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THE NEED OF E-LEARNING PLATFORM IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS¹

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Abstract

One important segment of modern education is the quality of curricula and the quality of the teaching process that should be directly related to the application of ICT. Education is facing the challenge of encouraging and supporting the information society, but also its required to be organized in such a way that students from all profiles will be able to gain solid knowledge and culture and develop into future competent staff in their profile. That is why modern learning management systems have recently been used to improve the quality of education, as well as to make it easier for students to master the learning materials.

Keywords: LMS, e-learning, e-content, education

INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of e-learning platforms is to complement the traditional way of learning with effective methods, to offer or provide solutions to a given problem, to provide access to resources at any time, as well as access to resources. The offer of a solution that will improve and facilitate the way of learning and mastering the learning materials should not be understood as a replacement for the traditional way of learning. E-learning certainly brings a number of benefits to the educational process. It is not an alternative to the existing educational process, but it is an integral part of it. The introduction of e-learning as a complement to the traditional way allows the student to be the center of the educational process and take responsibility for the outcome of education. The teacher acquires increased importance for the process, and his role changes, he is a mentor, coordinator and participant in the educational process.

The use of information technology in educational institutions has increased significantly in the last decade, and the reason for this is the need for students to acquire the necessary skills. Because computers and the Internet allow the use of services and tools, as well as access to vast amounts of information, they are of great benefit to teachers, as they can satisfy students' different ways of teaching and give their students access to information that otherwise would be difficult to access. But this technology should be seen as an accessory or a teaching tool, not as a substitute for the educator.

Education is one of the main segments in supporting the development of the information society, in two aspects. First, education should be a leader in the promotion of the information society and the creation of professional staff. Second, the quality of the educational process directly depends on the application of information and communication technologies (ICT) in it. Access to a computer also means access to the Internet, which confirms the existence of an Internet connection in schools. The use of ICT as part of teaching often supports the traditional teaching model. As part of the teaching and realization of the teaching tasks, the Internet is

¹ Specialized paper

most often used to obtain certain information about the teaching material and much of that information is taken without being checked, reworked and authorized. A very small percentage of the Internet is used to exchange opinions, discuss or use other innovations (blogs, forums, wikis, etc.). However, a large percentage of students use the Internet to communicate with other students, using all the possibilities for instant communication (messenger, chat, skype, etc.) and much less to communicate with teachers. Schools have a small number of functional websites that do not attract students in terms of content.

E-LEARNING

A term with a narrower meaning than e-education is e-learning, and that term defines the use of ICT for distance learning. The use of ICT for distance learning is most popular today in the field of higher education. In addition to universities as educational institutions, a number of other institutions and companies are introducing online courses, which are becoming more popular and more visited.

E-learning is a comprehensive activity that combines modern methods of learning with knowledge management and is already implemented in education, both in lower and higher education. The application in lower education is not excluded, but so far, no significant implementation has been noticed. The application in higher education is due to the possibility for students to perform their activities related to their education from home, and thus the student is more motivated. This requires effort on the part of teachers to create appropriate materials. They are expected to plan learning activities and develop learning materials. The good thing is that it has the ability to process once-created materials and adapt them to the needs of each student individually using intelligent tools and techniques.

Therefore, e-learning can be said to be the process of transferring knowledge electronically using appropriate ICT learning management applications. The goal is to improve the quality of learning by using the Internet and its services and to provide access to remote services source.

LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Learning management systems are a powerful technology that has yet to reach its full potential in the education process in this information age. Understanding of what LMS are and how complementary technologies can be integrated with LMS, researchers and practitioners can better able to communicate about the future of computers in education. However, understanding and consistent use of the conditions alone is not enough to realize the potential of computer technology in education. There is a real shortage of solid research for LMS. More researches are needed for the implementation and effectiveness of the LMS. These studies should take a closer look at the feature of these systems, as well as identify which additional features are needed. Students, teachers, parents and other perceptions in the educational process, as well as individual characteristics, should be described. More research is also needed in the area of authorizing lessons and adhering to standards. It is important to pay attention to the needs of today's students, where technology can rise to the top to best meet those needs.

LMS delivers and manages all types of content, including videos, courses and documents. In the areas of lower and higher education, LMS should include a variety of functionalities similar to corporate versions, but there will also be features such as forum sections, teacher and instructor courses, place for discussion, and often the use of a curriculum. The curriculum is

rarely a feature in the corporate LMS. LMS can be used to create professionally structured course content. The teacher can add text, pictures, tables, links and text formatting, interactive tests, a slide show and more. In addition, LMS can create different types of users, such as teachers, students, parents, visitors, and editors. Helps to control what content the student can access and monitor progress in it. Teachers can manage courses and modules, enroll students or set up self-enrollment, view student reports, and invite students to their classes online. In higher education, the use of LMS is more a means of subsistence than a consequence of technological development. With less and less investment in public universities lately, students and their parents have higher tuition fees. Many countries are developing education systems to reduce costs, increase teaching flexibility and expand access to higher education.

E-CONTENT

The technology behind the learning management systems is e-content (Learning objects). E-content is the smallest component with content within an LMS. They offer powerful learning potential due to the possibility of reusability in different contexts, generation (use of learning objects to generate new lessons), adaptability to meet the needs of individual students and adaptability to meet the needs of larger and smaller groups of students. without significant cost changes (Gibbons, J Nelson & R Richards, 2003). In essence, e-content can be defined as any digital medium that can be used to support learning (Watson & Watson, 2007). Its multiple use contributes the most to success. In order to increase the reuse of e-content, it should be compatible with the SCORM (minimum 1.2) standard. SCORM (Shareable Content Object Reference Model) is a collection of standards used in the development of e-content, regardless of who it is intended for: government institutions, private companies or the educational community. Unfortunately, there are multiple standards for describing e-content in use, as well as multiple standards for assessing interoperability between LMS and e-content (Watson & Watson, 2007). The elements that make up e-content depend on the idea and concept of use, but one of the key factors is the age of the students for whom it is intended, and can generally be divided into technical and user-friendly elements.

CHOICE OF E-LEARNING PALTFORM

As previously pointed out E-learning is a general term that refers to a form of learning in which the educator and the student are separated by space or time where the gap between the two is bridged through the use of online technologies. As with any online activity, it is important to set standards for proper operation. In the field of e-learning, there are standards that allow to perform courses in any type of LMS platform. It is a reference model with complex content and is accepted for use in many organizations and institutions involved in e-learning.

An e-learning platform is a software application that integrates various tools for management, communication, evaluation, monitoring, etc. in order to provide technological support to teachers and students at different stages of the e-learning process, but also in the traditional form of the educational process. When choosing these systems, there are a few critical points that each of them must meet:

- Be free and open source
- Multilingual support
- To be adjusted according to the SCORM standard
- Tools for creating courses

- Generate and review content
- Carrying out activities, tasks and tests
- Support for multimedia content
- Report on the activities undertaken by the student
- Personalized learning guidelines
- Evaluation tools
- Collaborative discussion forums
- Course efficiency analysis
- Available User manual.

But how to choose the right system among the hundreds on the market? In order to choose the best learning management software for the respective needs, the following important factors must be considered:

1. Defining users. Users generally want something that is easy to use, allows them to communicate with teachers and classmates, and generates a report on their own progress.

2. Budget preparation. It is very difficult to calculate exactly how much to spent on one LMS. Some of them have a monthly or annual fee, while others have accessories that improve the system and are only available at an additional cost. When defining the budget, one should also consider the option of whether it will be charged to course users and what can be expected in terms of system costs.

3. List of required functions. It is important to keep this list relatively short - about 10 features or less. If there are too few requirements, then each LMS will look like a good choice. But if there is too much, then it will probably not be possible to find an LMS that meets all the criteria.

4. Development plan. The learning management system provides the opportunity to be available to a new audience and increase the number of users. So, a solution is needed that can deal with the growth of participants. There is currently a shortage of free software on the market and this type of system is most in demand in the field of education, so some vendors offer free LMS solutions for teachers and instructors and for educational purposes.

CONCLUSION

The opportunities that arise when implementing ICT help a lot in planning and preparing the teaching process, enabling the preparation to be done faster and with better quality. This facilitates the work of the teacher, the preparation is of better quality, and the teacher gets more free time for additional self-improvement. The possibilities of new technologies also provide a great variety of ways to achieve educational goals. Applying ICT during the lesson increases students' activity, their motivation to learn and the opportunities for mutual cooperation.

The aim of this paper is to give a basic idea and describe e-learning that can be used in the educational process. These platforms can not only be an advancement of the institution, but also the basis of learning management systems, which nowadays are becoming increasingly popular in educational settings.

Students today are influenced by a variety of educational forms, whether formal or informal, that are often found outside the classroom. These experiences are global, so the moderators are required to connect the student with the world, for easier exchange of these experiences. The learning system can encourage teachers, parents, pupils and students, through access to certain information, to change the experience of the educational period of their lives.

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