

xAPI Basics

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INTRODUCTION

xAPI is the most recent way to track learning, communicating more in-depth information than Scorm content ever could. xAPI also provides the freedom of not being tied to a Learning Management System. Learning is going on everywhere and xAPI allows you to track learning from any location (e.g. app, website, video, classroom, etc.).

OVERVIEW OF XAPI

BEFORE XAPI:

A learner goes to the Learning Management System (LMS), they then launch a course and the course communicates to the LMS through a standard called Scorm. If a person logs into another computer, the course would be bookmarked to start where they left off. If they answer a quiz question it will send over what their response was to the LMS. If they complete the course, it will send over that they completed the course. The LMS then reports these analytics back to the report users. This process creates a closed learning eco system, which requires learning to happen within the LMS.



Figure 1: Traditional Closed Learning System

WITH XAPI:

Learning is going on everywhere, for example Udemy, YouTube, LinkedIn, Classroom, LMS, etc. The question is...does this learning not count towards my learning history?

The idea of xAPI is to break free from the closed eco system; to say that we understand learning is going on everywhere and we want to be able to track that learning.

In order to track the learning, different systems need to open an API in order to send over events. With this tracking it is possible to capture much more information, for example on a video there can be tracked when a user started a video, when and where it was paused, when it was completed, whether the user commented and what was commented.

In order to track this information, we need a Learning Records Store. The LRS is set up to receive all the different API events via a feed.

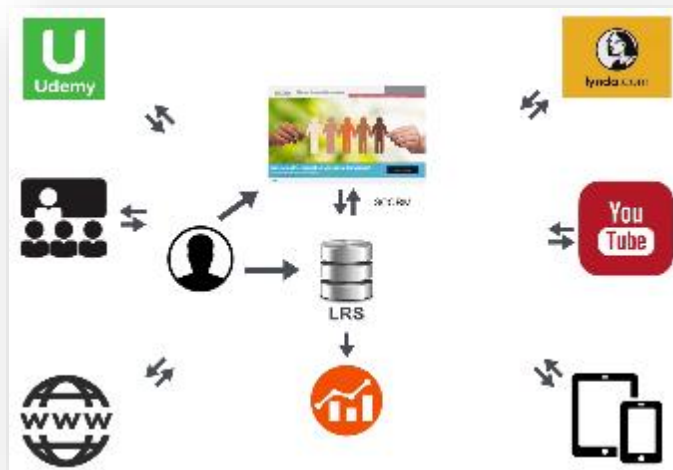


Figure 2: Learning Record Store

There is still a place for the LMS where structured learning is required. You still need to have compliance in different degrees in your company or industry.

There are options to have an LRS and LMS in one. There are some benefits to keeping them separate because the way that they store data is completely different. Tying them together inside your reports will be a beneficial bonus.

The nice thing about an LRS is that the data is easily transferable from one LRS to another, which is not the case for data transfer between LMS systems.

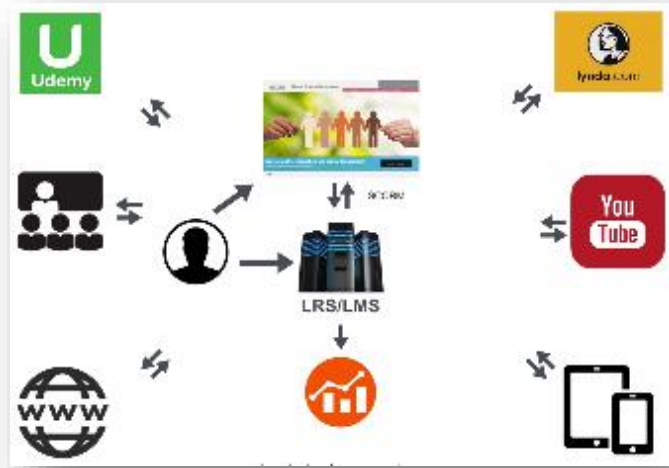


Figure 3: LRS/LMS Combination