SoftDeCC

Administering corporate educa-tion and learning experience is not a contradiction.

Interview with Georg Nüssel, CEO, SoftDeCC Software GmbH

LMS vs. LXP – Can there be only one?

Often declared dead, Learning Management Systems (LMS) contin-ue to thrive and flourish in peaceful coexistence as part of profes-sional learning landscapes. In conjunction with virtual classrooms, Learning Experience Platforms (LXP), authoring, and collaboration tools, they form the core of learning ecosystems, providing compa-nies with structural individuality and, thus, competitive advantages.a

Georg Nüssel, CEO

SoftDeCC Software GmbH
Kapuzinerstr. 9c
D-80337 München

+49 (0) 89 / 30 90 83 9 - 30
info@softdecc.com

www.softdecc.com

eLearning Journal: The company SoftDeCC has been successful in the market with the LMS TCmanager® for over 20 years. During this time, you have observed many developments.

Georg Nüssel: *We have been in the mar-ket since 1998 with TCmanager®, initial-ly as software for the administration of training centers. Later, with the emerg-ing spread of e-learning, it evolved into* *an integrated e-learning platform with a comprehensive portal component. We have witnessed many trends and short-term hypes, often seeing new ideas al-legedly completely displacing existing solutions in the very near future, whether it be e-learning, virtual classrooms, or social learning. In reality, a mix of old and new always emerged. It has been crucial for LMS manufacturers and LMS cus-tomers to remain flexible.*

eLearning Journal: What is the specific scope of an LMS in companies today?.

Georg Nüssel: An LMS is the central administration component in corporate learning with interfaces to various learning platforms, virtual classrooms, content libraries, as well as interfaces for data transfer to accounting systems, HR systems, and external marketing platforms. Recently, the requirement for integrating an LXP has been added. The LMS is the core element for building a holistically connected learning landscape.

eLearning Journal: Why is the LMS repeatedly declared "dead"?

Georg Nüssel: *The understandable shift towards more self-directed learning was sometimes exaggerated to paint LMS as the adversary, enabling the redistribution of scarce resources. Some manufacturers, who found themselves in a dead-end with their inflexible and expensive LMS solutions, attempt a breakthrough with a new, vibrant layout and a few additional functions in the cloud.*

eLearning Journal: What are these additional functions?

Georg Nüssel: *At LEARNTEC, the topic of Artificial Intelligence (AI) was particularly emphasized. Artificial Intelligence is simplified with the characteristics of "autonomous behavior change." This describes a system that makes decisions and acts independently without influence from individuals, for example, recommending*

training content. One could also simplify it as an evolution of widely used cross-selling agents on the internet.

This requires access to a large and diverse data pool, which individual companies typically do not have. Cloud-based LXP solutions can access the diverse data of their customers in an anonymized manner, analyze developments, and suggest, for instance, the "best learning content." However, this also means that these learning recommendations ultimately only reflect the market consensus and do not align with the company-specific strategy. With cross-company "best recommendations," differentiating features and competitive advantages disappear. It is essential to carefully consider which company and personal data end up in the cloud.

eLearning Journal: What else is seen as a difference?

Georg Nüssel: *LXPs often advertise with a Netflix-like layout of catalog content instead of a rigid tree structure. This is a surface design that can be subsumed under "image tile per entry.*

The integration of certain external learning platforms is often already built into LXPs, while LMS manufacturers may need to create the interface. Today, connecting platforms with standardized content is, however, a standard service and not wizardry.

Regardless of the LMS or LXP debate, a powerful search function that can access multiple repositories, both internal and external learning platforms, is crucial.

eLearning Journal: Wie beurteilen Sie den aktuellen Trend zur Learning Experience Plattform (LXP)?

Georg Nüssel: *LXPs can add value as a consolidating layer in addition to the LMS. To replace the LMS, one would have to rebuild all basic processes of training organization and all interfaces, which is complex. The idea of making a "clean break" from legacy systems and starting anew is tempting. However, it is overlooked that many so-called legacy systems are simply operationally or legally necessary.,*

eLearning Journal: However, LXP is supposed to place the learner or the individual learning experience at the center, unlike the LMS.

Georg Nüssel: *Competent employees want to work and learn independently. The transfer of learning in self-directed learning processes is proven to be higher. However, learning itself is an intrapersonal process that takes place neither in the LMS nor in the LXP. The decision to strengthen the individual's learning competencies or to promote the learning culture in an organizational context is not a technical issue but a question of the human resources development strategy. Whether LMS or LXP, both ultimately provide units of knowledge. Whether content, on-site courses, or other formats are freely accessible, can be booked free of charge, and without approval processes is a company-specific decision. If content is also to be published without access restrictions, the LMS manages these just as well. For LMS manufacturers that do not license the number of bookings, this question is irrelevant. We precisely reflect the desired structure.*

SoftDeCC has enhanced TCmanager® LMS with optional Learning Experience Freatures

By the way, Corporate Learning is not an end in itself but is linked to the development and continuity of the company. Ideally, individual learning processes influence organizational learning and vice versa. This is the only way a company can evolve. Processes, content, formats, and learning interfaces must be continuously reviewed and, if necessary, adjusted.

eLearning Journal: Why is an LMS still relevant today?

Georg Nüssel: *Learning Management Systems, along with virtual classrooms, external learning platforms, etc., form a learning landscape. The LMS provides the infrastructure to make knowledge (in the form of WBTs, personal training) and learning in well-structured, defined exchange formats accessible to specific groups of people. This is not only about mandatory training such as occupational safety and compliance. Particularly relevant are also contents seen as a competitive advantage. These include internal company information from R&D, production, and service processes that one would hopefully not find on YouTube. These are important topics that will not disappear.*

The administrative components of the LMS serve process support with qualification management, the organization of sophisticated educational campaigns, and automated correspondence. They ensure compliance with desired approval processes, manage resources (trainers, rooms, equipment, materials, etc.), and handle, for example, the billing of course fees for external participants or on a cost center basis.

Learners have access to their education history, upcoming qualification topics, and the learning platform through secure portals, regardless of whether the content is accessible via an LXP interface, on external learning platforms, or in the company's own training portfolio.

For trainers, executives, and suppliers, the LMS provides additional portal solutions with task-specific functionality portfolios. Learning Management Systems are deeply integrated into the IT infrastructure of companies through interfaces. This integration is of particular importance in the context of digitization regarding secure, cross-system data exchange between finance, HR, the corporate directory, workforce planning, etc.

eLearning Journal: So it's not an either-or question?

Georg Nüssel: *Exactly! Instead of creating artificial adversaries and investing energy in replicating complex existing solutions, companies should strategically and efficiently expand their own infrastructure. LMS and LXP, combined with virtual classrooms, collaboration tools, and personal exchange formats, can be connected to create a comprehensive learning landscape. The central task is to recognize the company-specific requirements and develop tailor-made concepts that can adapt and expand flexibly.*

eLearning Journal: We thank you for this conversation.