

Software Advice

**The 3 Best
eLearning
Tools and
Technologies
Compared**

The 3 Best eLearning Tools and Technologies Compared

by: Rhiân Davies

Smart organizations know that employee training and development is essential to improving the performance of their workforce and increasing profit, yet many organizations are struggling with [knowing how to deliver](#) learning and development experiences.

It's not that employers don't want to train their employees: Many are grappling with knowing how to deliver learning and development experiences to the entirety of their workforce because of their employees' various needs and learning preferences.



68% of employees prefer to learn at work



58% of employees prefer to learn at their own pace



49% of employees prefer to learn at the point of need

Employee learning preferences ([Source](#))

The eLearning market is now saturated with tools and technologies that offer learning solutions that equip every type of learner and business with what they're looking for. And it's because of this that organizations are struggling to compare products to suit their needs.

In this eLearning tools and technologies guide, we'll break down three types of learning applications—including their strengths and weaknesses—to help you shortlist the best eLearning tools for your employees' needs and expectations.

eLearning tools and technologies: A comparison

An increasingly saturated learning technology market creates challenges for buyers looking to evaluate, compare, and eventually shortlist products.

There are three main types of applications that offer learning and development products: [human capital management \(HCM\) suites](#), point solutions such as [learning management systems \(LMS\)](#), and [talent management solutions](#). Below, we'll go through each of their buyer trends, strengths, and weaknesses, to help guide you towards the most suitable learning solution.

HCM suites

[HCM suites](#) are designed to handle the entire employee life cycle from recruitment, engagement, development, and retention. HCM software suites offer core and strategic HR functions for a range of business sizes, but are often better geared towards large enterprises.

What kind of organization should invest in an HCM suite?

Organizations that are looking to use one system to deliver their eLearning technology alongside a core HR platform, and those looking for robust analytics and reporting capabilities.

Strengths:

- Comprehensive HCM suites manage the end-to-end employee life cycle.
- Offers users a single sign-on across modules.
- Learners are already familiar with the software interface.
- Suitable for multiple industries and types of workers, such as hourly, salaried, contingent, and remote workers.
- Employee workflows and histories are integrated in one interface and tasks are automated.

Weaknesses:

- The majority of vendors focus on larger organizations of 5,000 employees and upwards.
 - Because so many workflows are tied to one suite, buyers can be reluctant to switch systems for more suitable functionality because of the incurred disruption to users.
 - Learning and development modules within HCM suites tend to be quite basic.
 - Many vendors don't offer learning and development modules as stand-alone products, but must be bought in a suite bundle alongside a core HR module.
 - HCM suites aren't generally leaders in learning and development innovation, and often follow in the footsteps of point solutions and talent management suites.
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Point solutions

Point solutions include [learning management systems \(LMS\)](#) and learning experience platforms that target a specific functionality. Depending on the solution, these normally handle the management of learning and development programs, tracking of progress, and reporting.

What kind of organization should invest in a point solution?

Organizations looking to adopt software for a specific group of learners, those that are not looking to team their learning solution with a core HR solution, and those that want to formalize their training processes.

Strengths:

- Point solutions are often customized rather than out of the box solutions, meeting user-specific needs.
- Product and functionality is solely learning and development focused.
- Vendors often offer more flexibility in terms of pricing.

Weaknesses:

- Integration with other solutions such as core HR is often limited.
 - Vendors tend to operate on a country/region-specific basis.
 - Products are often very niche—often aimed at vertical industries and one business size.
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Talent management suites

Talent management suites integrate several areas of talent management such as learning management, recruiting, onboarding, performance, compensation, and succession planning. These solutions are centered around employee and talent development and provide a holistic view of skills, skill gaps, and future talent needs. Furthermore, they are often supported by highly functional mobile access.

What kind of organization should invest in a talent management suite?

Organizations who are looking for a robust learning and development content catalog and software with a talent-centric focus. Additionally, organizations who want learning and development experiences that can be supported on mobile devices.

Strengths:

- Talent management suites generally integrate well with leading core HR products.
- Product focus is on employee and talent development.
- Databases for skills and behaviors helps monitor and link all learning and development processes.

Weaknesses:

- Vendors often try to encourage buyers to purchase the entire talent management suite, which increases costs and often leaves buyers paying for unnecessary functionality.
 - Buyers are often tied to many processes in one talent management suite, so it reduces their leverage to negotiate discounts.
 - Pricing comparisons can be difficult due to highly diverse pricing models across TM suite vendors.
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Next steps on shortlisting an eLearning tool

Once you've identified which type of application most suits your needs, the next step is developing your own list of criteria to shortlist potential products. Ask yourself the following questions to help you narrow down your eLearning tool choices:

- ✓ **Technology:** What exact functionality is our organization looking for? If the product doesn't support it out-of-the-box, can the functionality or content be custom-made?
- ✓ **Employees:** Will the solution support employees' learning needs as the organization scales? Does the software support our organization's projected growth in headcount?
- ✓ **Vendors:** What functionality is the vendor planning on releasing? Are there features in the product's roadmap that the organization doesn't need now, but will in the future?
- ✓ **Pricing:** Is the technology priced on a pay-per-course, pay-per-use, or pay-per-learner basis? Is there another product that better suits our budget while still matching our feature requirements?

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