Title of Paper: Instructional Design Report

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LMS Selection

TalentLMS was methodically selected as a best-fit management system for the client. Before selecting a Learning Management System (LMS), the instructional designer used a participatory approach of data-gathering to determine the needs of key stakeholders at the client's institution. This approach produced unique and specific drivers that considered end-users' needs and the organisation's mission, vision and objectives (Foreman, 2018). Through prioritisation, some of the most critical needs of the LMS to satisfy, included data analysis and reporting; a system that provides communication tools for teachers and students; a scalable and reliable product; and a convenient user interface to name a few. The instructional designer objectively cross-referenced this information against key considerations for designing content within a LMS. Therefore, the subsequent paragraphs will discuss and justify why TalentLMS is a viable contender amidst its competitors.

TalentLMS supports essential educational needs. Firstly, it is an intuitive management system that has high usability. There is very minimal training and technical knowledge needed to operate the system. In spite of this, TalentLMS has unobtrusive, integrated support systems in the form of quick and effective training tutorials, documentation and webinars for guidance in course building. Secondly, it is feature-rich. It offers a gamut of features, for example, built-in quizzes, multimedia, discussion boards and communication tools including live conferences. Moreover, external features can be integrated from calendars and email merges to more sophisticated e-commerce structures such as finance and sales. Thirdly, the system considers those learners who may have technical knowledge and offers personalised experiences like the option to include coding. Users, therefore, can embed code into content and artefacts like certificates for customisation. Fourthly, data reporting is of a high standard and analytics report

on content, tests and user progress and behaviour. Not only are reports detailed, informative and well-presented but there are various methods to receive output. For instance, users can receive information through infographics and specify certain time frames. Lastly, TalentLMS employs gamification as a way to motivate learners.

Key Considerations

Whilst the aforementioned features and elements may be 'nice to have' in a LMS, it was prudent to discover how TalentLMS stood up against key and more concrete LMS considerations. It was determined that TalentLMS designs content for 21st century learning due to its response to and handling of accessibility and copyright issues, universal design and formatting of content. Coombs (2010) advanced that a system that puts measures in place to close the gap of inequality of education, creates a level learning space for all. Moreover, Coombs (2010) regarded making content in a LMS accessible as a doable task. Digitised information now offers multiple ways of being manipulated in order to be easily accessed by persons who may have obstacles or difficulties accessing content in a single format (Coombs, 2010). The selected system is governed by all Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) and is built with modern engineering principles (TalentLMS Support, n.d). It therefore ensures that navigation, search, keyboard, accessibility, usability and compatibility are compliant with WCAG guidelines (TalentLMS Support, n.d). This can be exemplified in content magnification to enhance learner visibility among many others. Similarly, it is Application Programming Interface (API) compliant and supports multiple web browsers.

Moreover, Armatas (2008) expressed the view that learning in a LMS has made it easier to disseminate copyrighted works where both instructors and students may be culprits. Whilst TalentLMS cannot control published course content, it safeguards educators' materials and

content (TalentLMS, n.d). As such, instructors can use their company's logo as a watermark on their content. In addition, shared embedded files and Uniform Resource Locators (URLs) only last two hours and expire after that timeframe (TalentLMS Support, n.d).

Furthermore, TalentLMS ensures that its system design follows the principles of Universal Design for Learning. According to the National Disability Authority (2020), Universal Design develops and promotes an environment that is accessed and maximised by all learners regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity, size, ability or disability. In this type of environment, all learners are given equal opportunities to learn and succeed. There are two major ways that TalentLMS incorporates Universal Design. Firstly, it provides instructors with multiple means of representation. In other words, information can be presented in different and sometimes flexible formations. For instance, text size can be increased, colour can be used for emphasis and even built-in audio can be toggled within recording to amplify sounds. Lastly, it offers multiple means of engagement. TalentLMS has ensured that multimedia including graphics, audio and authoring and collaborative tools can be used within its system.

Ultimately, formatting of content seems to be a priority in TalentLMS. According to Coombs (2010), formatting is useful as it provides clear navigation, maintains consistency and adds structure as well as provides better accessibility for readers with disabilities. In TalentLMS, a key example of formatting is headers. These are categorised and users simply have to select among six header types at the point of need.

In conclusion, TalentLMS appears to offer enriched experiences for its users especially due to its features. However, whilst features may offer some substance to learning, there was a need for deeper analysis to unearth how effectively the management system handled accessibility and copyright issues, Universal Design and formatting. In the discussion presented, for reasons

such as being governed by WCAG guidelines, including headers and buffering copyright

materials, being accessible on different devices and web browsers and so on, TalentLMS can be

a reputable best-fit for the client's needs.

Instructional Design Report

LMS Description

      Beginner's Spanish: SPAN100's aim is to build you into a confident, communicative

Spanish speaker. Have you ever listened to a Spanish advertisement and wished you understood

what the speakers were saying? If so, this course may peak your interest. With a few clicks and

tricks, dedication and active engagement, you can become communicative in Spanish. Not only

will your speaking be developed but your listening, reading and writing skills will be enhanced

after being an active participant. These new-found skills will help you establish and maintain

social relationships with other course participants which can be transferred to real life settings in

your future. The course is principally for adult learners as there will be some self-regulated and

problem-based learning involved.

LMS Credentials

Select here to gain access to the LMS.

Administrator, Instructor and Learner view

- Login address: griffithsasha@gmail.com

- Password: dEfaultpass

Select here for a quick guide on how to navigate between learner view, administrator and

instructor view on TalentLMS. Commence the video from 0:30 to 0:55.

Important links:

LMS access: https://tutoras.talentlms.com/index

Support system for different role or user access:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YEe2IoQvGAQ

User Login:

Link: https://tutoras.talentlms.com/dashboard

Username: John_Doe

(Please note that the user must log out of administrator/ instructor view before using this link)

Voice Thread Link:

https://voicethread.com/share/19930800/

Reflection

Designing an e-learning experience using an LMS was rewarding but it is not without its challenges. Yet, these challenges caused me to dig deeper and to be more experimental and creative so that a more learner-centred space could be developed. This reflection is a metacognitive self-examination regarding my design of the module in TalentLMS. In the following paragraphs, I will briefly discuss:

General Considerations

Peer Reviews

Revisions and

Concluding Remarks

General considerations that guided the initial design.

Besides the mentioned key considerations, there were alternative considerations that I thought were useful, effective and gave a competitive edge once placed in the system. The LMS design is learner centric and considers social and cognitive presence, building a virtual community and teacher presence.

Social and cognitive presence was used so that learners could co-construct their second language knowledge through peer interaction. In addition, social interactions could expose learners to a pluralistic of ideas that they would normally not be exposed to working independently. Cognitive presence was done methodically in pre-activities that allowed learners to think about and guess objectives, quizzes and learner activities.

Similarly, establishing a virtual learning community was paramount. This was done through an initial introductory discussion along with participating in discussion forums. According to Anderson (2008), when a virtual learning community or a climate of trust is not established from the onset, learners may be reluctant to post in forums.

Lastly, teacher presence was a key focus in the LMS design. Students can experience feelings of isolation in distance learning, therefore the system should have a climate of trust. Additionally, Anderson (2008) posited that instructor presence has more impact on successful student online learning than peer activities.

Peer reviews

An instructional designer must be able to accept critique of designs. The feedback was also fashioned in such a way that it allowed for peers to test the pilot and engage in alpha testing. Most of the reports concurred with and reflected the hard work that I put into the LMS. Additionally, some reported a few kinks that I was not aware of and had to fine tune. Other reviews, whilst valuable, veered a bit or came from a point of misunderstanding. For instance, one peer stated that on entering the system, the course evaluation was displayed. This occurred not because of the faultiness of the LMS but rather because since there was single user log in because of the free subscription, the page automatically allowed users to continue where they last stopped in their learning. Moreover, another user commented on the bland aesthetics without realising that users do not see the content page, but rather only see the pop-up screen of content. Overall, each feedback was useful and allowed for more scrutiny to be done for further enhancements.

Revisions.

In the second iteration, modifications were made to the following

- visibility and accessibility issues regarding links and content

- including topics for course evaluation

Concluding remarks.

This activity has demonstrated the uniqueness of peer reviews in designs especially in using a system where those key considerations for example, accessibility issues and design for all users, are of utmost importance. Overall, it was a rewarding experience and I look forward to sharing, growing and improving with peers.

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