

Spelling Out Usability: How to Choose a Great LMS

Usability is something everyone is concerned about, especially when choosing educational tools. For example, if your faculty and students don't feel your LMS is usable they're going to revert to old practices or seek other solutions. Without widespread adoption, any technology initiative will inevitably fall flat.

But how can we make something like usability less subjective? The "Spelling Out Usability" framework below provides some clarity around what usability really means to help you accurately determine whether or not an LMS is worth your time.

Understanding Needs

Instructors, students, parents, and administrators all have different needs. You can't judge usability if you don't understand how the LMS is going to be used.

Similar Paths

Are different tasks accomplished in different ways? For instance, is the process for one type of content starkly different than creating another? Disparate workflows hurt efficiency and generate frustration.

Articulate Steps

Because you will have to train your faculty on how to use your future LMS, think about how difficult it might be to articulate workflows step by step. It's worth trying this out with common tasks.

Back to Basics

Focus on how well users can accomplish basic tasks. Advanced functionality is important, but if the basics are challenging, widespread adoption is unlikely.

Interface Metrics

How many clicks and scrolls does it take for you to accomplish something? Remember, those clicks multiply exponentially when you hand the product over to users.

Learning Curve

How much time will it take for your users to be proficient in the platform? If you're estimating days versus hours, you need to move on.

I Need Help

What resources does the product make available to support users? Are there embedded tutorials the first time you get into the platform, online help guides, or videos?

Today's Thoughts

It's best to evaluate usability up front. After you spend more time exploring a product you start becoming more familiar with it and it takes away some of the objectiveness of your evaluation.

Yield on Usability

Adoption and usability go hand in hand, which is why usability should be a top consideration when choosing an LMS—even above checking off all the features on your list.

Millions of students and faculty fall in love with Schoolology's LMS every year without training, because it's designed with users in mind.

Learn more at www.schoolology.com