



How Much Does an LMS Cost?

2020 PRICING GUIDE



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Pricing is a top priority for schools and businesses trying to pick a learning management system (LMS). These organizations want to educate students and train employees while staying in their budgets.

It can be time-consuming to compare prices for LMS solutions because vendors have different kinds of payment plans. In addition, some vendors state pricing info on their websites, while others ask you to contact them directly for a quote.

To make the process easier, we've created this comprehensive pricing guide with common payment models, additional costs to consider and examples of popular LMS vendor pricing.

What is an LMS?

A **learning management system** delivers and tracks educational and training content. It's used by companies to onboard and train employees and by educational organizations to teach students. E-learning tools include customizable content, mobile lessons and gamification. LMS solutions can improve employee engagement and retention.

Learning management systems have several modules, including:

Learning management - Learning management helps users organize and automate education and training. It includes tools for managing user info, scheduling, alerts, messages and delivering content. Administrators can also set prerequisites for training and allow users to self-enroll into specific courses.

Content development - Organizations can develop personalized course content, either using



templates or from scratch. Course authoring tools let administrators design courses with multimedia, such as videos, PDFs, infographics, animations and PowerPoint presentations.

Content library - Many LMS solutions include an out-of-the-box content library with premade learning materials. The library may cover a variety of topics, such as safety regulations, customer service and management techniques.

Employee training - Some LMS solutions offer employee training courses. These courses often cover onboarding and job training or offer instruction needed for industry-required certifications.

SCORM compliance - Shareable Content Object Reference Model, or SCORM, is an industry standard that allows learning management systems to incorporate third-party content without any duplication or recoding.

Asynchronous learning - Asynchronous learning lets students access course materials at different times and locations. The main benefit is that users can learn at their own convenience. Because users aren't bound to a class schedule, organizations often set deadlines to motivate users to complete courses.

Synchronous learning - Synchronous learning requires students to learn at specific times, either online or in a physical classroom, which can foster collaboration between employees. However, it can be difficult to coordinate and schedule synchronous learning.

Mobile learning – Mobile learning gives students access to LMS materials through a mobile app or web browser. This feature allows remote and asynchronous learners to complete courses on the go.

Gamification – Also known as game-based learning, gamification provides incentives for students to stay engaged by offering points, badges and other achievements. Students are motivated by competition, entertainment and the casual nature of games.

Testing and assessments – Tests, assessments and quizzes see whether individual students have retained what they learned. They can be given after each lesson or at the end of the course. Analytical tools can identify proficiencies and learning gaps.

Certification and compliance management – Some industries or specific jobs require employee certification or compliance training. This feature manages and tracks whether employees have completed all requirements and can generate reports for auditing.

Performance tracking – Performance-tracking and reporting functions help determine if the overall learning program is effective. Organizations can analyze how users have performed in their courses and how much time they spend learning.

LMS Pricing Models

Learning management systems are used by businesses, schools, hospitals and more. The differences between customers in these markets are vast, so the pricing models for LMS solutions are equally flexible.

LMS solutions often use a software-as-a-service (SaaS) pricing model, which means customers pay a subscription fee for the features they actually use. Some LMS vendors also offer an annual or one-time license fee or have a free version of their software.

Here are the four standard LMS pricing methods:



Per learner, per month – The most common payment option is a per learner, per month

subscription fee. This figure is either calculated based on the total number of users in the system or the number of active users enrolled in courses.

There may also be an initial service fee for creating an account. In addition, vendors might ask for payment to be made annually, even if prices are broken down monthly.

Fees are generally \$5 or less per learner, per month. **Small to mid-sized businesses** (SMBs) with general training requirements are the best fit.



Per learner, per use – LMS solutions can include more features, lessons, modules and tools than a company needs. A per learner, per use pricing model allows clients to opt out of certain parts of the software and pay only for what they use.

This could mean being charged based on the modules in use, the number of active accounts in use or only the content that's being used by those accounts. It depends on the arrangement made between the vendor and client.

Prices range from \$1 to \$10 per learner, per use. This option best serves companies that don't need to train employees regularly.





Per course – Some LMS vendors have a pay per course option for employees that need special certification for their industry or job function. Vendors might have content available in an internal library or partner with third-parties to deliver lessons through their LMS platform.

This pricing option has elements of the per learner, per use pricing model, but with premium prices for specialized content. The best fit for this option is compliance-focused industries with learners that must be certified, such as human resources, healthcare or safety.



Licensing fee – Companies can purchase a license to install LMS software on-premise. The licensing fee can be paid annually or up-front as a one-time fee. There are often additional implementation expenses for installation, data migration and training, and there may also be a charge per learner.

Licensing fees generally range from \$500 to \$20,000, and setup can cost over \$25,000. This pricing model works best for mid-sized or large businesses with an existing data center and internal IT staff.



Additional Costs to Consider

Organizations in the market for an LMS solution should also consider other costs beyond the subscription or licensing fee. Here are several expenses that are easy to overlook:



Implementation – The cost of **LMS implementation** varies by vendor and whether the company chooses a cloud LMS solution or to host the software on-premise. Expenses may include consultants, hardware installation, software customization, data migration and integration with other software (e.g., enterprise resource planning systems).



Training – Many vendors may include web-based training services for free, but in-person training at the client's site usually comes at an extra fee.



Support – Basic support (e.g., knowledge base, email support) is typically included in the price. However, vendors may offer plans that include advanced support, such as priority support or access to a dedicated customer service manager.



Maintenance – LMS software requires ongoing maintenance, such as updates, patches and upgrades. This is generally included with subscription pricing, but not with licensing fees.



Content creation – Many vendors offer services to create custom training courses and educational content for businesses and schools. Some vendors can even produce site-specific videos and with a company's particular operating procedures. This service may be charged per hour or as a one-time fee based on course requirements.

Open-Source and Free LMS Software

Open-source LMS software has source code that's publicly available. Companies can download, install and customize the software on their own, for free. Some vendors also offer free versions of their LMS software.

Open-source and free LMS solutions generally include basic functionality or may limit the number of users. Companies that choose these options will still have pay for implementation, customization, integrations and maintenance.

In particular, installing and customizing open-source software can be complicated for companies that haven't used an LMS before, and there's no support if something goes wrong. Companies that choose this route will need to have a knowledgeable in-house IT team or hire implementation consultants.

LMS Vendor Pricing

We've compared pricing for many of the top LMS solutions. Note that several of the largest vendors in the market don't offer pricing details publicly, so you'll need to contact them directly for a quote.

Abara LMS offers two pricing models: active user (anyone who logs into the system within a 30-day period in a given month) and registered user (anyone who has been registered in the system in a given year).

The tiers are 100 active users for \$2.92 per user, per month or \$3,500 per year, 250 active users for \$2 per user, per month or \$6,000 per year, 500 active users for \$1.42 per user, per month or \$8,500 per year, 1,000 active users for \$1.02 per user, per month or \$12,250 per year and over 1,000 active users that's based on custom pricing.

CoreAchieve is available in four pricing tiers. Each tier includes a free trial and unlimited courses. The Basic plan costs \$299 per month (or \$2.99 per user, per month) for up to 100 active users. The Standard plan

costs \$799 per month (or \$2.66 per user, per month) for up to 300 active users. The Premium plan costs \$1,219 per month (or \$2.44 per user, per month) for up to 500 active users. The Enterprise plan supports unlimited users; please contact the company for a price quote.

Accord LMS is a scalable LMS with several pricing options: \$1.75 per learner, per month up to 200 learners; \$1.10 per learner, per month up to 500 learners; and \$0.80 per learner, per month up to 1,000 learners. Contact Accord directly if your company has over 1,000 learners.

Note that prices are listed as monthly, but billed annually. All plans include core LMS features, mobile learning, gamification and role-based learner enrollment. For more details, check out our [Accord LMS pricing](#) article.

Blackboard is among the most popular LMS solutions for K-12 and higher ed organizations. Although the vendor doesn't publicly release pricing info, we've estimated [Blackboard pricing](#) based on various sources.

A 2015 review by the University of Missouri found that mid-range plans were \$25 to \$30 per learner, per year and enterprise plans were \$17 to \$20 per learner, per year. And Michael Feldstein, partner at MindWires Consulting, estimated the average cost of a full license for a university or school district as \$160,000.

Coassemble has an unlimited plan that covers many of its features. It costs \$299 per month (billed annually).

Create LMS is a single-platform, cloud-based LMS that costs \$12 per user, per year. For companies with over 500 users, the price drops to \$6 per user, per year.

Edmodo is an LMS for K-12 schools that operates like a social platform (similar to Facebook) to make announcements and post assignments online.

We've previously written about [Edmodo's "freemium" accounts](#) – meaning parents, teachers, students and even school districts can create their own accounts for free. Features include unlimited document storage,

integration with Microsoft Office and Google Apps, mobile access, and security and privacy tools.

EdTek LMS offers two pricing options.

The Kick Start option has an annual cost of \$2,000 to \$2,500 and a per learner fee based on course length. The Annual License option is based on the total number of learners in a year. Subscribers can earn a discount by paying the annual license fee up-front.

eFront has four pricing tiers based on the number of learners.

The Business plan costs \$1,000 per month for up to 1,000 learners. The Enterprise plan costs \$1,500 per month for up to 2,500 learners. The Large enterprise \$2,500 per month for up to 5,000 learners. The Tailored plan supports over 5,000 learners and requires a direct quote from the vendor.

ePath Learning nGage is a validated compliance training solution developed specifically for regulated organizations, such as life sciences and pharmaceutical companies. It offers two pricing models, namely active user and registration type. The price per user ranges from 25 cents to \$3.

eTrainCenter offers two pricing models.

Registration pricing is calculated by multiplying the number of students by the number of registered learning activities. The plan starts at \$151 per month or \$1,500 per year.

User seat pricing is based on the number of active users. It starts at \$330 per month or \$3,600 per year for 100 users.

GnosisConnect offers a monthly or yearly subscription based on the number of learners. A company with 100 learners can expect to pay \$299 per month or \$2,990 per year.

The subscription includes all features, unlimited file uploads, unlimited course storage, a dashboard with company branding and free email support.

Google Classroom is part of the Google for Education package that includes Gmail, Google Drive, Google Calendar and other apps. It targets teachers and students in both K-12 and higher ed markets.

The Google for Education suite is free for schools, but there's a paid G Suite Enterprise for Education tier that includes additional features, such as advanced videoconferencing features, advanced security and premium support. Google no longer publishes pricing information so you'll want to contact them directly for a quote.

iSpring offers three pricing tiers: \$3.66 per active learner, per month up to 100 active learners; \$3 per learner, per month up to 300 active learners; and \$2.82 per learner, per month up to 500 active learners.

Contact the company directly for custom plans with more than 500 active learners.

Knowledge Anywhere has three pricing options.

The Express plan costs \$850 per month and is available to 500 active learners. The plan also includes two system administrators and standard support.

The Professional plan is \$1,700 per month and covers up to 1,000 active learners and five administrators.

The Enterprise plan supports unlimited active learners, administrators and storage. You'll need to contact the vendor for a price quote.

Moodle targets schools, but is also used by corporate training programs. We've previously researched [Moodle pricing](#) and found several payment options.

MoodleCloud has a 45-day free trial that includes 200 users and 400 MB of storage. Then, there's the Moodle Starter plan that's intended for a single class, has greater technical functionality and costs \$80 per year.

The Moodle for School plan has three pricing options: \$250 per year for 100 learners and 200 MB of storage; \$500 per year for 200 learners and 400 MB of storage; and \$1,000 per year for 500 learners and 1 GB of storage.

MyQuest offers solutions for three distinct markets: Coaches, Business Trainers and Enterprise.

Base pricing for the Coaches and Business Trainers solutions starts at \$97 per month for one Quest (lesson) and up to 10 students. A web-based version costs \$247 per month and includes 10 Quests and 10,000 students. The \$447 per month option provides clients with a branded solution. The \$1,247 per month plan offers an analytics dashboard, Quest store, flexible invoicing and a branded mobile app.

Oracle Learning Cloud is a module within **Oracle Talent Management Cloud** that focuses on training employees. It costs \$3 per learner, per month and requires a minimum of 1,000 learners. It requires a subscription to either the Global Human Resources Cloud or the Talent Management for Coexistence Cloud.

OttoLearn Agile Microlearning is a mobile-first, desktop-friendly application, that uses bite-sized content to improve learner engagement and retention. It has three user-based plans (Team, Growth and Enterprise) that start at \$2 per user, per month. However, the Enterprise plan has additional implementation and support services, so please contact Neovation directly for a quote. OttoLearn also offers an Enterprise CORE plan that includes a concierge-level implementation and support package.

OttoLearn also has usage-based plans that are based on total activity usage. They start at one cent per activity, per month (billed annually), and each activity consumes one usage credit. The Team plan costs \$120 per month for up to 10,000 credits, and the Growth plan costs \$600 per month for up to 50,000 credits. The Enterprise plan supports up to 100,000 credits, but companies will need to contact the vendor directly for a quote.

SAP Litmos is a cloud-based LMS with four user-centered solutions: Employee, Customer, Compliance and Channel. We've previously written about two **SAP Litmos pricing** plans.

The Litmos Pro plan costs \$6 per learner, per month for 150 to 500 learners and \$4 per learner, per month for 501 to 1,000 learners.

The Litmos Pro + Courses plan costs \$15 per learner, per month for 50 to 150 learners; \$9 per learner, per month for 150 to 500 learners; and \$6 per learner, per month for 501 to 1,000 learners.

Schoology is an LMS solution targeting K-12 learning, higher ed and corporate training programs. The Basic package is free and intended for students, parents, teachers and advisers.

The Enterprise package is intended for schools that want advanced features. Pricing isn't publicly available, so contact the vendor for a quote.

Schoox is a corporate training LMS that's built to resemble a social platform. It has three pricing tiers.

Light Academy is priced at \$6 per learner, per month up to 300 employees. Professional Academy costs \$5 per learner, per month up to 1,000 employees. For Enterprise Academy, which handles over 1,000 employees, contact the vendor for a pricing quote.

Skyprep LMS is available in four different pricing plans.

The Starter plan costs \$449 per month (\$349 per month, if billed annually) and includes 100 learners, two administrators and 50 GB of storage.

The Advanced plan costs \$649 per month (\$499 per month, if billed annually) and includes 250 learners, five administrators and 100 GB of storage.

The Premium plan is priced at \$999 per month (\$749 per month, if billed annually) and includes 500 learners, 20 administrators and 500 GB of storage.

Companies interested in the Enterprise plan (over 500 learners) need to contact the vendor directly for a quote.

SmarterU is a full-featured LMS platform that helps organizations administer engaging training programs more efficiently. There are two pricing plans. The Corporate plan costs \$6,999 per year for up to 300 learners. It includes all SmarterU features except for learning plan automation. Onboarding and training services as well as an [OttoLearn Agile Microlearning “Team” plan](#) are included in the price.

The Enterprise plan costs \$9,999 per year for up to 500 learners, \$12,999 per year for up to 1,000 learners and \$29,999 per year for up to 5,000 learners. It includes all SmarterU features, including learning plan automation. Onboarding and training services as well as an [OttoLearn Agile Microlearning “Team” plan](#) are included in the price.

TalentLMS is a cloud-based LMS that helps small and midsize businesses provide training programs. It has two separate plans: Standard and Active. The Standard plan is based on the total registered number of users, which cannot go over the limit. On the other hand, the Active plan includes active users (e.g., trainers, administrators) but supports an unlimited number of registered users (e.g., learners). Note that each paid tier is billed annually.

The Standard plan has a free tier and five paid tiers. For example, the Starter tier supports up to 40 users and unlimited courses for \$59 per month. The Active plan also has five paid tiers and its Starter Active tier supports up to 40 active users and an unlimited number of registered users for \$129 per month, plus an extra \$4 for each additional active user.

ThinkingCap provides a free plan that includes up to 10 active learners, community support and one learning domain. In addition, there is a customized free trial, and Standard and Enterprise licenses. The Standard licenses are intended for smaller organizations and have four tiers. The four tiers are: Starter (\$65 per month for up to 25 active learners), Small (\$125 per month for up to 50 active learners), Medium (\$225 per month for up to 100 active learners) and Large (\$500 per month for up to 250 active learners).

The Enterprise licenses are targeted to companies with more than 250 active learners and have three tiers. They are: Starter (\$12,000 per year for up to 500 active learners), Small (\$18,000 per year for up to 1,000 active learners), Medium (\$27,000 per year for up to 5,000 active learners) and Large (\$42,000 per year for up to 10,000 active learners).



Bottom Line

Many of the LMS vendors listed here follow the per user, per month pricing model, with tiers that provide additional features. Some also offer perpetual licenses for a one-time fee.

Be sure to consider which features each vendor offers, as well as their reputation among users.

If you'd like more info on LMS software or want to compare solutions, check out our [reviews for over 60 LMS vendors](#).