

EBOOK

6 Tips on Choosing a Learning Management System (LMS)

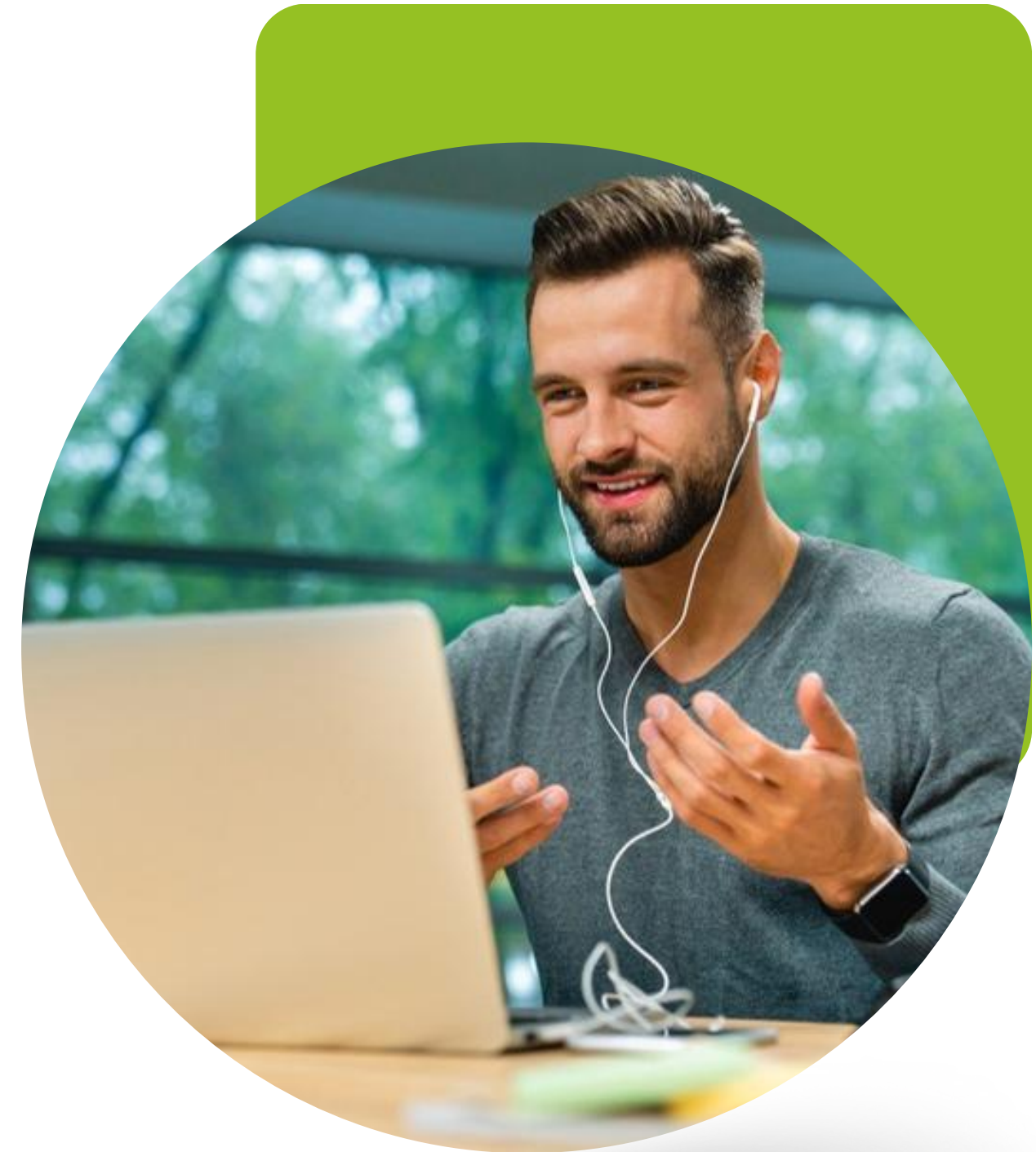


Table of Contents



1

Introduction

2

Ask yourself why?

3

Budget

4

Integrations

5

Features

6

Training Content

Free Trial your Short list

Next Steps



Introduction

You've realised that the way you were providing training is no longer cutting it? But you're not sure how best to fix that? Relax; you're not alone. Companies are moving to modern, cloud-based Learning Management Systems (LMS) in huge volumes, and the pandemic has only increased that urgency. If you think it looks like a bit of a minefield, here are some suggestions that will help you determine and agree on your priorities and find an approach that works for you.



1

Ask Yourself Why?

Knowing your objectives will be critical – bear in mind that at some point, you'll have to ask for the funds to pay for the LMS that you choose. So before you start to look at what LMS products are available, it will help to establish your strategic objectives i.e. why you're doing this and what you hope to achieve as a result.

Try to create SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-based). The goals you identify will be specific to your situation, but it will add focus to your search to invest some thought into the priorities and the benefits you aim to see from your LMS.



Considerations include:

THINK ABOUT YOUR AUDIENCE

If a significant number of them don't use technology often, try to keep things simple. Even if that means choosing an LMS that's less feature-rich, the user interface's simplicity will help drive better engagement among employees, which is probably a high priority, right?

DEMOGRAPHICS

If you have a majority of younger employees, you should pitch it at a level they'll respond to. In this case, features like gamification will help to make that age group respond positively.

WHERE WILL YOUR TRAINING BE DELIVERED?

Exclusively online? And if so, will it always be self-led? Or will there be some Instructor-led courses? If that's a requirement, make sure your LMS can enable you to manage calendar invites and locations (in the case of face-to-face sessions).

REPORTING

Talent development is all about improving performance for the individual and, by extension, for the employer. Make sure the LMS has a flexible (and easy to use) reporting capability so that you can track attendance and completion of courses.





SKILL LEVELS ARE ALSO SIGNIFICANT

Skill levels are also significant

It's unlikely that everyone will be at the same level in the various disciplines you want to train. Make sure that your chosen LMS is flexible enough to define different learning paths according to your workforce's existing different skill levels. Of course, if the purpose of your training effort is to ensure compliance (perhaps if you're in a heavily regulated sector), this is less important.



2

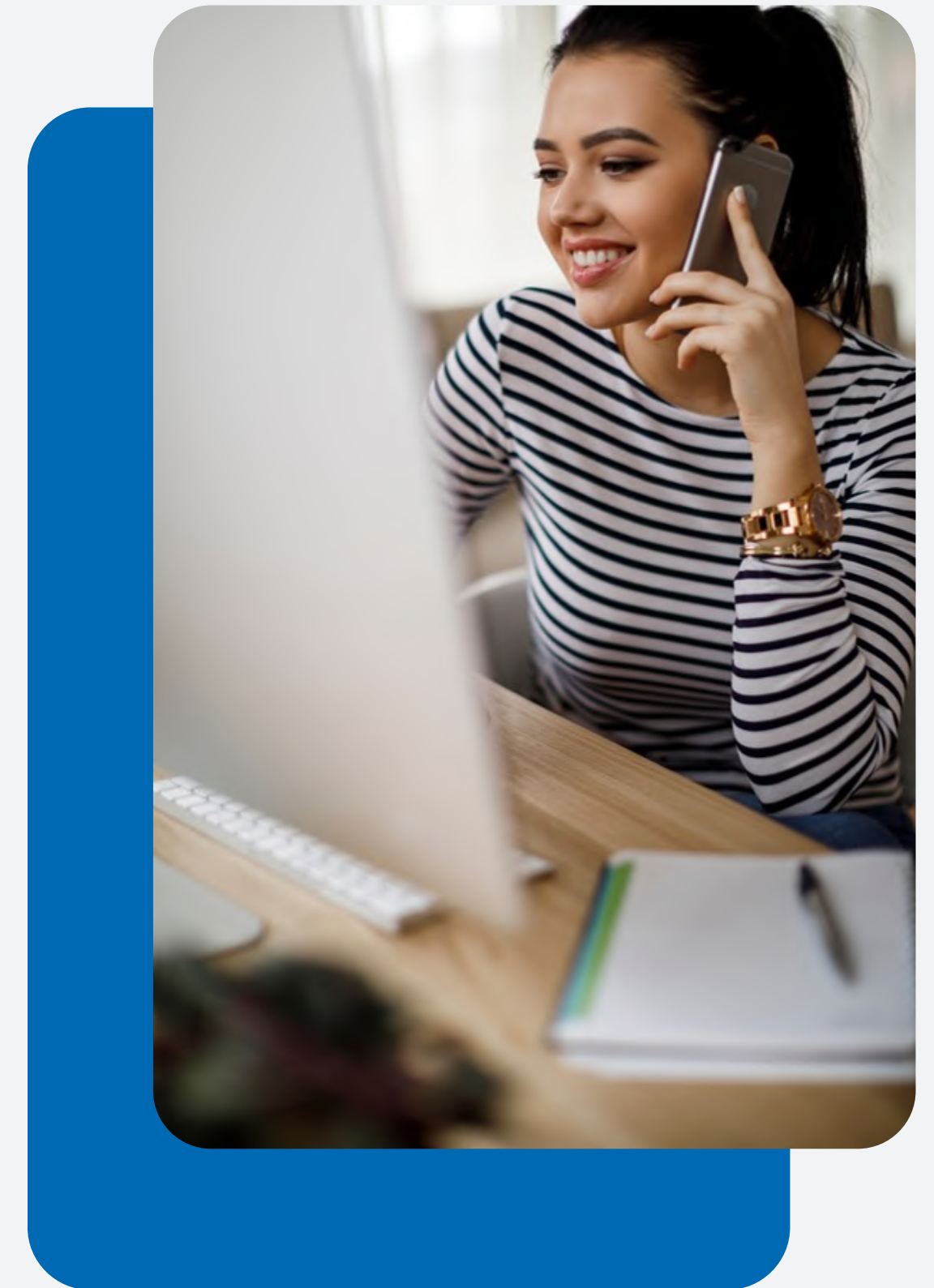
Budget

HOW MUCH DOES YOUR CURRENT TRAINING COST?

If you're planning to run all or most of your courses online, you'll save on the potential costs of venue hire, printed materials, an expert trainer, as well as travel and accommodation costs. .

PRICING MODELS VARY

and most LMS platforms are cloud-based, working on a Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) basis. Some will offer an outright licence purchase option, but most will be based on annual subscriptions, payable as annual, quarterly, or monthly fees.



LEARNING CONTENT

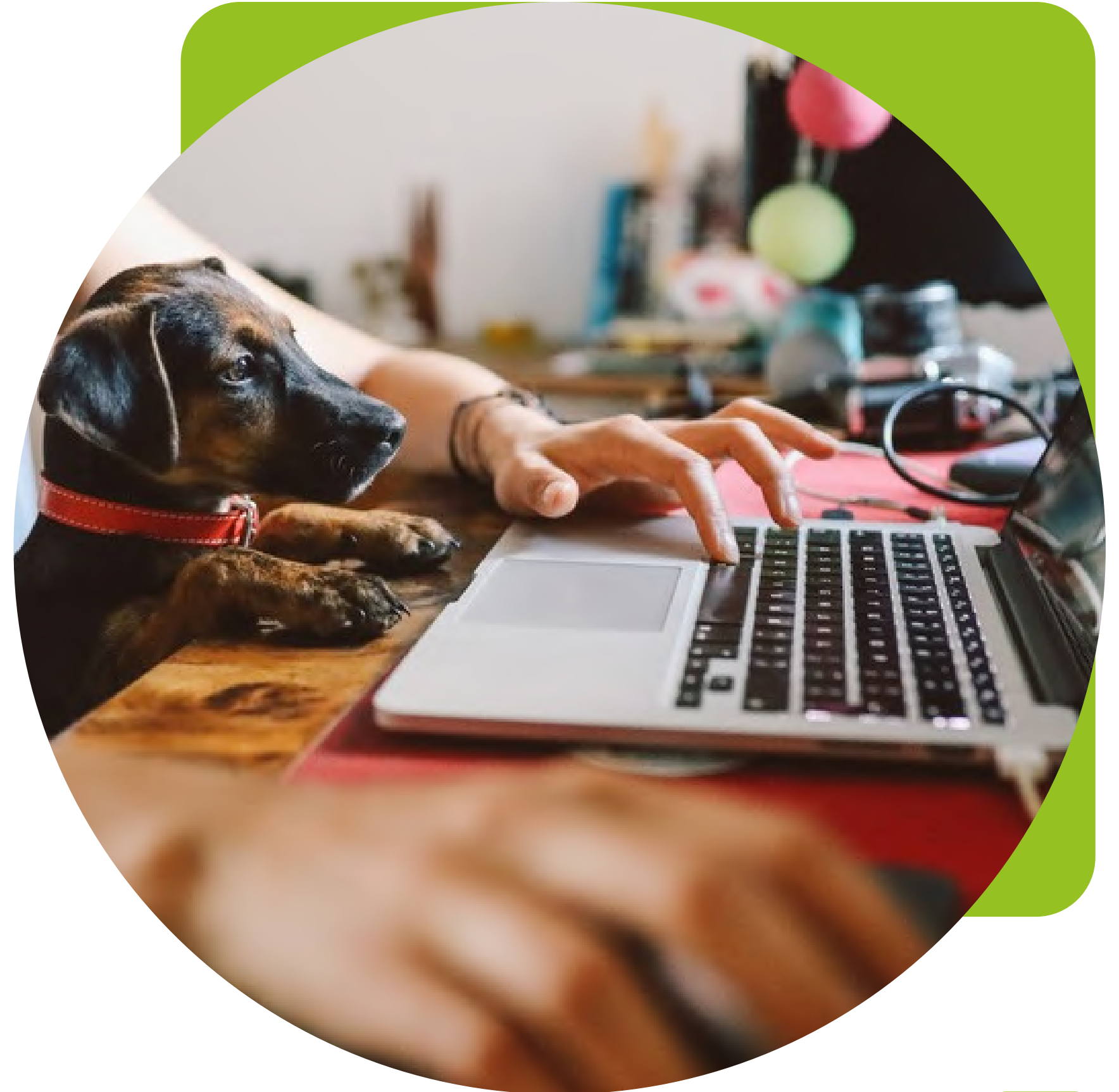
This is the area that is often underestimated. There are courses available off the shelf for most disciplines, and most LMS vendors offer a range that you can buy to work with the LMS. If you have specific needs, however, you may need to create your own content. This is not a skill that most companies have internally, so it's a good idea to find a partner who can help create new (or modify existing) training materials. The important thing is to allow for such costs in your budget calculations.



3

Integrations

If you have an HRIS, you'll want to be able to link the LMS to it. That will save you an enormous amount of effort. Ensure that new recruits can be automatically uploaded to the LMS and allocated to the training they need when they first join. Additionally, the ability to populate employee records in the HR system with details of training completed is invaluable. It helps with identifying skills gaps, performance appraisals, and even succession planning. If you have a regular 2-way exchange of information between the LMS and HRIS, your investment in both systems can truly start to pay huge dividends.



4

Features

Make a list of the type of features that you absolutely need. LMS vendors tend to show everything they can in a demo, and it's easy to be dazzled.

MUST-HAVE

By listing what really matters to you, you'll be able to reduce that risk. Doing this will also help you ask relevant questions of the vendor – for you, that might be reporting or integration with your HR system. If you have a predominantly younger workforce, you might have gamification higher up your 'must-have' list. Another capability that may be important for you is managing face-to-face training (often called Instructor-led Training (ILT), or a hybrid of self-guided with ILT.

NICE-TO-HAVE

If you're not in a sector where employees need to be annually tested and certificated in specialist areas, then the ability to award certificates on successful completion of a course will fall into the 'nice-to-have' category.





DON'T-NEED:

features can only be a good thing, right? Not always, and here's why: a very feature-rich LMS will be less appealing to trainees if it makes it harder to use. Also, you may decide that the extra—unnecessary—functionality isn't worth paying for. And even if it's not an extra that you can opt-out of, you'd still be paying for the effort that went into developing those redundant features.



5

Training Content



The most significant single factor in any learning programme will be the content that you provide to delegates. This is the area that companies neglect to consider all too often, and if you don't already have course material to use, developing good content can be time-consuming and costly. There are, of course, several different places where you can buy training courses that run on an LMS, but make sure that your chosen LMS can "run" these.



Modern LMS platforms usually also contain tools for developing your own training content or for assembling materials from different sources (YouTube, pdf, Powerpoint, etc.). Check how easy it is to build courses with your LMS. Don't forget to add aspects that will make the training both enjoyable and valuable – Quizzes to check the delegates' understanding; Certificates for successful completion. It's also essential to gather feedback from learners about the course they've just taken, so check that your LMS supports the inclusion of surveys.



6

Free Trial your Shortlist



It's a good idea to have a few different products to evaluate (but have it whittled down by this stage!). Ask the vendors for a free trial so that you can put their systems through their paces (most will be happy to let you do that). The best way to evaluate its suitability is to work your way through some courses, and the vendor can probably provide these. But if you already have some training materials, load them onto the LMS (the more, the merrier, to make sure it can cope!). Have a few colleagues work their way through the courses and ask for their feedback; that will give you an idea of how your "learner" colleagues would find this system.



Try out different things – perhaps create a course with the Admin tools, see how easy it is to generate a completion certificate or produce a report. Try contacting the vendor's support team to see how responsive they are. After this, ask yourself how easy these aspects were. If it was a challenging experience, that should tell you that your colleagues may also struggle with it too, and learners won't be fully engaged with the learning process. That's why we suggest having a few options by the time you reach this stage. It will take some time to do these free trials, so the other systems you've excluded earlier in your search won't add to that burden. But it's important to have alternatives because if you do a trial and find the system isn't right for you, you really don't want to be going back to the drawing board!





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TalentLMS has an adaptable pricing model and offers a free ongoing trial, so you can try it out with no risk. The best part is that if you decide to adopt the solution, any work you've done on the system will still be available. Additionally, as part of the free trial, you can also have 14-days complimentary access to TalentLibrary (a collection of ready-made courses with a focus on soft skills, created by TalentLMS)

[Click here to find out more](#)



E-LEARNING CONSULTANCY SERVICES

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Tugela People provide a complete and extensive e-Learning service to assist you in producing bespoke e-Learning material, including the custom branding of existing course materials, that delivers on your desired outcomes and helps to achieve your company goals. Tugela People provide a complete and extensive e-Learning service.

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