

Case Study

CYPHER Learning



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- ✓ Review by a Real User
- ✓ Verified by PeerSpot

What is our primary use case?

We've been using it for the delivery of our learning materials as well as for assessments of our students. Similarly, if training has to be conducted for our employees, including faculty members and school staff, all the materials are readily available in our LMS.

How has it helped my organization?

We have saved a lot as far as courier services are concerned. In the past, before CYPHER Learning, we would burn our materials onto CDs and send them out across the country via courier. With the LMS, all our materials are uploaded and they are almost instantaneously available for access within our school.

Apart from those costs, it has saved us time. We had a procedure where our materials would be posted on OneDrive and then one person was responsible for accessing and distributing them in each of our schools. With CYPHER Learning, we have been able to cut out that step.

Now, when we develop the materials in our headquarters, the faculty members are able to access them instantaneously. By removing that interim step, we have saved man-hours. Administratively, CYPHER Learning has helped us save time.

It has also definitely helped us to save costs related to the printing of materials because we no longer print our materials. Teachers and students get access to them through their devices.

We also make use of other solutions to help address higher-order thinking skills, and



CYPHER Learning supports that. Activities that help our students achieve or acquire higher-order thinking are very important because that's how we make sure that we prepare our students. That's how we ascertain that we are delivering quality education to our students and that they are really achieving the intended learning outcomes of the particular program they are enrolled in.

What is most valuable?

There are several valuable features. One is the competency mapping. This helps us, as faculty members and developers of learning materials, track and monitor which competencies our students have acquired, based on the outcomes that we wanted them to have at the end of a particular module or term.

And tagging classes and assignments with competencies is user-friendly, from the feedback I get from my team. There are options for whether it is a required module or assignment. Is it something that they can do on their own? It can be tagged such that it will only be given on a particular day. All of these types of tagging features are available. You just upload your materials and tag them to be, for example, self-paced or on a particular schedule. Then you just leave it and it unhides a particular module when a student has to complete it.

The tagging and the achievement of competencies, together, are almost always seamless. When you tag a particular

competency in the mapping in a module, the student really has to achieve it. The competency mapping will show if they have reached a particular level of competency, because the mapping of achievements is color-coded. Teachers know when a student is still in the red zone, orange zone, or has reached the green zone. The modules in CYPHER Learning are well thought out. This feature is user-friendly for the teacher, and the students, as the end-users of the materials, are also able to see their progress.

Also, there are different types of learning materials that we can put in the LMS. Some are web-based, meaning we can embed a URL in the system, and it automatically leads the student or the user to the online materials we're going to use.

And on the dashboards, we are able to see the progress of our students, such as whether they have been able to do their assignments or homework and submit everything that they have to submit.

In addition, the adaptive learning is a feature that I really appreciate. Especially when the pandemic happened and classes were mostly asynchronous, we populated our library of materials. If a student had not yet reached a particular grade or level to proceed to the next module, we gave them additional modules to watch, read, and practice on, to better understand things. They would not proceed to the next level or module until they were able to earn a particular score. That's how we apply



adaptive learning. This feature was something that we always wanted CYPHER Learning to have, but they went full-scale with it only recently. It has really helped us make sure that everybody is on the right track in mastering, or at least acquiring, fundamental knowledge and skills before they proceed to the next module.

We also do make use of the solution's competency-based learning, which is another feature they just introduced recently. It will help bridge the gap between what industries need when our students graduate and they join the workforce, and what we teach them in the classroom. It's something that we are exploring at the moment, and it's something that we've always wanted to have. The goal is that the students, when they graduate, will be able to show a portfolio of the competencies that they needed to acquire during their time with STI.

Communication through CYPHER Learning is just like on any other multimedia platform. Anything that has to do with schoolwork or official communication has to go through the CYPHER Learning or Microsoft Office. CYPHER Learning is like their Facebook for school. This communication is very important because there are a lot of things that come from our headquarters that have to cascade to the schools. The LMS helps us eliminate the transfer of communication from one person to another. When there are announcements that have to be done network-wide, CYPHER Learning helps ease that communication between head office and the entire network. We don't have to worry

about the possibility that something was never relayed to the students or faculty members.

What needs improvement?

Most of our wish list for CYPHER Learning has already been addressed. One that we are still asking them for is to include competencies from different industries, since they have industry partners. These would be the competencies that these industries need so that we can make sure that we are developing our students toward those competencies or skill sets.

Also, because the competency mapping feature is very well thought out, our wish list also includes that when our students graduate, they are able to print, download, or access the competencies that they have achieved in the four years that they studied with us at STI. That portfolio could then be shown when they apply for a job, and employers would see that it has been mapped out according to the industry's standards.

For how long have I used the solution?

I have been using CYPHER LEARNING since 2016.



What do I think about the scalability of the solution?

It's scalable because when we have requests they're able to find solutions or they tell us it's something they're considering. CYPHER LEARNING is able to address the needs of its clients.

We have 91,000 users of CYPHER Learning. There are 63 campuses of STI that are using it. You can just imagine how confident we are with CYPHER Learning because 91,000 of our students are using it every single day of their lives at school.

As far as our learning materials and assessments go, we really make use of the platform and, therefore, students have to use it. Everything is there. Teachers should be giving their assignments through CYPHER Learning, but of course, sometimes they don't. But the idea is they should be using it.

How are customer service and support?

CYPHER LEARNING has very good customer support. Sometimes, because of their number of customers, it takes a little bit longer for them to reply to us. Sometimes, it takes them a week to reply to us, but those are rare cases. Most of the time, when our team chats with them, they are able to get back to us pretty quickly. Very seldom do they need to ask me to escalate an issue to one of their senior staff. They're able to

address our concerns.

How would you rate customer service and support?

Positive

Which solution did I use previously and why did I switch?

We didn't have a previous solution.

What was our ROI?

We have seen ROI because we have been able to cut down on time, courier services, freight, and the time it takes for things to travel from one campus to another. It is really the time savings that have been very good and important for us.

What's my experience with pricing, setup cost, and licensing?

CYPHER LEARNING is very flexible when it comes to pricing. They hear out their customers and see where they can help them as far as cost is concerned. They look at long-term relationships and partnerships with their clients. It's very easy to talk to them regarding the cost and tell them why we can only afford a particular price bracket. When we explain that to them, they are able to adjust. At the end of the



day, they are really looking to build and keep relationships and partnerships with their clients.

Which other solutions did I evaluate?

We evaluated two or three other solutions. And we are still evaluating different solutions when they approach us, but CYPHER Learning still stands when it comes to modules, features, benefits, and costs.

What other advice do I have?

If you're looking into a product like this, you first have to understand what you want from an LMS. There is no one-size-fits-all for a particular institution. You have to list what your non-negotiables are, and then make sure that the provider is able to give you the things on that list.

It's also very important when you are deciding on an LMS that the team presenting it to you knows what they're talking about and that they'll take care of you. Some will present a solution to you, but when you ask a question they're not confident in their answers. That's a red light for me.

As for gamification, it is something that helps students learn, but we have discovered that it's not a silver bullet. You cannot gamify everything. It is something that helps engage students in their learning, however, it cannot be the only approach. You really have to know what your

objectives and outcomes are and then include gamification. Otherwise, it will just be something that the students will take advantage of, and they will no longer learn. It becomes repetitive for them.

Gamification is nice because it drives and motivates students, but you have to vary gamification modules with other types of delivery. We tried dashboards and leaderboards, but sometimes students aren't motivated by those either. You have to strike a balance. It's nice to have, but are we able to achieve the intended learning outcome?

We have to keep on exploring things because CYPHER Learning has a lot of modules that we can utilize. And I really appreciate their management. They're so easy to talk to. When we need something, they're able to discuss it with us and help us find solutions. They're very easy to talk to, as long as they understand where you're coming from.

Overall, it's a very well-thought-out solution. I am thankful to Graham [the founder] and the team at CYPHER LEARNING. They're very dynamic. They keep their ears to the ground regarding what their clients need. It's a very stable company.



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