

S2 Online Learning Consideration Checklist

The following is a checklist of considerations for reviewing online training/knowledge management systems.

Application Architecture

These points are directed at the actual application architecture.

- Is the architecture currently in use?
- Can you get references regarding the use of the application?
- Can you review the application as it functions in a circumstance that closely approximates the environment that you will expect it to function in (i.e., do not trust demos)?
- Does the architecture utilize an open platform that can be linked and/or combined with future products?
- Is the application itself easily customizable?
- Is the application absolutely compatible with prevailing W3 Consortium standards and popular browsers (e.g., Netscape Navigator and Microsoft Explorer)?
- Is the application designed to run within your user's available bandwidth?
- Does the application require plug-ins that must be installed? Plug-ins often lead to compatibility issues and/or are rejected by corporate firewalls.
- Is the application entirely web based? Hybrid technologies requiring the dissemination and installation of software for authoring, training, or course management often demand great resources for distribution and technical support.
- Is the hosting environment appropriate? Characteristics of a quality hosting environment include:
 - o Tier 1 Internet connectivity,
 - o Daily data back-up,
 - o Redundant power generation,
 - o Redundant fire suppression
 - o Redundant routers,
 - o Redundant Internet connectivity points,
 - o Site security, and
 - o 24x7x365 server monitoring

Design and Functionality

These points are directed at the design and functionality of the application.

- Does the application support appropriate instructional design, including: pre-testing, post-testing, content presentation, interactivity, and practice?
- Does the application inherently support editing and customization of the content (i.e., you should not have to go back to the developer to customize the content)?
- Is the data from the training and testing maintained in an open database environment so that it can be shared with other applications?
- Is the application SCORM or AICC compliant so that it will allow you to share content with others and/or allow you to acquire content from others?
- Does the application incorporate other knowledge management functions that support learning and sharing information, including:
 - o Threaded discussion,
 - o File and document sharing, and/or
 - o Online references?
- Are the student management tools included in the application?
- Are the student management tools robust and flexible enough to support a Fortune 500 learning environment?