

Sloan-C View

Perspectives in Quality Online Education

A Publication of the Sloan Consortium

[A Letter from the Editors of the Sloan-C View, 2](#)

[News, 2](#)

Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Awards, Programs newly listed in the Sloan-C Catalog

[Current Perspectives on Learning Management Systems, 5](#)

Feature article presenting administrative and faculty perspectives regarding a series of probing issues related to LMSs

[By the Numbers, 3](#)

Is blending in your future?

[New at Sloan-C, 4](#)

Register for online seminars, Read relevant Book Reviews and New and Noteworthy Effective Practices.

[Calendar, 11](#)

Upcoming events in Online Education

[Newsletter Registration](#)



THE SLOAN CONSORTIUM

A Consortium of Institutions
and Organizations Committed to
Quality Online Education

And the top ten are . . .

Increasing scale can motivate the academy's greater appreciation of itself as a community focused on common goals.

Burks Oakley of **UIUC** asked the Sloan-C listserv about scaling quality higher education to include all learners who are motivated to pursue it: "What are the issues related to scaling online learning, what are the barriers preventing this, and what are the breakthroughs needed to drive online learning to a new level?"

Ray Schroeder of UIS responded:

*As you well know, the issues are legion and still evolving!
My top ten are:*

- 1) *Technical support of online class development*
- 2) *Pedagogical support of online class development*
- 3) *Faculty compensation and tenure/promotion process recognition*
- 4) *Extending student services (placement, counseling, advising, activities, networking) online*
- 5) *Extending library services online*
- 6) *Marketing programs*
- 7) *Developing virtual laboratories to emulate physical labs*
- 8) *Technical support for distant students and resident/distant online faculty members*
- 9) *Assuring continuity of service (server backups/alternative paths to/from the Internet)*
- 10) *Implementing a controlled growth plan that allows for steady (not out of control) expansion*

When scale is small, support is not a problem, agrees **Victor Kobayashi** of **UH**. However, increasing scale challenges certain traditions:

The problem reflects how bifurcated the academic side is from the fiscal/support/service side of an institution, especially a very large one, that bifurcated itself with the need for division of labor as it scaled up in the "traditional" way.

Increasing scale can motivate the academy's greater appreciation of itself as a community focused on common goals. Scalability demands integration, Kobayashi reasons; the academy becomes integrated when everyone—learners, faculty, staff, administrators and leaders—contributes to the matrix for software systems that include ALN students and courses, especially in distance learning.

forward

Is blending in your future?

Jeff Seaman, Ph.D.

The history of academic programs delivered fully online is a recent one. The Sloan Foundation has been supporting the development of these programs for a bit over a decade, and the Sloan Consortium has been acting as a resource for those providing such programs for only a few years. Recently there has been increased interest in so-called blended or hybrid courses—those that combine online components with face-to-face instruction. Is this option changing the complexion of online offerings? Will we see the same growth for blended courses as for those that are fully online?

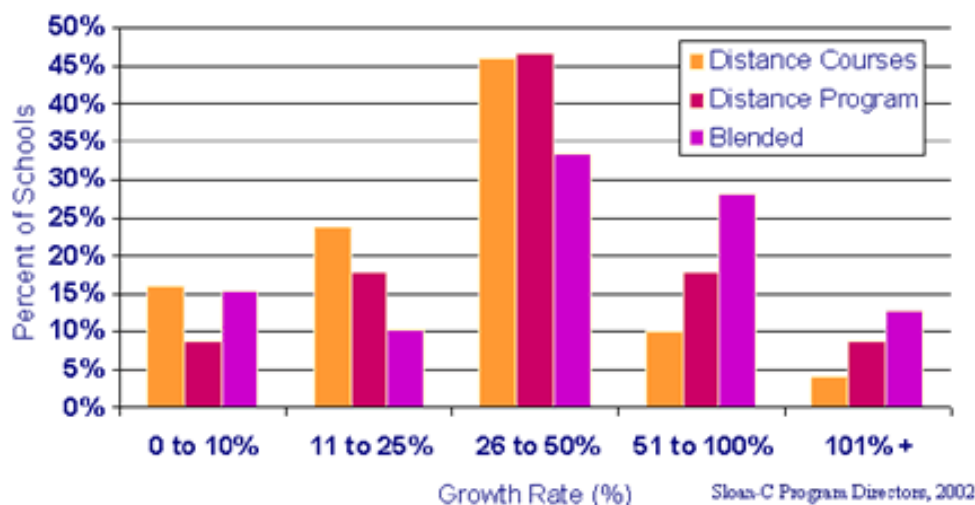
To address these questions, the Sloan Consortium surveyed directors of distance education programs at Sloan-C member schools. These represent Sloan Consortium institutions that, on average, were among the first to offer fully online programs. The directors were asked, among other things, to report on their current and projected enrollments.

Student Enrollment

Percent of students who:	Current	In 3 Years
Are enrolled in a distance education course?	20.2%	36.6%
Are enrolled in a program that is delivered entirely at a distance?	11.7%	22.1%
Are enrolled in a "blended" course?	7.6%	21.1%

Sloan-C Program Directors, 2002

Course and Program Growth



Current Enrollments

Sloan-C Program Directors report that, on average, one in five of their students take a distance education course and about one in ten is enrolled in a program that is delivered entirely at a distance. In addition, they report an average of 7.6% of their students is enrolled in a blended course.

Enrollment Growth

When asked to project their enrollment growth over the coming three-year period, the Program Directors predicted growth for all three areas, online courses, online programs, and blended courses. However, the growth is expected to be highest for blended courses. The expectation is that in three years the percentage of students enrolled in a blended course will be greater than current percentage enrolled in distance courses.

Sloan-C program directors expect blended course enrollments to triple over the next three years.

The expectation for these pioneering schools is that in three years over one-third of all students will be enrolled in a distance education course and over twenty percent will be in programs delivered entirely at a distance. The rapid growth in "blended" enrollments will result in over twenty percent of all students at these institutions enrolled in at least one blended course. Clearly, the expectation is that blended instruction will move from a minority activity to where it rivals the fully distance courses and programs for numbers of students.

Data

The data for the analysis come from a Sloan Consortium survey of Sloan-C Program Directors conducted in October 2002. The sample represents over 50 institutions with fully online programs.

Sloan-C Online Seminar on Access in May

You still have time to register for this online seminar as well as the student satisfaction seminar in June!

Widening access to more learners is fundamental to the evolution of online learning and essential for its success. Programs have evolved from an emphasis on providing access to courses and instruction to recognizing that access is an enterprise-wide issue. An even more fundamental challenge is how to enable prospective learners to be aware of and to evaluate the available learning opportunities. As practices for providing access evolve, measuring the quality of access helps practitioners better determine how best to improve access for the learners they serve.

Who is finding effective ways to interest prospective learners in online education, and how are they doing it? What effective practices are emerging for dealing with access as an enterprise-wide issue? What new ways of measuring the quality of access are being developed, and how useful are they?

Which new challenges and developments on the horizon are likely to change current landscape of access to online education?

The Sloan-C Third Thursday online seminar on Access will explore these and related questions of interest to seminar participants. Commencing May 1 with readings, the seminar is open for registration through May 15. For a fee of \$79.95, participate in online discussions, and receive the preview access studies, Volume 4 of the quality series upon publication, and a synthesis of commentary from peer practitioners, register at: <https://secured.sloanconsortium.org/sloancseminars/registration/index.htm>

Book Reviews

For complete reviews, please visit: <http://www.sloan-c.org/resources/reviews/index.asp>

Handbook of Distance Education. Michael Grahame Moore and William G. Anderson, Editors. Malway, New Jersey, Lawrence Erlbaum Publishers, 2003.

Corporate Universities: Lessons in Building a World-Class Work Force. Jeanne C. Meister. New York; McGraw Hill Trade, 1998.

Honoring the Trust: Quality and Cost Containment in Higher Education. William F. Massy. Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing Company, 2003.

If You're Going to San Diego

Be sure to attend the May 20 "Corporate and Higher Education Alliances For e-Learning," a special Sloan-C session about industry-wide partnerships between corporations and higher education creating competitive advantages. Visit <http://www.sloan-c.org/conference/index.asp> for a registration discount code.

Shifts in the Economy*

Old Economy	New Economy
-One set of skills	-Lifelong learning
-Labor vs. management	-Teams
-Business vs. environment	-Encouragement of growth
-Security	-Risk taking
-Monopolies	-Competition
-Plant, equipment	-Intellectual property
-National	-Global
-Status quo	-Speed, change
-Top-down	-Distributed

*Berge, Zane L. "Planning and Managing Distance Training and Education in the Corporate Sector." Handbook of Distance Education. Michael G. Moore and William G. Anderson, eds. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2003

New and Noteworthy in Effective Practices

California State University, Chico is one of the many colleges and universities that are developing well-organized processes and tools to evaluate online courses. Chico State's Rubric for Online Instruction is a tool that guides improvement of existing online courses or development of new online courses through comparison to quality standards. The rubric can be used as a self-evaluating tool by individual faculty or for campus-wide implementation; it provides clear guidelines on what makes an online course effective or exemplary. The course evaluation process also provides a non-competitive form of recognition through the institutional reward system for faculty doing exemplary work with online courses.

A team at **Indiana University-Bloomington's School of Continuing Studies** has developed a group of repurposeable learning object templates designed to make it easier for instructors to provide interactive and highly experiential learning exercises. These templates are part of the TALON (Teaching and Learning Oriented Network) Learning Object System and are built around particular modes of teaching and learning, for instance visual learning, writing skills, critical thinking, time-revealed scenarios, case studies and empirical observation. Designing and describing the learning objects in terms of commonly used teaching and learning styles helps instructors readily understand and use these templates to design learning objects for their own courses. The templates are also designed to allow reprogramming for new applications in other courses and subject areas with little or no additional programming.

Visit <http://www.sloan-c.org/effective/index.asp> to read more details about this and other replicable online practices. Submissions become eligible for annual Sloan-C Quality Awards.

[submitted by [John Sener, Sloan-C Effective Practice Editor, Access](#)]

Current Perspectives

on Learning Management Systems

In the February 2003 Sloan-C View, there was a lead article summarizing the give and take views expressed on the Sloan-C listserv regarding Learning Management Systems (LMS). The editors feel that there is more to be gleaned from a discussion of this topic and they have asked a university IT administrator and a knowledgeable faculty member to present perspectives regarding a series of probing issues related to LMSs.

ADMINISTRATOR PERSPECTIVE Dr. Don Spicer Associate Vice Chancellor for Information Technology and CIO University System of Maryland	FACULTY PERSPECTIVE Dr. Marci McClive Director: whytech Project for Faculty Training Professor of Management, College of Business Frostburg State University
What is important to you when it comes to an institutional choice of a LMS?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term viability of the company • Reliability of application • Runs on a platform where there are in-house skills present • Good technical support • Reasonable pricing and stable pricing model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choice • Simplicity and integration, and a minimal investment of time in learning • Minimal investment of time in "production" • Reliability • Extensibility
As with many software applications, there is the choice of build versus buy. What is your view regarding these two options?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features vs Resources • Collaborative approaches • Experience • Leverage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buy! • But, perhaps more than one . . .
Who should be at the table when an institution decides on a LMS strategy and product?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly all stakeholders have to have a say, but... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty • Students
One of the perceived barriers to using technology in support of teaching and learning is sometimes referred to as administrivia—the need by faculty to key in class lists, grade books, etc. over and over. How big a problem is this really?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrators put a high value on reducing this barrier to faculty adoption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Batch load process, copy the course structure and content, administrative support
What features are critical in order to provide an online learning environment?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ email ◦ asynchronous conferencing ◦ chat • Multimedia publishing • Foreign language, natural science, and mathematics editing capabilities • Modular design • Assessment capabilities • Tutoring capabilities • Integrated class management tools • Calendar • Homework grader would be desirable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ announcements ◦ place to exchange files ◦ gradebook mechanism ◦ automatic lost password response ◦ calendar • Assessment and automatic grading • A logical interface/navigation • More control of the look and feel of the page (without html) • Access to directories • Managing more than one section • Smoother multimedia transitions and linking files within directories • Addressing delivery for multiple student learning needs

(Continued on next page)

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Different disciplines have different pedagogical approaches. Can one Learning Management System meet the needs of all faculty?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Probably not 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, but an LMS that meets the needs of most faculty . . .
There is an apparent tension between ease of use and giving a faculty member control over the presentation of course materials. The easiest to use Learning Management Systems are like a fill-in-the-blanks template. It is hard to go beyond the boxes they provide. For the average faculty member, is there a middle ground?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, through HTML • But. . .
The Learning Management Systems industry is immature. Companies come and go. What are the implications of choosing an LMS? Are you better protected by building your own?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is true that companies will come and go. It is also true that transitions are hard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When a key person leaves the relationship... • I need transferability

Current Perspectives on Learning Management Systems

Full Responses

What is important to you when it comes to an institutional choice of a LMS?

ADMINISTRATIVE PERSPECTIVE:

- **Long term viability of the company:** The LMS market is young and fluid. There has been substantial consolidation of the marketplace in the last several years. Transitions between systems are not easy and the institution's intellectual property is encapsulated within the system.
- **Reliability of application:** Increasingly an institutional LMS is a mission critical system. If a component fails, that course component is not available. Faculty and students won't tolerate, or use, tools that interfere with the learning process rather than assist it.
- **Runs on a platform where there are in-house skills present:** These systems are a component of the enterprise services architecture. They need to be integrated with other systems, such as Student Information Systems. This, as well as their on-going maintenance, requires in-house technical skills. There is only a limited amount of diversity of skill sets in which an institution can afford to invest.
- **Good technical support:** Concurrent with the youth of the LMS market is its rapid growth. LMS companies have had difficulty managing the growth of the market, the evolution of their product, and customer services. Institutional staff cannot afford to find themselves caught between an unresponsive vendor and demanding faculty and students for a service that is this mission critical to the institution.
- **Reasonable pricing and stable pricing model:** LMSs were initially quite inexpensive for stand-alone systems. As they have evolved to become a component of a more integrated services architecture, their license costs have escalated rapidly. Their license fees are typically more comparable with those of other enterprise services (ERP applications, mail systems, etc.). Institutions have struggled to manage rapid escalation of costs, especially in the current lean budget years.

FACULTY PERSPECTIVE:

- **Choice:** The faculty culture continues to value choice. We want to maintain an individuality of presentation and be able to choose among many instructional materials as we help students learn more and increasingly complex materials. This requires institutions to consider offering a variety of options for faculty to develop a web presence. The ideal solution might ultimately be based upon a per-student-user pricing system so that the institution can consider offering several solutions to faculty. Faculty are concerned with few features, beyond what they can do with their courses, that may be offered by a LMS. One that is very important, however, is how the system facilitates the batch enrollment of students into their courses.
- **Simplicity and integration, and a minimal investment of time in learning:** While many "early adopters" invested time and their own, often personal, resources in learning a variety of tools in the past to supplement their learning environment, most faculty do not have the resources to apply to this approach. They prefer a simpler and more integrated approach. The fewer systems they have to access to communicate with and provide information to students, the more likely they will find the time to invest in the learning and development of their online learning environment. Many faculty members are interested in pursuing tools that can really help their students, but they prefer those that allow them to do things in a similar manner to what they already know. This makes the system easier to use, quicker to adopt, and the product(s) more intuitively understandable. For example, in the last few years, the ability to attach files in their original format has improved quick access to and learning of online learning solutions. Otherwise, faculty will not have the time to invest in learning the system or adapting previously built course materials.
- **Minimal investment of time in "production":** An important consideration in a choice of an LMS is that it requires a minimal investment of time in "production," and a step-wise addition of skill. More demands than ever are placed upon the faculty member. While we are very interested in administrative tools that help our students stay connected and help us build student-to-student relationships, the time we have to build such systems is more constrained. Immediate results (even during a training workshop) are very important. And, the more similar the processes for using other aspects of the system, the more likely faculty will more quickly adopt all of the features of the product. We also have to be able to change the contents of the system regularly. A system that allows for quick replacement of content and participants will be preferred.
- **Extensibility:** Instructional designers, LMS administrators and faculty all agree that an LMS should offer basic functionality (communication, announcements, a place to exchange files, assessment, a logical interface/navigation, gradebook mechanism) to begin, but that as the faculty gain a comfort level they are anxious to add functionality. So, extensibility is a key factor in the choice of an LMS. Some disciplines (e.g., foreign languages, math, and engineering) are quick to request extended functions. The LMS needs to tender commonly requested options.
- **Reliability:** The LMS must be reliable. Faculty have zero-tolerance for downtime and sluggish responsiveness.

As with many software applications, there is the choice of build versus buy. What is your view regarding these two options?

ADMINISTRATIVE PERSPECTIVE:

- **Features vs. Resources:** While one may get just the features desired by building an LMS application, most institutions don't have the resources to do so and maintain it in perpetuity.
- **Collaborative approaches:** OKI, as an example of a collaborative approach, offers a framework for sharing components, but it is difficult for many institutions to be a full partner in such development activities.
- **Experience:** An institution LMS will become mission critical, if it isn't already. Developing and maintaining such a system is best left to full-time professionals.
- **Leverage:** As a general principle, for applications that are common to many institutions, buying spreads the cost and the overhead of evolving and maintaining the application across many users. Admittedly, commercial software includes vendor markup, but higher education is famous for ignoring the many hidden costs inherent in internal development.

FACULTY PERSPECTIVE:

- **Buy!** Faculty recognize that building an LMS requires resources (highly paid programmers, designers, and some specialized software) that are better devoted to technical training, attention to course quality, and instructional design support. However, one expressed caveat is that the LMS developer must be involved in an active feedback process with faculty and students (not just administrators) in an attempt to improve the product's functionality. The feedback to a private LMS developer will be broader and will ultimately serve faculty and students better. Buying an LMS also helps the institution avoid a parochial design and use of the LMS.
- **But, perhaps more than one . . .** Faculty members prefer choices however and some option to build their own approach (websites and independent tools) may be very effective for some faculty, particularly in math and the sciences. Resources need to be used to buy access to one or more LMSs but the institution must also attempt to support faculty members seeking an independent route. While the website approach is lower cost, the support must be of very high quality.

Who should be at the table when an institution decides on a LMS strategy and product?

ADMINISTRATIVE PERSPECTIVE:

Clearly all stakeholders have to have a say, but... ...there are many issues at play here. The decision touches on many of the issues discussed in our current list of questions. Clearly it would be shortsighted to leave this decision to only administrative staff or to only faculty. Faculty need to have a say in features, functionality, and ease of use. Administrators need to determine initial and long term cost of ownership, ability to support the system with technical staff, viability of the vendor, and integration with existing systems.

FACULTY PERSPECTIVE:

- **Faculty:** While faculty have a huge role to play, they are not the only stakeholders. Instructional design experts provide the guidance for developing course modules and have a vested interest in the capabilities of the program. They know best what needs faculty have expressed. Some faculty members will have specific needs and may sit on committees that help make these decisions. While satisfying their needs is very important, the needs of a few should not drive the purchase decision, however. The institution must ensure that a wide variety of faculty are represented—from the expert and experienced users to the novices. At this point in time, it is the novices that may interest the institution the most depending on the aspirations of the institution's to do widespread online learning.
- **Students:** While faculty have a large stake, and while Administrators must be able to live with the administrative and technical requirements of the LMS, it may be time in the development of online learning to involve students. They express concerns with consistency among classes (user names, navigation, nomenclature of the course areas), ease of use, and flexibility with respect to downloading multimedia and files that are not compatible with their presentation and word processing software.

One of the perceived barriers to using technology in support of teaching and learning is sometimes referred to as administrivia—the need by faculty to key in class lists, grade books, etc. over and over. How big a problem is this really?

ADMINISTRATIVE PERSPECTIVE:

Administrators put a high value on reducing this barrier to faculty adoption. Much current staff effort and expense of upgraded licenses is invested in addressing this issue. Integration with the campus Student Information System is considered a necessity. Managing drop-adds and gradebooks is an unnecessary burden to inflict on faculty members in this day and age.

FACULTY PERSPECTIVE:

Batch load process, copy the course structure and content, and administrative support: This is a very big issue for faculty. Most will not persevere if they find they are doing much clerical or administrative work. Any LMS product should provide, at least, a batch load process. Additionally, the LMS system must provide features that allow faculty to copy the course structure, content and online tests, sans current student enrollees, in order to avoid the requirement of rebuilding gradebooks, discussion board questions, and the like. The administrative support of students who forget their passwords should be built into the product.

One of the perceived barriers to using technology in support of teaching and learning is sometimes referred to as administrivia—the need by faculty to key in class lists, grade books, etc. over and over. How big a problem is this really?

ADMINISTRATIVE PERSPECTIVE:

- **Communication**
 - **Email**
 - **Asynchronous conferencing**
 - **Chat**
- **Multimedia publishing**
- **Foreign language, natural science, and mathematics editing capabilities**
- **Modular design:** By this is meant the ability to use learning objects created for other courses or by other faculty members.
- **Assessment capabilities**
- **Tutoring capabilities**
- **Integrated class management tools**
- **Calendar**
- **Homework grader would be desirable**

FACULTY PERSPECTIVE:

- **Communication**
 - **Announcements**
 - **Place to exchange files**
 - **Gradebook mechanism**
 - **Automatic lost password response**
 - **Calendar**
- **Assessment and automatic grading**
- **A logical interface/navigation**
- **More control of the look and feel of the page (without html)**
- **Access to directories:** Some early adopters, and now a fast growing number of faculty, are conditioned to building their own websites and accustomed to having access to directories to select, copy, and move files from page to page. The LMS should provide this capability.
- **Managing more than one section:** Many faculty like to maintain a single course in which they have several sections of students. While some of the material is meant for general consumption across the sections, some materials and almost all of the communications are specific to each section. They are frustrated with having to conduct multiple uploads when adding materials to separate sections of the course and would like to find creative ways to create their sections within a single course.
- **Smoother multimedia transitions and linking files within directories:** The recent increase in availability of multimedia material has meant that many faculty are adding sound and movie files to their courses. Students may view these in their browsers, but not without some good coaching by academic computing experts and/or very savvy teachers. Two issues exist with respect to the use of multimedia files: (a) faculty would like to see greater support and smoother transition to plug-ins, and (b) they would like to be able to link to multimedia files from presentation, word processing, and other programs using hyperlinks (e.g., Inspiration). This enables them to use a coordinating mechanism (slide or document) to help the student work through a complex learning module that utilizes a variety of file types.
- **Addressing delivery for multiple student learning needs:** A growing number of faculty believe they can use the LMS to address multiple learning styles, help students with learning disabilities, and are concerned about making information available to physically disabled students. The LMS must provide text options, for example and should seek to integrate the distribution of multimedia as seamlessly as possible.

Different disciplines have different pedagogical approaches. Can one Learning Management System meet the needs of all faculty?

ADMINISTRATIVE PERSPECTIVE:

Probably not: This is a difficult problem. In the physical learning environment we have lecture style classes, seminars, laboratories, group project spaces, collaborative learning spaces, etc. It is unreasonable that one LMS can replicate the range of capabilities that we continue to evolve in face to face learning interactions. Still, the combination of meeting mainline needs for interaction and building to a modular design that allows "plug-in" modifications as appropriate might be the best that can be expected.

FACULTY PERSPECTIVE:

No, but an LMS that meets the needs of most faculty is better than none. It is agreed that technical disciplines that use symbols and disciplines with foreign language requirements must be supported. Must a LMS trade these needs off with other basic functionality? Why can't one LMS do it all through the use of extended products that can be purchased? (See the need for extensibility above.)

There is an apparent tension between ease of use and giving a faculty member control over the presentation of course materials. The easiest to use Learning Management Systems are like a fill-in-the-blanks template. It is hard to go beyond the boxes they provide. For the average faculty member, is there a middle ground?

ADMINISTRATIVE PERSPECTIVE:

- **Yes**—to a degree. LMSs provide the core tools that are necessary for every learning environment: information distribution and access; content management; communication tools; assessment tools; and class logistics management tools. With some degree of variation this meets many common needs.
- **No.** There is such a wide variety of needs given the unique learning environment demands from humanities and arts to foreign language to natural sciences, that it will be difficult to meet the nuances inherent in every discipline in one online environment. Modularity and the ability to "plug in" components that meet focused needs will help address this issue. That assumes, of course, that individuals or companies will invest the effort to create components for very specialized needs.

FACULTY PERSPECTIVE:

- **Yes,** as faculty members master basic functionality and are given access to extended functionality, they will be more inclined to be coached by webpage designers and trainers to add in what HTML can provide. Furthermore, many faculty are discovering that presentation software offers them extended control over the presentation of course concepts, symbols, and images.
- **But,** multimedia still does not function well from these applications, but close cooperation between LMS developers and Microsoft, in particular, seems to be addressing these issues. Faculty are also being coached on the different and appropriate uses of the web and compact disk for speedy and accurate delivery of course objects.

The Learning Management Systems industry is immature. Companies come and go. What are the implications of choosing an LMS? Are you better protected by building your own?

ADMINISTRATIVE PERSPECTIVE:

It is true that companies will come and go. It is also true that transitions are hard. The protection against having your intellectual property encapsulated by obsolete and proprietary packaging is to insist on the vendor adopting existing standards. Currently IMS, the Instructional Management System Project specifications are the best currently available for this purpose. Even if your old vendor and new vendor adhere to these specifications, it does not mean that a transition from between the two delivery environments will happen easily, but it increases the likelihood of success.

FACULTY PERSPECTIVE

- **When a key person leaves the relationship...** There are always issues with a change in key players. To date we have found that if a key person at the LMS developer leaves, the relationship and development of the LMS for that site faltered. LMS developers may be improving this situation with multiple expert contacts. Some LMS developers fail to support clients in a timely fashion; this varies from developer to developer and over time within each development firm. We are not always better protected by building our own. The experience has been that when key person(s) leave the University, the development, support, and the maintenance of the proprietary product may falter in the same ways.
- **I need transferability:** The key faculty concern regarding this question is transferability. Will my course transfer easily from LMS to LMS? If I develop file formats for one LMS will I be able to use them in another? Until licensing and prices settle down, faculty are nervous about investing much time in a course. This risk is less for faculty whose publishers work with a variety of LMS developers. In fact, publishers (or LMS relationships with key textbook publishers) may likely determine which LMS developers survive. Faculty are or should be advised to develop course materials in files and to maintain backups of all course content, even announcements.



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The Sloan-C View is published by Sloan-C™ and is supported by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.

Contact Information:

Sloan Center for OnLine Education (SCOLE)
Olin College of Engineering and Babson College
1735 Great Plain Avenue, Needham MA 02492
voice: 781-292-2524
fax: 781-292-2505
email: publisher@sloan-c.org
on the web: <http://www.sloan-c.org/>

If you have a question or comment, or would like to submit an article for publication, please email publisher@sloan-c.org.

John R. Bourne, Editor
Janet C. Moore, Editor
Kathryn M. Fife, Publisher

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ISSN 1541-2806

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If you know of, or are hosting, an event that should be listed on the Sloan-C View Calendar, please send the details of the event and url to publisher@sloan-c.org.

9th Annual Sloan-C/ALN Conference

Date: November 14-16, 2003
Location: Orlando, Florida
URL: <http://www.aln.ucf.edu>, www.sloan-c.org

Mark your calendars for this year's conference: The Power of Online Learning: Implications for Teaching and Learning.

International Conference on Computers in Education(ICCE)

Date: December 2-5, 2003
Location: Hong Kong
URL: <http://www.icce03.org>

Proposals for papers deadline extended to May 2, 2003.
The theme of the Conference is **The "Second Wave" of ICT in Education: from Facilitating Teaching and Learning to Engendering Education Reform**. The theme adopted places the issues of a "pedagogical practice paradigm shift" at the centre of the debate.

Corporate and Higher Education Alliances For e-Learning

Date: May 20, 2003
Location: San Diego, California
URL: <http://www.astd.org> and
<http://www.sloan-c.org>

A Special Session Forum conducted at American Society for Training Development International Conference and Exposition

NUTN 2003 Digital Learning: The Whole Enchilada

Date: June 1-3, 2003
Location: San Antonio, TX
URL: http://www.odu.edu/dl/nutn/annual_conference.html

Three engaging days of innovation, interaction and insight.

21st ICDE World Conference on Open Learning & Distance Education: Lifelong Learning in the Networked World

Date: Postponed until further notice
Location: Hong Kong
URL: <http://www.ouhk.edu.hk/hk2003/>

The Conference aims to document achievements and investigate the challenges facing those seeking to provide open and distance education for persons of all ages in a world that is becoming increasingly networked.

19th Annual Conference on Distance Teaching and Learning

Date: August 13-15, 2003
Location: Madison, Wisconsin
URL: <http://www.uwex.edu/disted/conference/>

This year's conference will feature distance educators who are working smarter to build successful strategies, methods, and techniques.

The University of Calgary's Best Practices in e-Learning Conference

Date: August 13-14, 2003
Location: online
URL: <http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/conference/>

Totally online so you can participate without the cost and inconvenience of traveling.

ALT, The Association for Learning Technology

Date: September 8-10, 2003
Location: University of Sheffield, UK
URL: <http://www.shef.ac.uk/alt/>

ALT celebrates its 10th anniversary conference "Communities of Practice" hosted by Sheffield Hallam University and the University of Sheffield.

Online Learning Conference & Expo

Date: September 22-24, 2003
Location: Los Angeles, CA
URL: <http://www.onlinelearningconference.com/>
The largest gathering of decision-makers charged with developing and implementing e-learning.