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Uncovering the Costs of a "Free" LMS

YOUR FREE LMS ISN'T AS FREE AS IT SEEMS

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One of the biggest unforeseen challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic has been the need for colleges and universities to transition to remote teaching and learning almost overnight. Even institutions that felt they were well prepared found themselves struggling to support a connected learning experience for both faculty and students. Nowhere was this felt more acutely than by schools with aging learning management technology, or those without a reliable commercial partner to turn to.

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the driver's seat of developing software to support their needs, it came at the cost of centralized support and maintenance for those solutions. While strong communities emerged to provide mutual support and development, each software installation inevitably becomes so highly customized that it's nearly impossible to rely on a community for all aspects of support.

In many cases, what was once considered a "free" learning management solution, for many colleges and universities has evolved into the very thing they were trying to avoid: entrenched, out-dated, highly customized software that's hard to learn, hard to maintain, and costly to support.

The unaccounted-for costs of people and hardware, paired with the outdated user experience and low adoption rates, have left many colleges and universities struggling to deliver a modern digital classroom experience.

A decade ago, Canvas was developed to evolve the traditional approach to open-source technology. Today, it's dubbed "commercial open-source," and remains committed to openness, ensuring every institution can deliver a personalized learning experience at scale. We know every institution has its own set of unique challenges and needs, that's why Canvas leverages the security and reliability of Amazon Web Services (AWS) while featuring open APIs and deep LTI integrations to help schools easily build their technology ecosystems. Additionally, Canvas source code allows institutions to create deep

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With the Covid-19 pandemic forcing most learning institutions to evolve their blended and fully online course offerings, schools leveraging traditional open-source learning management software are at a crossroads: purchase additional costly hardware to support the surge in student usage expected in the fall, or make the switch to a new LMS—one that's reliable, scalable, secure, and can support the evolving needs of your learning community. In an effort to uncover the hidden costs of a "free" LMS, and to guide the exploration of a new LMS, we've developed this infographic.

Review a comparison of an open and free vs. an open and reliable LMS, side by side.

DOWNLOAD THE INFOGRAPHIC →

Keep On Learning

A couple more related posts you might dig

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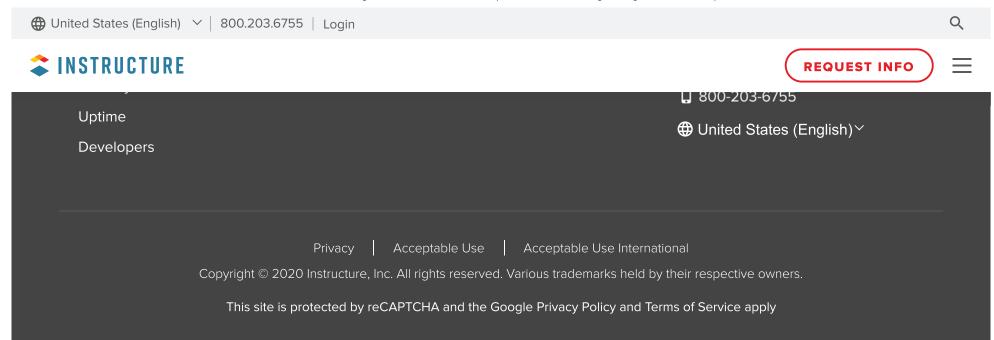

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2020 "Note to Self" Student Scholarship Contest Is Now Open!

Students and teachers should submit their #CanvasNoteToSelf videos by May 8, 2020.

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YOUR FREE LMS ISN'T AS FREE AS IT SEEMS

(Let's compare an open & free vs an open & reliable LMS)

Let's look at some key considerations involved in meeting today's higher education technology challenges.

DATED SYSTEMS **<<< ● >>>** BLENDED, ONLINE, AND MOBILE LEARNING

TIGHT BUDGETS **<<< ● >>>** A MODERN AND PERSONALIZED STUDENT EXPERIENCE

MANAGING CHANGE ⟪●⟫ A TECHNOLOGY-FRIENDLY, DATA-FRIENDLY CULTURE

SUSTAINING OPERATIONS ⟪●⟫ A SCALABLE, SECURE, OPEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Plus, the <u>2019 Campus Computing CIO Survey</u> discovered these top IT priorities:

83%
IT DATA SECURITY

73%
LEVERAGING IT TO SUPPORT STUDENT SUCCESS

So, how can you implement a sustainable, scalable architecture with your institution's needs in mind? Preferably with the flexibility of an open, born-in-the-cloud, fully supported learning management platform.

OPEN & FREE
(hosted by you)

→ Easy customization innovation, and expansion

→ A chance to design the learning experience you want to deliver

OPEN & RELIABLE
(hosted in the cloud—near you)

→ Easy customization, innovation, and expansion

→ A chance to design the learning experience you want to deliver

→ Integration with all your learning tools via compliance with the latest LTI standards

THE FREE OPTION HAS ITS HIDDEN COSTS. $ THE BENEFITS ARE WELL WORTH THE COSTS.

TECHNOLOGY

THOSE ON-PREMISE HOSTING COSTS ADD UP:

→ Servers (more students online = more servers = more money)
→ Additional software
→ Hardware upkeep
→ Security
→ Bandwidth

NOT TO MENTION:

- Development costs
- Customizations
- Configurations
- Consultant implementations

(Run your costs through the AWS TCO calculator and see where you land.)

ONE CLEAR-CUT COST COVERS IT ALL, INCLUDING:

→ A multi-tenant system
→ Amazon Web Services, the most secure cloud-hosting service available
→ Seamless hosting, security, backups, and updates

NOT TO MENTION:

- Intuitive, clean user interface, easy navigation, & integrated video tools
- Scalability for tens of millions of users with no up-front hardware investment
- A student LMS app with an average 4.7 stars from 1.3 million ratings
- Simplicity even for those new to online teaching and learninG

STAFF

DISTRACTED WITH

Maintenance
Integration and upgrades
Learning how to learn

ON TASK WITH

Engaging course design integrating a robust ed-tech network

SECURITY

CONCERNS

Breaches
Hacks
Shutdowns
Data loss

COVERED

A dedicated security team

Annual third-party security audits built-in disaster recovery and data backups

DEPENDABILITY

DOWNTIME
Complex on-premise updates

Downtime to upgrade can take days or even weeks

UPTIME
Guaranteed 99.9% uptime

World-class support at every turn

Easy integration with 400+ education technology partners

Over 4,000 global implementations

COMMUNITY

AT A COST
Tiered membership costs

The higher the membership fee, the more you can influence the product

BUILT RIGHT IN
709,535 Canvas Community users sharing ideas (and 520+ Canvas features just from their suggestions)

22,502 questions and answers to browse

CANVAS

You have a true partner in Canvas.

Canvas offers the best of all worlds. You get the innovation of open source backed by reliability, scalability, and support—from migration to implementation. Join the millions of people using Canvas for a simpler, more connected learning experience.

"We decided to go to a cloud-based LMS, and Amazon Web Services is a big deal. Previously when we had problems, our downtimes extended into hours, even a whole day. Response time went out the window. That doesn't happen with Canvas."
— Jeff Meier, Center for Teaching and Learning, UNC Charlotte

Learn more about Canvas or request a demo.

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