

Case Study

CYPHER Learning



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

What is our primary use case?

It's a learning management system for students to log into and use, and for teachers and mentors to go into and check on students. Parents can also go in.

We have hundreds of students a month who go through the platform. We use the platform to produce reports which assist us with compliance.

How has it helped my organization?

The system is so good that we rarely have to even physically talk to any of our clients on the phone. It's just fully managed online and manages the whole process from the start of the student engagement all the way through their

training, communicating with them via the platform, and completion of their training. It's one of the few platforms that just works.

I have a philosophy in business: Whenever my phone rings from one of my customers I assume I'm doing something wrong. For example, I may talk to one of my schools in Victoria, one that runs our platform, three times a year, and it is me chasing them up saying, "I haven't heard from you, is everything all right?" It's just that they love it because they can fully manage it themselves and everything they need is there. They have never contacted me and said, "Laurie, I can't do this," or "This is wrong," or "Why can't we do this?"

When a solution works for your business such that you can sign up a customer and you don't need to talk to them, and they're happy, what better rapport is there than that? It blows me



away that I have schools that just don't call me (as all communication is via the CYPHER Learning) and that's a good thing. I can then focus on other things and not get bogged down on issues.

And when clients don't ring you, you have no costs. There's no cost to reduce because it has created a sense that you don't need those costs. I have probably reduced costs by 95 percent because I don't have them.

In addition, when it comes to saving money on training facilities or on travel that was involved in training, you almost can't put a price on it. When you physically go and do training out there, you have to charge a minimum of about \$1,500 a day, plus flights and everything else, for a class, and that's cheap. There are expenses on top of that such as learning materials. And when you're out teaching you're not doing anything else.

Instead, I can be here and, with the platform working, I can build my business. Instead of working in the business, you're working on the business. And you're not going to be as successful in business if you're continually working in it. If you're a plumber, when you're fixing that person's tap you're not working on your business, you're working in it, and it's never going to grow. This platform allows you to work on your business and let the business evolve. I can take on hundreds of schools and thousands of students with this platform and it won't make any difference to me whatsoever. I don't need extra trainers or classrooms to do so. It's future-proofing where my business is heading.

This platform allows me to supply my niche market better than anyone else can. If it weren't for this platform, I wouldn't have an edge over the other companies. Even if they know what I'm telling you—and they know it—they're still not going to do it because they don't get it.

What is most valuable?

The main reason I chose this software is the competency-based learning feature that helps make sure the learning is compliant. It's probably the best on the market.

In Australia we have things like performance criteria, knowledge evidence, and performance evidence that we have to map to assist with our compliance. One of the requirements that we needed a system to meet is something that CYPHER Learning has, a feature called mapping. In CYPHER Learning, when you write an assessment or do an activity, you can map it back to those criteria and generate a report for compliance. That report shows that you are covering every point that you need to cover in the training to issue a national qualification. This is one thing that CYPHER Learning does extremely well.

In Australia, when we get audited, they map our training on our potential for how we are going to deliver it. It's called a mapping document. It is fantastic for reporting, and it assists in compliance.

Another thing it does extremely well is that students have a seamless, easy process to



follow. The parents can also log in and see what the students are up to. The teachers at the school and the mentors can log in and give advice on assessments. The training coordinators at each public school or private school can log in and see the progress of the students. Each school is able to have its own portal (organisation) where all the school activities are only visible to that school's own students, staff and parents.

Another feature is that it's simple to use.

You are also able to see who has not accessed the portal and follow up with those people. The reporting process is really good. You can click a button and it displays all the dates and you can see the last time that they logged in and you can see exactly what they accessed. The reporting on it is second to none.

What needs improvement?

There are improvements that are needed and things that they could do a bit differently, and they're all in the suggestions we make. And CYPHER LEARNING will bring them out, but they're only minor things that are focused on the way that I run my business.

One example is the email integration. When we send out an email to a customer that says, "Welcome, here's your enrollment and this is what you do," if it bounces back because that email address is not correct, CYPHER Learning won't tell you that your email bounced back. What I've done, as a result, is set up an

external email system where I now get bouncebacks reported to me.

That's not a feature that the program has, but it would be a cool feature if the program did it. Because when you have invited somebody into the system, you're waiting and you're thinking, "This guy, he hasn't logged in," and you can start abusing your customer. Meanwhile, he is saying, "I never got the email." Then you find out that he gave you the wrong email address, but the system doesn't tell you. That's just me being really critical, and it's not disrespecting CYPHER Learning. It's not built as an email program, it's built as a learning management system. That's what they're good at.

Another feature that I would like has to do with the e-commerce side, which is only for one business. In my case, I am a business and different organizations run their own training under my business. The e-commerce is associated with my business. When one of my customers runs training courses, they cannot process the payments through their account, they have to go through my account. It would be helpful if they separated out the e-commerce. Again, that is not a learning management system's problem, it's not e-commerce software, but that would be a cool feature. It's not a negative about the software. It's just me being particular.



For how long have I used the solution?

I've been using the CYPHER Learning for well over six years. My current business has only been using it for the last two or three years but, in total, I have been using the platform for that long.

What do I think about the stability of the solution?

It's 100 percent stable. No problems at all. None.

What do I think about the scalability of the solution?

I could quite easily have thousands of students in it and it wouldn't be an issue. It's the only solution that is going to scale with our business. I give 100 percent on scalability.

How are customer service and support?

When you get the guys that really know what they're doing, the support is a 10 out of 10. I'm not going to rate them a nine because they are a 10. You just get that feeling. You get to know the guys that aren't quite on top of things and you just avoid them and go on to the guys who know what they're doing.

You put an issue on the support chat. When

some of the guys reply to it, I know what to say and I know when to reply to get the right guy back. About 90 percent of the guys there are brilliant. It's just the new guys who don't understand things as well and struggle a little bit sometimes, but they always get back to you quickly.

Every now and again there are little quirks and bugs, but the support is absolutely brilliant. They'll usually get back to you quite quickly.

Sometimes they don't understand exactly what I'm saying but that's just because I have one way of explaining it. At the end of the day, not one problem that I've had hasn't been resolved.

And about 80 percent of the issues that I've raised have been due to me not understanding the platform. And that's just been a matter of learning the platform. When you understand it, it is amazing.

There are always improvements that could be made to the platform, but that's just a personal opinion. And every time I have come up with a personal opinion, the support guys have said, "Mate, that's great. Can you log it as a feature request?" Sure enough, people vote on it, and the feature comes out. They're very open to suggestions. I'm a developer myself. When you develop things, you don't know what you don't know. Until you start using it and finding better ways to do something, you just don't know. I've always got suggestions but, in general, looking at all the LMSs out there, this is the best one.



How would you rate customer service and support?

Positive

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

We were using Talent only because we didn't know this existed. Talent, as a solution, was cheap and cheerful, but it sort of worked. But that was six or seven years ago when it was in its infancy.

How was the initial setup?

For any new platform that you use, you go through a learning curve. This one was probably the easiest to learn. Was it straightforward? No. But it is the easiest platform to learn. Nothing is ever straightforward. When you buy a new car, you've got to learn it. When you buy a new laptop, you've got to learn it.

It has been a learning process but it's more about learning the features and how they work. When you learn them, they are excellent. It's the normal learning curve that you would have with any software, but I promise anybody who takes on this platform that it will be the easiest one to merge into. I'm not saying it's easy but it is the easiest to learn.

One way I evaluate software is that if I cannot work it out in the first couple of hours I'm not going to use it. Because if I can't work it out with

my knowledge, how is my staff going to understand it? I was able to work CYPHER Learning very simply in the first hour and my staff picked it up extremely well.

As far as implementing it goes, we made a business decision to slow it down. But you could get this program and have it up and running within three to five working days, very easily. Anybody could adopt it, set up the e-commerce, set up the emails, understand it, and put the courses in. There's no reason why, within a week, you couldn't have a live program up and running, if you're motivated and really determined.

What was our ROI?

Even though it's priced higher than the cheap and cheerful solutions, the return on investment is going to be phenomenal. It does what you want it to do.

Which other solutions did I evaluate?

I looked at Blackboard Learning Management, Canvas LMS, TalentLMS, Udemy, and Thinkific. I've also looked at Moodle, which is brilliant, but it doesn't have a good SaaS solution. I wanted something that was managed by other people, whereas with Moodle, you have got to manage the IT yourself.

I have pretty much looked at all the platforms and tried everything. I have been trying out



LMSs for the last 10 years or so. By far—and I'm not saying CYPHER Learning is the cheapest, as I can get something cheaper—when I did the price comparison for what you get, six years ago, CYPHER Learning was the best out there and I strongly believe it still is.

I keep testing other ones and saying to myself, "Oh, I want to try and save some money." But when I look at the other ones they're just not comparable at all. They're great for mum and dad at home who want to sell courses online. But they don't take it to the next level. This solution takes it to the next level. Even McDonald's Australia is using this platform.

What other advice do I have?

In the corporate world—I'm talking about the big end of town, and large training companies—this is the best solution. If mum and dad are working from home and want to do online training, it's probably not the platform for them. It is more of a professional, business-oriented and focused platform, and a platform for schools. It's not for "Ma and Pa Kettle." There are other solutions out there for them. But for the corporate world, and for what we do, it beats anything else on the market, hands-down.

We don't use the solution's automation because of compliance. For compliance, our assessors and trainers have to manually check up on the student. So we don't want it fully automated for that reason. I'm not saying it's not good, I have seen the automations in the system, but we

prefer to have a manual process.

Obviously, an issue will always pop up. For every feature that our clients, our schools, have asked for, we have been able to come up with the correct solution on the platform. Not one of my customers has come to me and said, "It can't do this." I've always had a workaround solution for them.

Learning management systems are new to a lot of people. Only during COVID has the industry accepted that physical, classroom-style learning is changing. We've got a new program starting overseas and we're training mining companies in Papua New Guinea, using our platform. They can get the qualifications and come to Australia with them, and that helps them with their visa. A lot of training companies in Australia work on the model of being in a classroom and teaching people. Education training is changing.



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