Managing Relationships with External Learning Management System Providers

TOPIC

This session will explore different experiences, aspects and lessons learnt in managing relationships with external Learning Management System providers.

More and more universities are exploring the shift from internally hosted and supported LMS systems to an externally hosted and supported model. With this shift comes many potential benefits but also creates a new paradigm of association and interaction from an internal University services and support area to a commercial external third party. To compound the impact of this shift, LMS systems are usually mission critical, complex and high profile. The speakers in this session discuss their experiences across a number of institutions (The Australian National University, University of Canberra, Canberra Institute of Technology) and perspectives (Program Managers, Educational Designer, Educational Technologist) and will share some lessons learnt managing these important and complex relationships.

TALKS

Handing over the keys while keeping one hand on the wheel: Managing an Externally Hosted and Supported LMS
Allan Sieper, Divisional Manager Academic Support and Information Services
The Australian National University

Hosting an LMS externally brings with it many benefits such as an instant support service, rapid implementation, an existing knowledge base and extensive system experience. With it also comes a certain way of operating which must be successfully navigated for the best outcomes. Allan will discuss how a thorough understanding of contract specifics, the development of quality communication channels and clearly defined processes help to ease the transition from an internal to external hosting and support model.

Moodle has Changed the Game at UC
Alan Arnold, Program Leader - Learning Technologies & Environments
University of Canberra

The University of Canberra was the 2nd University in Australia to adopt Moodle as its enterprise LMS but the first to do so by using the services of an external partner to increase the university's capabilities and capacity. Two successful teaching years down the track, Alan will describe how this decision has changed some aspects of management and teaching practice at UC.

I'll just call the helpdesk… who arent even on campus… or in this timezone
Marina Lobastov, Educational Designer
The Australian National University

Transitioning from a completely in-house institution to an outsourced LMS brings with it a need to make cultural changes across the University. Whereas previously a highly responsive, if at times ad-hoc, approach was sufficient, external hosting requires internal processes be more structured and transparent. Subtle (and not so subtle) changes needed to be implemented when aligning the processes and interactions of academic staff, the educational design community and management. Marina will discuss the learning curve and changes to the landscape necessary to make the ANU community more comfortable with external hosting.

Coordinating the efforts of internal IT departmants and external hosting partners
Minh-Tam Nguyen, E-Learning Services Manager
Canberra Institute of Technology

Hosting a mission critical system externally requires close collaboration between internal IT depatments and the external hosting partner, to ensure that all required data is available to the LMS in a secure manner. Integrations between systems need to be robust and perform smoothly which can be tricky if one of the systems is outside of the university network.

CONVENER

Allan Sieper, Divisional Manager Academic Support and Information Services
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