2014/08/28/the-red-hot-market-for-learning-technology-platforms/#1377c74937fc>

      <http://marketing.bersin.com/learning-management-systems-2014.html>

      <http://elearningindustry.com/top-10-cloud-based-learning-management-systems-for-corporate-training>

      <http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2488347,00.asp>

**Step 4: Product evaluation (8 points)**

1.    **Create a detailed overview and description** of the product line for **each of 4 vendors** you are evaluating. NOTE: Some LMS providers have several different product lines. You must narrow down and choose one line of focus to evaluate. Describe the chosen product line for each of the 4 vendors in narrative text.

a.     Provide an overview of the industries served by the vendor

b.    Include screenshots of specific features from the vendor’s demo, and make these screenshots as realistic as possible.

c.     Use figure headings and descriptive text adjacent to the features in the figures.

d.    In the descriptive text, analyze how the features relate to your team’s use case scenario, adjacent to the screenshots.

**This section for each vendor should represent the bulk of your Final Report’s length.**

2.    **Complete the product requirements matrix** provided in Excel for each vendor product. Consider how 4 chosen LMS vendor products will function to meet the needs of your given company and use case scenario. Each individual in the group will be responsible for researching each product, and mapping its features and functions to a given product requirements matrix. You will make a recommendation to the CIO (Dr. R) on the best vendor product based on its FIT with the use case scenario – the purpose you identify. ***Consider***:

a.     Size of business; Area / sector of business

b.    Purposes / uses intended by the business for the LMS: Corporate training; desired format of the training – all online vs. FTF etc.; Content needed to fulfill the learning objectives (who will generate the content, how will it get into the system, etc.); tracking performance; reporting; metrics, etc.

3.    **Write up a SWOT analysis** (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) that offers a summary of your assessment of each, and a concluding assessment based on your evaluation of each vendor.  Make sure to summarize the SWOT findings in the Excel file, too.

**Step 5: Product selection (4 points)**

1. Create **a final ranking of vendors and a final declarative recommendation**to the CIO, based on your team’s assessment. Summarize why you have made this choice. You can refer to the evidence presented in your recommendation. NOTE: The 4 vendors will vary in their features and services. Rank them based on your assessment of their quality, and their fit with the use case scenario.

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**Background on each criterion in the matrix, and guiding information on Learning Management Systems**

A learning management system (LMS), also known as a course management system (CMS), is software or a web service used in the development, delivery, and management of learning or training activities within an organization.

**Industry Served:**  
Users can implement LMSs in a variety of settings:

* **Corporations** can use LMSs for employee training and certification.
* **Schools** and teachers can use LMSs to compliment or enhance classroom learning.
* **Organizations** can provide e-learning courses to a larger student/user population virtually anywhere in the world.

When choosing a learning management system, consider these elements:

1.     **First**, decide which features–like administration, course development, content, productivity, and integration–are fundamental to your institution's training needs. The more features the software includes, the more expensive it can be.

2.     **Next**, pick a Deployment Model or the type of platform on which your software operates. You can choose between a licensed system and one that’s hosted online, but make sure it’s compatible with your business or industry.

**LMS vs. LCMS**

* Unlike a learning management system (LMS), a learning content management system (LCMS) lets students create, edit, store, manage, and publish learning content.
* LCMS is beneficial for online K-12 learning, as teachers can easily edit content, curriculum and syllabi, as well as import and reuse learning material.
* LMS, on the other hand, is for businesses that train their employees using strict and unchanging requirements. Hospital employees on HIPPA regulations that apply to a broad range of employees use LCSs because the software does not need to cater to specific people.
* Smaller businesses usually favor LMSs over LCMSs because they are less expensive.
* Both systems are often referred to as LMSs, but an LCMS is an expansion of the basic LMS. In this comparison, we have listed "LCMS" as a Content Development feature.

**How to Choose Learning Management Systems (LMS)**

**Content Features**

This is the software/service's capacity to develop and manage learning material. NOTE: IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT YOU CONSIDER WHERE THE CONTENT WILL COME FROM. Will this be content that the partner organization provides? Or will your company work with experts within the organization to develop the training material yourselves?  If the expertise domain is proprietary to the company (e.g., science of particular pharmaceuticals) then you need internal experts to create the content. If the expertise domain is more broad (e.g., helping your company’s marketing department enhance its graphic design expertise) you could contract with a learning content provider, e.g., Lynda.com. How will the content get into the system? Consider this!

LMSs may give the administrators the ability to customize certain aspects of the software, such as the user interface and reporting modules.

Some Features Criteria to Consider:   
Content Management, Custom Branding, Custom Fields, Custom Functionality, Custom Reporting, Custom User Interface, Data Import/Export, Data Management, Multiple Delivery Formats, Templates, LCMS, Legacy System Integration

**Administration Features**

Features that refer to the administrator's authority to register and manage users. Administrators may limit user access or grant specific roles to some users, depending on the development of the course.

Some Features Criteria to Consider:

Administrative Reporting, Authentication, Course Authoring, Defined User Roles, Hosted Services, Registration Management, Unlimited Users, User Access Controls

**Course Development Features**

Course development features ease a user's learning or training experience and thus are crucial aspects of every LMS. These features are of utmost importance when considering which LMS to purchase. Deciding which course development features suit your business's training needs will help you choose an LMS that is both cost-effective and functional. For example, LMSs with “blended learning” features support classroom learning, while other LMS features are solely web-based learning environments. The following features are found in the majority of LMSs:

* **Blended Learning**: This feature allows for the combination of face-to-face classroom learning with computer-based methods. Online portions of an in-class curriculum may also be available to students/trainees to complement or even replace some portions of classroom learning. Web-based modules allow for flexibility in a student's/trainee's schedule.
* **Testing**: LMSs offer testing as a standardized method of evaluating employees or students based on their learned skills. Depending on the LMS, an instructor or admin may be able to build a customized test and scoring method.
* **Skills Assessment**: Both the user and administrator can use this feature to evaluate the student's/trainee's acquired skills at a certain point in the course.
* **Skills Tracking**: Both the user and administrator are able to view the progression of the student's/trainee's acquired skills over time with this feature.

Some Features Criteria to Consider:

Blended Learning, Career Tracking, Collaboration Management, Course Catalog, Course Interactivity, Coursework Grading, Display Transcripts, eLearning, Exam Engine, Goal Setting, Individual-Based Plans, Multimedia Available, Performance Assessment, Roster Processing, Self-Paced, Skills Assessment, Skills Tracking, Student Portal, Student Self Service, Student Tracking, Supports Classroom Learning, Test Building, Test Scoring, Testing, Training Metrics, Virtual Classroom, Wait Listing

**Business Size Served**

Business sizes are distinguished by how many users the particular LMS is scaled to. Typically, small businesses will require a system that allows for 1 - 50 users/students. A medium-sized business will require anywhere from 50 - 500 users, and a large business will require anywhere from 500 - unlimited users.

Some Features Criteria to Consider:

Any, Large, Medium, Small

**Accessibility Compliance**

Accessibility Compliance is a set of technology and communication standards that explain how to make Web content accessible to people in specific industries. These guidelines also ensure that the software is being used and shared legally and effectively for educational purposes. There are four different compliances in this comparison. They are:

* **AICC**, or Aviation Industry CBT (Computer-Based Training) Committee, is an organization comprised of technology training professionals who create training standards in the aviation industry.
* **IMS** Global Learning Consortium has developed open interoperability standards to support and enhance educational technology.
* **LLC**, or a Limited Liability Company, is a business that blends elements of both corporations and partnerships in accordance with all federal and state regulations.
* **SCORM**, or Sharable Courseware Object Reference Model specifications were created by the Department of Defense's Advanced Distribution Learning (ADL) Initiative. These standards define communication between client and host systems, as well as content transferability. Most companies strive to adhere to SCORM specifications, as opposed to AICC, as those standards are specifically for the aviation industry.

Some Features Criteria to Consider:

AICC Compliant, IMS Compliant, LLC Compliant, SCORM Compliant

**Industries Served**

The industry in which the learning management system has been, or can be, applied (as stated by the developing company).

Some Features Criteria to Consider:

Accounting, Advertising, Agriculture, Airline, Automotive, Banking, Brokerage, Business Services, Certification, Chemical, Communications, Computer, Consulting, Education, Electronics, Energy, Entertainment, Finance, Franchises, Government, Health Care, Insurance, Legal, Manufacturing, Media, Non-Profit, Other, Real Estate, Research, Retail, Safety and Security, ...

**Deployment Model**

This model determines whether the learning management system is web hosted (Software as a Service) or licensed to you and hosted on your own servers.

Some Features Criteria to Consider:

On Premise / Client Server, SaaS (Software as a Service)

**Pricing**

Pricing will vary by volume, licensing, etc. You will need to develop a DETAILED rubric for pricing.

**Meeting of specific business needs**

What are your unique business requirements? Specify and rate vendors accordingly.