

Strategy matters

Prove learning's value with the
right reporting strategy



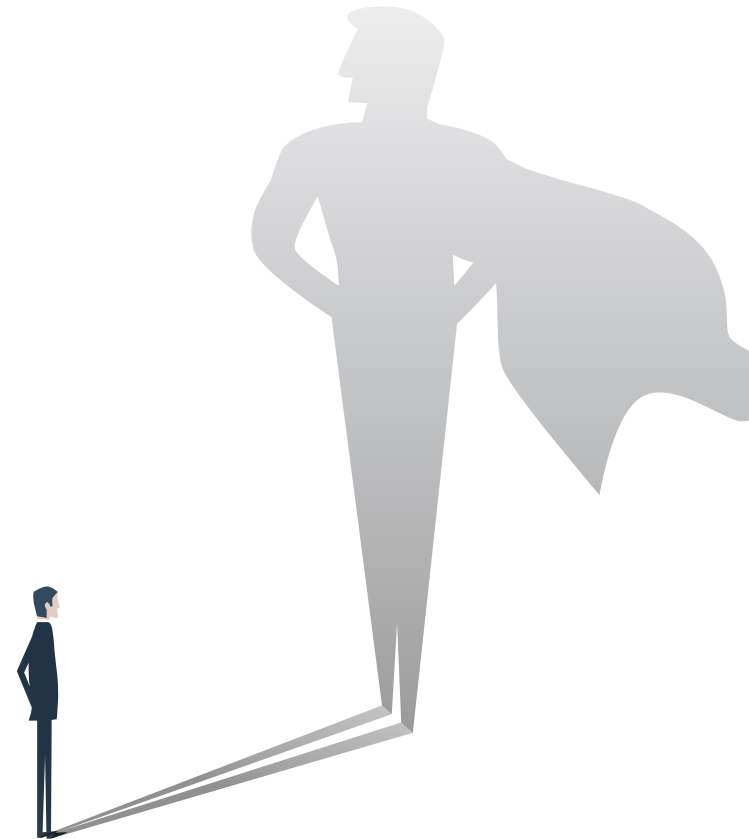
Learning report eBook - Part 1 of 3

Introduction

Reporting on your e-learning strategy shouldn't only be resorted to when required – **it should be an integral part** of your learning and development strategy in order to plan for the future.

A **Learning Management System (LMS)** is defined by its reporting functionality; this is often the main reason for implementation. However, time that is no longer spent delivering learning in an archaic manner has now been **reapportioned to collecting and reporting on learning activity**.

Until the scale of reporting is fully appreciated, **rather than being an after-thought in the planning process**, an LMS cannot function at its most effective. By firstly looking at strategy during the planning process with this eBook, **you will be armed with opportunities** to make the most of your reporting functionality, which will aid you in the development of your LMS across your organisation.



But firstly...

Your reporting **strategy needs to be considered** during the initial planning process. Whilst your users' learning experience and the content is important, it is nothing if not backed up by analytics proving the system's worth.

Is it time to understand the benefits of reporting in your organisation?

To develop a seamless strategy, it needs to incorporate your organisation's objectives. You may require:

- Data for auditing purposes
- To provide data to support the chasing-up of incomplete learning assignments
- A better understanding of the usability and performance of individual training activities
- To demonstrate the impact of your learning on the organisation

By setting out your organisation's objectives, **you can align your learning and reporting strategy** accordingly to ensure that the relevant statistics will be available at the click of a button.

The above example requirements may have differing priorities; **data for audit purposes naturally goes hand-in-hand with the legal requirement** to complete certain learning assignments.

However, qualitative reporting on the usability and understanding of training activities **supports the proof** of impact on learning in your organisation.

“54% of L&D staff lack knowledge about the potential use and implementation of technology^[1]”



Bullseye!

Strategic reporting objectives and goals lead to targets and achievable KPIs. These KPIs may be pre-existing or newly defined for a specific purpose; or those that L&D has signed up to in order to measure its own performance.

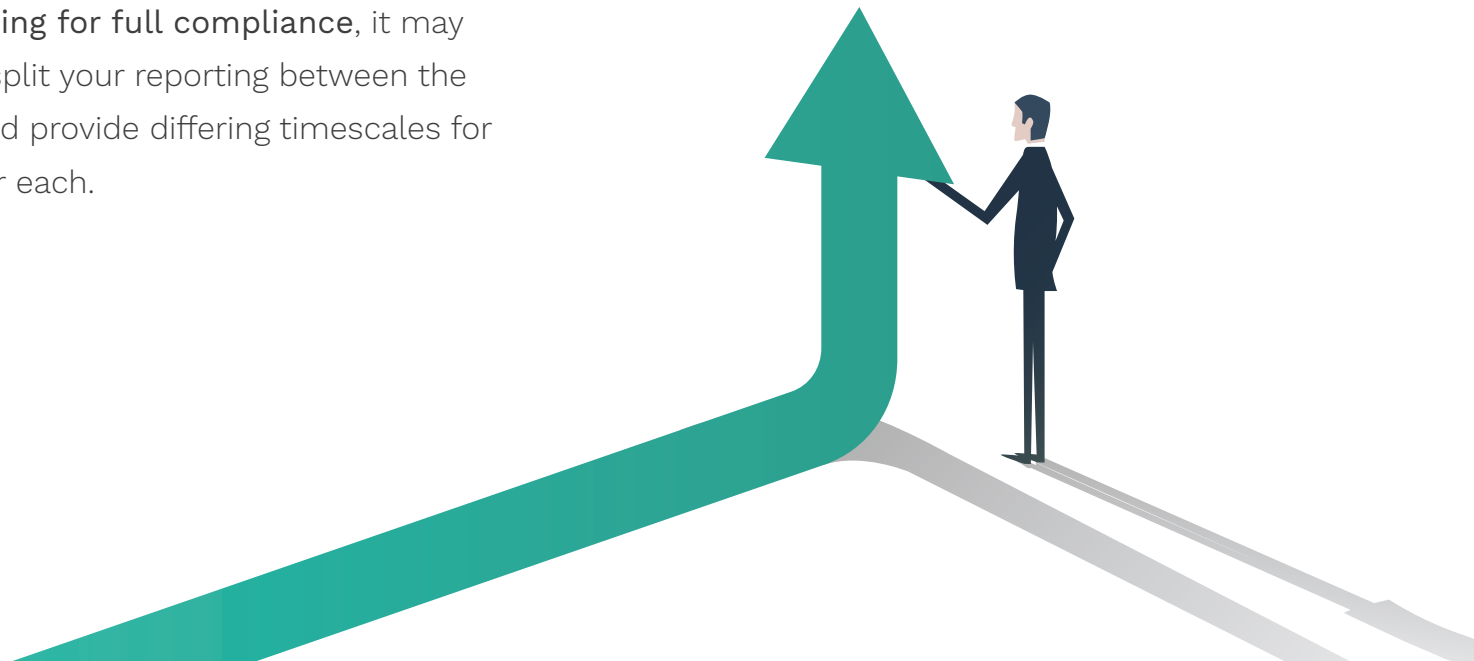
Targets typically revolve around completion rates. Whilst organisations may dream of 100% completion rates, it is important that targets are realistic – staff turnover and departmental changes will result in no fixed start or end-point, meaning 100% completion will be difficult – if not impossible – to achieve.

This is most significant for compliance training programmes. With this, you will find that you have two audiences:

1. Those who were already a part of your organisation on the day the compliance programme was launched
2. Ongoing new recruits who join throughout the year

If you are aiming for full compliance, it may be helpful to split your reporting between the two groups and provide differing timescales for completion for each.

“Only 15% of organisations measure the effectiveness of their learning against specific and measurable KPIs ^[2]”



What is your reporting strategy looking to analyse?

Looking to monitor user engagement?

Your LMS's surveying capabilities to report on personal improvement?

Business improvement that is experienced after training completion?

Return of investment on e-training implementation costs?

Whatever it is that you are aiming towards, measuring the impact your learning has on your organisation is essential for business development and growth.



Who

Consider the stakeholders that you will present your findings to:

- Who are they and why do they require these reports?
How will your supporting data reach their goals?
- What data do they need? Is it even possible to collect this?
- How often will they need to see these reports?
- What is the best way of presenting your findings?

If these questions are considered during the planning process, time can be saved - and frustrations reduced - as you will understand business requirements and be able to extract reports accordingly.

When

As the amount of learning activity increases alongside engagement, **the frequency of your reporting schedules becomes more important**. This is because the process of collating and sharing data often generates questions and calls for remedial action.

This can be a lengthy process but uncovering further issues from your initial solutions can help build towards an ultimately stronger learning strategy.

Consider each stage of your learning campaign:

1. **Post-launch:** an interest in examining the initial uptake
2. **Following post-launch:** the frequency of reporting could be slowed until nearer the target completion date

3. **'Final push':** reporting could be more frequent, though reports should be well spaced enough for you to be able to contact slow-completers to allow them to actually finish the training. You will see very little change on a day-to-day basis otherwise.
4. **Post-due date:** you are likely to keep some reporting live whilst 'mopping up' the real laggards

Agree to a fixed schedule and avoid accepting requests for ad hoc reports where possible. The more your team can work to a timetable, the easier it will be to collate data and report more accurately.

If your reporting goal is to be able to measure the impact of your learning, you will need to consider when follow-up reporting should be undertaken.

You should provide time for learning to have been applied and embedded into your organisation's learning culture prior to any follow-up reports being extracted and manipulated.

95% of organisations want to respond faster to the speed of business^[1] and this is only possible with intelligent data. By ensuring frequent, scheduled reporting, you will become more aware of minute changes in analytics, allowing you to react to these changes in a timelier fashion as required.



Nagging and nudging communications

Nagging and nudging employees to complete their online training **is rarely effective**, and can lead to a negative relationship between the employee and their opinion of learning and development.

Use reporting strategies and planning to address this area seamlessly to develop a smart, efficient and repeatable approach that will not damage the learning culture.

Consider:

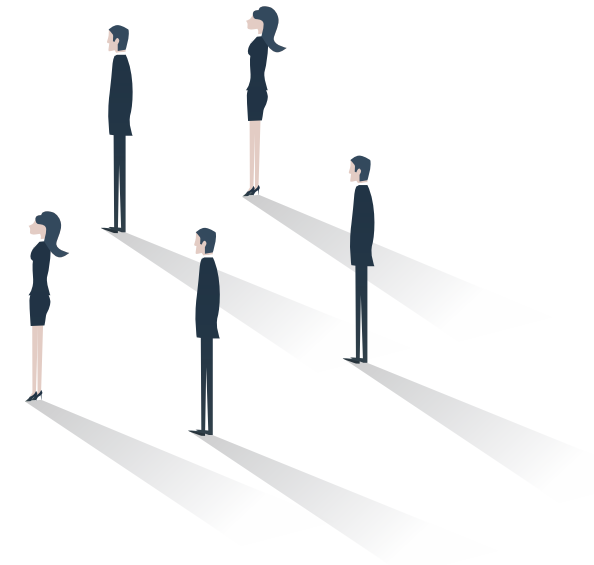
- After how long will you chase?
- How often will you nag?
- Who should nudge?

If **stakeholders are given ownership** to remind employees to complete their online training, this places the responsibility on them and removes the onus from your L&D team. Furthermore, the stakeholder will be keener to support L&D teams in your effort to deliver learning.

The most successful organisations draw on insights from a wide range of stakeholders, **with 66% of organisations pulling key stakeholders together to support programme design and implementation**^[1].

Consider the reports that you will be **producing** and how this will affect the chase. The main stakeholder is unlikely to need to see the detail, just high-level statistics. It is more likely that direct reports will only need to know who to chase.

Are you able to automate the communications within your systems, accompanied by the relevant data? Or do you need to plan for a more personalised approach?



“But the system wasn’t working”

Any chasing exercise will surface issues with people claiming to have completed the learning but that ‘it was not logged on the system’.

You will need to decide how to manage appeals: on a case-by-case basis, or by simply approving the manual updating of the data in good faith.

Ensure that your reporting and launch plans account for your LMS technical support team dealing with an initial spike of such support calls.



Think *carrot*, not stick

Learning has largely enforced a ‘stick approach’, but through the modern use of gamification and gameful design, a more **positive approach to online learning is being reported**, with genuine interest and interactions with learning occurring.

Reporting therefore can be used to share good news and to reward appropriate learning activity and behaviour. Through the generation of leaderboards, healthy competition can be encouraged amongst colleagues, giving you the opportunity to measure the attainment of certain award thresholds.

Strengthen your strategy

Think about the data that your LMS currently records. Consider how you could use this data differently, and how it can help you to plan what you intend to do next and how. If there are gaps in the data you’d like to collect, **work with your LMS vendor to propose a solution** to close these gaps.

Whilst scarce resources are a continual issue for most L&D teams, you can improve your overall learning strategy and individual programme designs by considering how reporting could work for you ahead of its implementation, therefore reducing your own stresses.

[1] Towards Maturity, ‘Unlocking Potential: 2016-17 Learning Benchmark Report’

[2] Towards Maturity, ‘Why Today’s Businesses Should Use Learning Data’, 6 March 2015



Don't resort to reporting – make it your priority

Integrate reporting into your planning process. **Speak to one of our experts** to discuss how planned reporting will transform your learning strategy for the long-term success of your organisation.

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