The Evolution of AI in Learning Management Systems

Introduction

The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence is fundamentally reshaping how organizations approach corporate learning and development. Through the lens of OneStream Software's experience, we gain valuable insights into how AI is transforming traditional Learning Management Systems (LMS) and pushing organizations toward more sophisticated, AI-powered learning ecosystems.

Beverly van de Velde, who heads Global Education Services at OneStream Software, has witnessed firsthand the limitations of traditional learning platforms. "The LMSs, the LXPs don't serve what learners need," she observes. "They need to be able to find what they need when they need it across multiple sources, internal and external to the company."

This recognition has led OneStream to pursue what van de Velde calls a "unified learning ecosystem" – a single pane of glass that sits atop various learning sources, from traditional course content to product documentation, pre-sales materials, and technical support resources. The goal is to create an AI-powered system that can intelligently guide learners through their development journey.

The Amazon Effect on Learning Expectations

Modern learners' expectations are increasingly shaped by their consumer experiences. Van de Velde draws a compelling parallel to Amazon's recommendation engine: "Amazon's the best example... if you're looking at camping stoves, interested in a sleeping bag, you might be interested in a headlight." This same predictive intelligence is what learners now expect from their corporate learning platforms – the ability to suggest relevant content based on their role, interests, and learning history.

The Journey to AI Integration

OneStream's approach to AI integration has been methodical and multi-faceted. The company began by building knowledge clusters containing various types of learning content:

- Product documentation
- Training transcripts
- Physical textbooks
- Community content
- Podcasts
- Webinars
- Premium on-demand instructor-led training

These knowledge clusters serve as the foundation for AI-powered features like chatbots and enterprise-wide search capabilities. The company has also begun experimenting with AI for content creation, including voiceovers and lab content development.

Addressing AI Concerns and Challenges

The implementation of AI in learning systems comes with its share of concerns. Van de Velde identifies several key considerations:

- Validity of AI-generated responses
- Quality of prompts
- Reliability of source material
- Currency of information
- Data privacy
- Content ownership (paid vs. free content)

To address these concerns, OneStream has adopted a policy of transparency, particularly regarding AI-generated content. "If you take one of our courses and it has an AI voice on it, we're putting those caveats so that learners know," van de Velde explains. "We're not going to try to cover it up."

The Human Element:
Skills Development and Change Management

Perhaps one of the most crucial aspects of AI integration is preparing the team for this technological shift. OneStream took an innovative approach to skills development, starting with non-work-related exercises to make the learning process more engaging. Van de Velde recalls, "We made it fun ... one use case was, you're going to develop a restaurant in Austin, Texas. And so use ChatGPT, learn about Austin, Texas."

This approach helped address initial fears about AI replacing jobs. As van de Velde notes, "AI won't replace your job. The people who don't use it won't replace your job... the people who use it will replace your job. In other words, you need to use it."

Looking Ahead: Challenges and Opportunities

While AI has made significant strides in content creation – which Brandon Hall Group™ research identifies as the biggest impact that we've seen so far r – challenges remain. One emerging concern is the potential bottleneck in content validation. As van de Velde points out, "My concern is that we develop so much content and there's not enough subject matter expert time to validate that content in terms of its technical accuracy."

Despite these challenges, the trajectory is clear: AI is becoming an integral part of corporate learning systems. The focus is shifting from traditional LMS platforms to more sophisticated, AI-powered learning ecosystems that can deliver personalized, just-in-time learning experiences across multiple content sources and formats.

This evolution represents not just a technological shift, but a fundamental change in how organizations approach corporate learning – moving from prescribed paths to AI-driven, personalized learning journeys that adapt to each learner's needs and behaviors.

— Matt Pittman, Principal Analyst, Brandon Hall Group™

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