

# 5 LMS INTEGRATIONS YOUR EMPLOYEES CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT



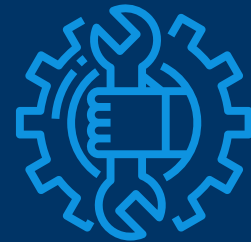
## INTRODUCTION



**“Our current system isn’t intuitive.”**



**“It needs to be easy. Fewer clicks.”**



**“The process today is too manual.”**

The pain points we tend to hear about the most center around a common theme – workplace experience. From content integrations to single sign-on to virtual instructor-led trainings, there are an array of scenarios where integrations can enhance your LMS and streamline business workflow by removing otherwise manual steps and tasks. Not only does this help save time, money and resources for the organization, it also goes a long way to providing a more positive user experience. In this eBook, we’ll share five key integrations that will improve your learners’ experience.



#1

# SINGLE SIGN-ON

Single sign-on (SSO) functionality helps organizations simplify the overall user experience. Rather than requiring employees to maintain distinct usernames and passwords for every application they use, SSO allows them to maintain a single username/password that can be used to seamlessly access numerous applications, including the LMS. Single sign-on can be configured using many different providers including industry standards such as Microsoft’s Active Directory as well as other providers that support SAML or IdP.

## INTEGRATION SCENARIOS

From both a business and technical perspective, it is quickest to integrate SSO with your LMS when you already have the architecture in place and your organization is using it with other applications. Once your employees have seen how simple it is to seamlessly log in to multiple applications, they will expect that same experience as new sites are implemented. If you don’t already have the technical infrastructure in place, SSO is still worth pursuing although it is a larger internal endeavor. The major gains to user experience come from using SSO across most if not all your applications requiring authentication.

# QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER



1. Are you already using SSO in your organization? If so, does your LMS provider have experience integrating with your SSO provider?
2. Do you have unique identifiers for all users such as an employee ID or network username?
3. Will all system users be able to utilize SSO, or are there any audiences that will still need to log in without SSO?
4. Do you have more than one SSO provider? If so, does your LMS provider have the capability to handle multiple SSO integrations?
5. Will you require SSO on mobile devices?



#2

## VIRTUAL INSTRUCTOR-LED TRAINING

Virtual instructor-led training (vILT) integrations allow learning management systems to seamlessly join with virtual training platforms such as WebEx Training Center, Adobe Connect or other similar applications. These tools help instructors and users engage from anywhere in the world, and the integration provides a simplified workflow when administrators configure these learning events in an LMS.

vILT is commonly used for organizations that are spread across multiple locations; they can save a significant amount of money and productivity time by removing the need for employee travel and the accompanying expenses. With this integration, training can be created quickly and appear on a learner's transcript where it can be launched with one click. It simplifies the workplace experience by allowing learners to launch from a platform where they already go to take other types of training, rather than having to log in to yet another system. Additionally, the learner's attendance can be tracked automatically, thus removing the time-consuming task of manually tracking attendance.

## INTEGRATION SCENARIOS

If your organization offers many virtual instructor-led training sessions, the reduction in manual work for your administrators makes this integration worth pursuing. Manually configuring the administrative portion of a vILT session in two systems often takes around 15 minutes, but it can be done in under 5 minutes with the vILT integration in place. When a vILT integration is in place, the system automatically tracks attendance and marks learners attended, thus removing the manual processes on the back end of the session.

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER



1. Do you already have a virtual training platform implemented?
2. Is the vILT platform you use supported as an integration with your LMS?
3. Are you delivering training using your virtual tool that needs to be tracked? Or is it more of a meeting tool where tracking attendance is not required?
4. Does the same administrator manage sessions in both the vILT tool and the LMS, or are there multiple administrators?



#3

## CONTENT

Content integrations allow organizations to expand their LMS learning library quickly and easily, providing a broad spectrum of additional web-based training options for learners from third-party providers. Often, organizations interested in integrating content from a third-party platform will use a pre-configured connector to seamlessly link content from the content provider to the LMS. Once the connector is configured, web-based trainings can be easily imported with almost instant access for LMS users, and updates are made as content changes. LMS content connectors are often configured by integration experts, who can help ensure content is organized and distributed according to each company's requirements and contract provisions.

Once configured, the content connectors can be used by administrators for importing additional content over time. In situations where a formal connector is not available, content integrations can still be achieved using SCORM or other standards. Without a connector or integration in place, the user experience can suffer, with learners forced to log into multiple systems and/or having to wait for a history upload to take place before they can see the completed training on their transcript.

## INTEGRATION SCENARIOS

Content integrations are useful if your organization uses third-party vendors to distribute learning content to users rather than creating content in-house, especially if content is being provided on a subscription basis so that updates can be more readily adopted. Connectors and integrations are especially valuable for compliance-related trainings that have been created and approved by governing bodies and can simply be imported to your LMS for consumption.

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER



1. Do you want to assign custom categories to the imported content? If not, do you want to import the default categories assigned by the content provider?
2. Will you be charging your customers for consumption of the integrated content? How will you update your pricing and eCommerce structure to include the integrated content?
3. Do you want to limit integrated content consumption to specific audiences? If so, how will you limit accessibility?
4. How will you manage content changes from the third-party provider (retired, modified, or new courses) on an ongoing basis?



## USE CASE

A global software company was looking to design a structured and consistent onboarding process for their sales team. Rather than create their own content, they built out a web-based training onboarding curriculum for their new sales consultants with OpenSesame and hosted it in their LMS. This integrated curriculum is easily accessible by the sales teams and integrates both mandatory and elective offerings. As employees develop in their careers, leaders select additional OpenSesame training to satisfy new objectives or address training gaps. This allows leaders to be responsive in providing relevant, on-time training to their team through the OpenSesame integration.



#4

# APPLICATION PROGRAMMING INTERFACE

API integrations empower businesses to maximize the benefits of their LMS by creating custom solutions to meet their specific requirements. Since it is impossible to account for every company's unique business processes, API integrations can solve specific challenges without the exorbitant cost and complexity of maintaining traditional customizations. Whether an existing process needs to be streamlined or an entirely new process needs to be created, API integrations can help companies enhance their overall solution without affecting their ability to take on new releases from their LMS vendor.

Each LMS has different API endpoints which serve as the touchpoint between the API and the LMS. These API endpoints can be used in custom software or through collaboration platforms like Postman. To make an API call, one must first acquire an authentication token using system-specific credentials. This allows them to update data including the user profile, learning events, and other items. LMS vendors make the process as seamless as possible through detailed documentation of their public APIs.

## INTEGRATION SCENARIOS

- » **Streamline a business practice.** An API can reduce manual work and automate processes that are prone to human errors like course registration.
- » **Create an enhanced user experience.** Combining interesting graphics with API integrations is an easy way to get users to have more meaningful interactions inside and outside of the LMS.
- » **Bring the LMS functionality outside of the LMS.** Some companies want to share their knowledge and learning with the public, but it may be hard for them to access it within the LMS. An API integration may allow a person to register for a course and create a user in the LMS all from the company's homepage.
- » **Create a unique process.** In addition to standard fields, most systems include custom fields to increase their flexibility, allowing companies to enhance a standard feature or even create a brand new, unique process.

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER



1. Are there currently repetitive processes in your LMS that are a drain on company resources?
2. Do the tasks you're trying to automate have API endpoints exposed?
3. How much time will it take to create a custom solution and how much time will it save others from manual data entry?
4. Who will code the software? In what language will it be coded? Who will maintain it? Where will it be hosted? Is the code robust and reliable?



## USE CASE

A leading global supplier of automotive seating and electrical components was seeking an intuitive and personalized user experience that would provide targeted messages and direct access to learning in order to drive user compliance and adoption. They set up an API integration in Saba and designed a highly visual, tile-based system home page with rotating content driven by user attributes and specific job functions, as well as more general learning maps and company news.



#5

## DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

A Document Management System (DMS) is a repository that stores business documents such as Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), work instructions, and other similar materials that describe how specific tasks should be completed. These repositories are very common across pharmaceutical and medical device companies as well as in other highly regulated industries like aerospace. A DMS allows those with appropriate access to not only view the current version of a document but also view all prior versions.

A DMS is meant to store documents and most do not offer the detailed assignment functionality that an LMS does. When these two systems are combined, it allows learners to have their due dates, completion dates, and reminders handled in an automated fashion by the LMS while providing them direct access to current documents in the DMS. Specifically, a DMS integration with an LMS will keep all learning assignments up to date as new document versions are created in the DMS or existing versions are obsoleted. Once this daily feed is up and running, the chance of human error is significantly reduced as is the need for extensive manual maintenance. From a learner perspective, the experience is much more seamless and training completions are available instantly.

## INTEGRATION SCENARIOS

Highly regulated industries are typically very risk-averse, so setting up an integration in this instance with an LMS is a smart choice to ensure timely compliance. Without an integration multiple steps are required, which can be a time-consuming process prone to user error. For example, if a new version of an SOP is released, the DMS administrator must inform the LMS administrator. The LMS administrator then needs to deactivate the record for the old version, create the new version, and assign training on the new version. If the new version is missed by administrators, it will not get assigned and could lead to non-compliance. With an integration in place, possible points of failure are reduced as manual intervention is minimized.

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER



1. Do you have a DMS already implemented?
2. How many items are in your DMS? Are all used for training purposes, or only a subset?
3. Do all employees have accounts in your DMS or a way to view documents there?



## USE CASE

A large medical device manufacturer was looking for a seamless way to avoid an untrained employee going unnoticed in their current LMS. With the frequency of updates to their document catalog, maintaining the documents in Cornerstone OnDemand manually would be nearly impossible. They set up an integration between Cornerstone and their Agile DMS allowing them to successfully manage very large amounts of documents (25,000+) and ensure that the latest version of their documents was assigned to learners within less than 24 hours.



For more information on how to set up LMS integrations for your organization, email us at [info@educegroup.com](mailto:info@educegroup.com), or visit us at [www.educegroup.com](http://www.educegroup.com).



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