

Don't Just Build and Forget

5 Tips for Maximizing Your Learning Content Investment

BY LUKE HICKEY

Stuck in inflexible pages, much of today's learning material remains trapped in traditional formal vehicles like *elearning* courses or presentations. As a result, learning content – and the time and effort that goes into it – is often poorly leveraged. But it doesn't have to be that way.

STRIVE FOR SINGLE SOURCE, MULTI-PURPOSE CONTENT

Organizations are awaking to the importance content plays as a competitive differentiator and are now demanding tools and processes that allow them to gather, create, organize, disperse, and re-use learning content in multiple ways, across multiple learning vehicles.

Today's learning content development tools need to support the creation of single-source, multi-purpose content for both formal and informal learning experiences. As you build out your learning content strategy, look for tools and processes that allow your organization to collaboratively create content that can be used at multiple times of need — from formal learning through to application on the job — and let you to measure its effectiveness.

FIND THE RIGHT TOOLS

There's been a rush for authoring tool vendors to get on the responsive band-wagon. That's great news for those wanting to develop content that can be

accessed on multiple devices and used in multiple ways, but beware, not all responsive tools are created equal. Truly responsive content means developers can build rich learning experiences without worrying about specific devices or multiple versions of the same content.

Stay away from vendors that enforce a dumbed-down approach to learning content development. Templated, fill-in-the-blank, or block-based tools help get stuff out the door and satisfy the responsive checkbox, but they often don't satisfy the learning need.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE POWER OF MANY

Today's learning organizations must adjust to the rapidly changing content requirements of their audiences. Whether it's evolving regulations, product updates, or changing business drivers, training departments must deliver content that is relevant and useful — with little or no delay. While there are still content developers that work alone, team-based development models have become the norm because they can leverage the collective skill and expertise of dispersed teams.

To make the most of the time and dollars spent on learning programs, all learning stakeholders (authors, subject matter experts, sponsors) need to easily engage in the development process. Explore integrated, collaborative development platforms

that satisfy the needs of all your learning stakeholders.

LOOK TO THE FUTURE

Future organizational learning success means making the right tool and process decisions today. The history (and current state) of learning technologies is full of horror stories about costly investments in proprietary technologies that lock up content and make it unusable beyond its initial purpose. Eschew propriety technologies and focus on vendor neutral, standards-based platforms. You'll own your own content and be able to re-use and re-purpose it freely — both today and tomorrow.

DON'T SETTLE FOR LESS

Learning content developers need to make the best learning experiences possible — quickly and efficiently. Don't settle for an uncompromised content development experience. Platforms

and tools exist that offer both powerful features AND simple-to-use environments. Search out robust, scalable solutions that give you the power to create meaningful learning content, without the need for complicated interfaces or programming languages.

IT'S ALWAYS ABOUT CREATING GREAT LEARNING EXPERIENCES

How your organization gathers, creates, organizes and disperses content to support its business goals can mean the difference between market leadership and failure. Always keep in mind that it's not about creating great *eLearning*, it's about building and sharing great learning experiences — and then maximizing your content use and value. 📌

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