



# The Business Case for a Learning Content Management System

## Research Brief



## Introduction

Every year, organizations lose a significant portion of revenue due to inefficiencies in their processes and practices. One area that can have a huge impact is learning and development, which is not immune to these issues and can contribute to the loss of revenue.



Business-process experts point to five specific culprits that drive these inefficiencies, each of which can be found in the learning content development and management processes.

- 1. Silos.** Typically, content is developed in silos, with each business unit, functional area, geography or individual person creating discrete material, regardless of whether it can be used in other areas. Nearly identical learning programs are often created multiple times.
- 2. Lack of Integration.** Many organizations have multiple delivery points for learning, including Learning Management Systems (LMS), portals, websites, etc. Different formats and specifications for each system require designers to rebuild content for each use.

- 3. Bottlenecks.** When developing learning content, there are often multiple authors, each of whom must wait their turn to contribute, due to lack of version control. Another bottleneck is the review process, which can require sign-offs at each stage of development.







- 4. Redundancy.** “Reinventing the wheel” is perhaps the biggest offender in learning content development. Authors often “reinvent the wheel” when developing learning content, recreating learning objects multiple times because they either didn’t know something already existed or couldn’t find it. This issue is compounded by content redundancies created by silos and integration issues.

- 5. Lack of insight.** Without a way to manage individual content objects, organizations are left to measure learning based on courses, classes and programs. If something is not working, it is discarded and restarted. Having insight into the impact of specific elements allows for more targeted adjustments.

## LCMS is the Solution

A Learning Content Management System (LCMS) is designed to directly address these issues. And while companies struggle to find room in their budgets for new technology solutions, the LCMS is designed to eliminate the types of inefficiencies that can cost an organization real money. Brandon Hall Group’s latest Learning and Development Benchmarking Study found that the average hourly cost to create any kind of learning is approximately \$300.

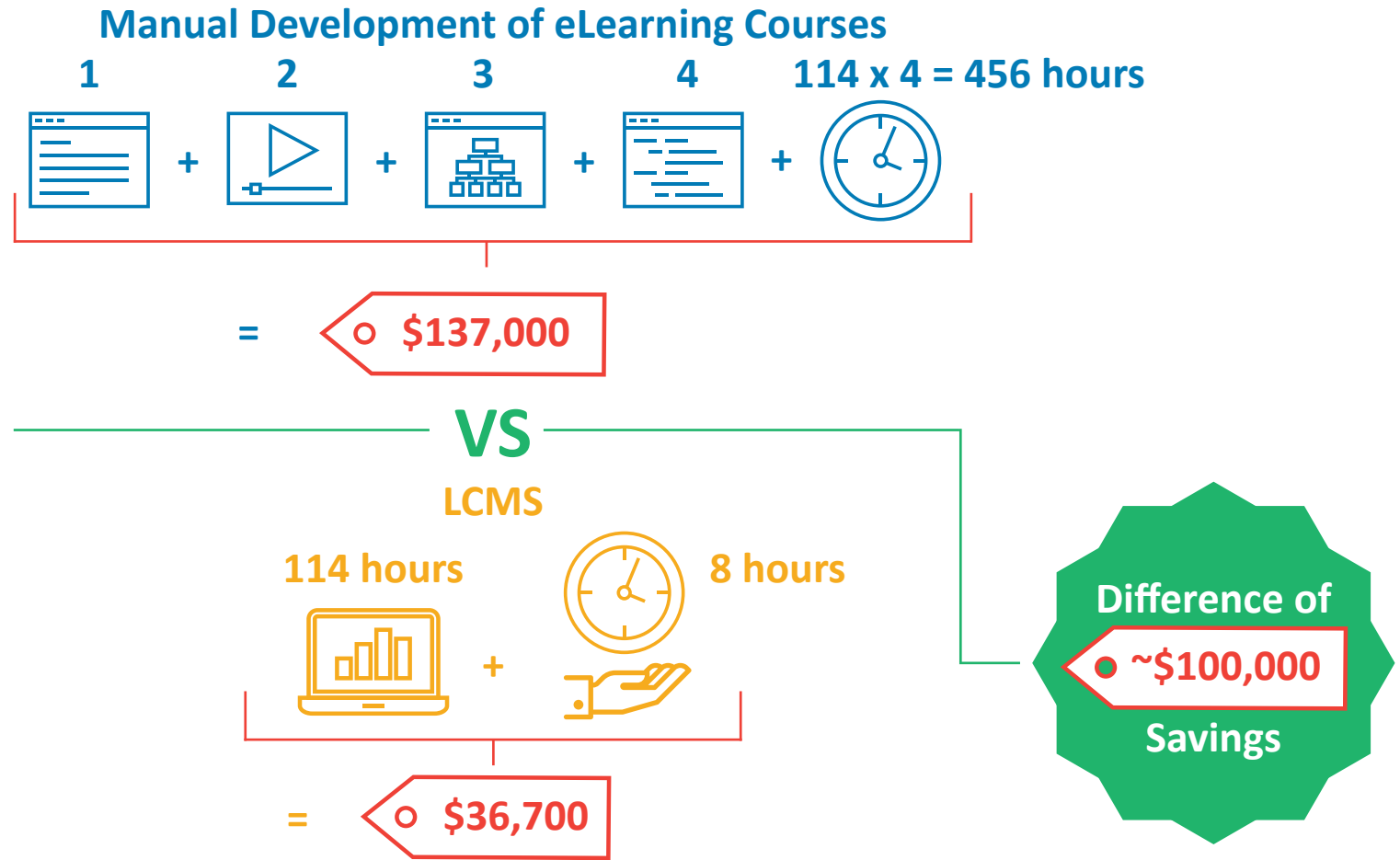
**Figure 1: Cost of Creating Learning Elements**

Element	Average hours to create	Total cost
 In-person instructor-led class	101	\$ 30,168.00
 eLearning course	114	\$ 34,308.00
 Game	114	\$ 34,215.00
 Simulation	156	\$ 46,740.00
 Mobile app	248	\$ 74,316.00
 Instructional video	80	\$ 23,877.00

Hidden within those development hours are the five drivers of inefficiency. The processes inflate the hours it takes to create learning, and in many cases, redundancies double that time. Companies need a system for managing content that addresses these inefficiencies and that is where the LCMS flexes its muscle.

**Figure 2: Savings with an LCMS**









Based on the calculations in Figure 1, if you wanted to create four versions of an eLearning course, you would spend 456 hours developing that content at a cost of \$137,000. With an LCMS, you produce the course once and expend only a handful of hours to realign content objects. Your potential savings could be about \$100,000 for that single learning asset.



## Benefits of an LCMS

Brandon Hall Group’s Learning and Development Benchmarking Study found that the majority of the learning content that companies use is created in-house. For example, 83% of companies say that at least half of their technical skills training content is developed internally.

**Figure 3: Where Do You Source Your Training Content for Each of the Following?**

Training Focus	In-house and third-party equally	Mostly in-house	All in-house
 Leadership	31%	23%	9%
 Team Development	24%	36%	12%
 Compliance/Regulatory	26%	28%	19%
 Soft Skills	30%	33%	9%
 Technical Skills	29%	37%	16%
 Sales	26%	33%	16%
 Ethics	18%	32%	20%
 HR legal	25%	32%	15%

Given this environment, companies must have the tools to quickly and easily create and recreate content. It means being able to import content from other sources, unpack it so the elements can be explored and recombine these elements to create new learning packages and content.

Here is how an LCMS addresses costly inefficiencies:

- **Breaks down content silos.** An LCMS allows instructional designers and other learning and development professionals to manage content in a dynamic system with multiple points of integration across the organization. Even authors in remote locations can access the same learning objects and reuse them to suit their needs, rather than starting from scratch.
- **Improves interoperability.** An LCMS permits users to systematically analyze learning content before distribution to ensure it complies with established standards. It can be distributed in any required standard (SCORM, PDF, ePub, HTML, XML, Print Bundle, zip manifest etc.) to an LMS, learning experience platform, web portal or any other end-user interface.
- **Reduces Bottlenecks.** The issue of multiple authors is addressed by creating a place where instructional designers, editors, subject matter experts and others can assemble and edit content. The review/approval process is often inefficient, but an LCMS can streamline and shorten the process by assigning tasks to users, monitoring their progress and providing an audit trail of their work.
- **Minimizes Redundancy.** Companies need a platform that enables users to store, manage and reuse multiple types of learning objects. An LCMS can facilitate the enrichment of learning content with metadata and relationships, making it easily discoverable.
- **Gains insight.** An LCMS gives users a view into all usage of individual assets across the system.



## Key Takeaways

At a time when the learning strategy is focusing on being more agile to keep pace with the changing business, content issues are creating bottlenecks and slowdowns. If the process gets bogged down because content formats and standards are incompatible with the ways modern learners access content, the strategy fails.

By doing some upfront research, learning managers can be armed with real savings to justify the adoption of an LCMS. This technology choice is not based on intangible things like look and feel or ease of use (although an LCMS can help address those). Rather, adoption is based on the hard savings realized through more efficient workflows and content that is more discoverable and agile.

Learning leaders evaluating an LCMS should consider the following actions:

- Create a detailed workflow of how content is currently developed, reviewed and distributed, seeking to identify inefficiencies, and be sure to look at how well your learning content complies with the 3 Cs of metadata: completeness, correctness and consistency.
- Conduct an inventory of their learning asset library, looking for duplicate and outdated material.
- Work with instructional designers and other authors to uncover pain points in their workflow.
- Examine current content-search functionality to determine the relevance of results returned.
- Review the content library to inventory current formats, identifying areas where there may be either too many or too few formats.

These items can all be quantified into cost savings, making it easier to build the business case for the value of an LCMS within the technology ecosystem.

## About Copyright Clearance Center (CCC)

Copyright Clearance Center (CCC) builds unique solutions that connect content and rights in contextually relevant ways through software and professional services. CCC helps people navigate vast amounts of data to discover actionable insights, enabling them to innovate and make informed decisions. CCC, with its subsidiaries RightsDirect and Ixxus, collaborates with customers to advance how data and information is integrated, accessed, and shared while setting the standard for effective copyright solutions that accelerate knowledge and power innovation. CCC is headquartered in Danvers, Mass. and has offices across North America, Europe and Asia. To learn more about CCC, visit [www.copyright.com](http://www.copyright.com).





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Brandon Hall Group is an HCM research and advisory services firm that provides insights around key performance areas, including Learning and Development, Talent Management, Leadership Development, Talent Acquisition, and HR/Workforce Management.

With more than 10,000 clients globally and over 25 years of delivering world-class research and advisory services, Brandon Hall Group is focused on developing research that drives performance in emerging and large organizations, and provides strategic insights for executives and practitioners responsible for growth and business results.

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