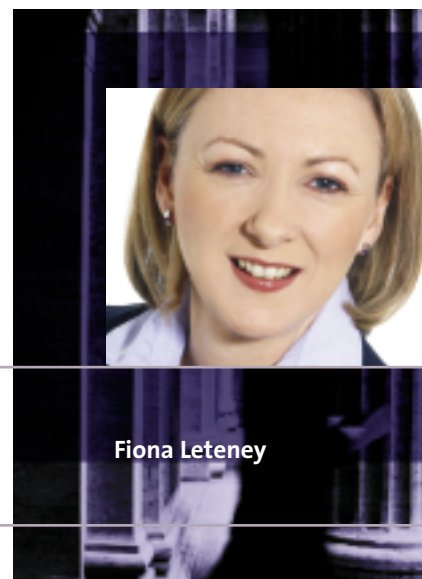


The benefit of experience

Discovering what people really think.



Fiona Leteney

In my previous column I asked for feedback on how your organisation was using the e-learning standards for interoperability (AICC/SCORM) and if there were any issues. These were the questions I asked:

- What is your role in e-learning?
- How do you use the e-learning standards?
- Please give your views on the standards

This column has some of the feedback; it is fairly anecdotal because there is not enough information to be statistically significant, however in e-learning we all find other people's experiences very useful!

Most of the people who provided feedback were in learning and development (l&d) departments and were sourcing e-learning from various vendors but also have experience in creating e-learning themselves; mainly using authoring tools such as Adobe Captivate rather than programming in Flash or HTML.

Below I have provided a couple of the examples that are very similar and may be the majority view (silent or otherwise), the second one will remain anonymous as requested. She does have small "dig" at me (rightly so!), for the way I phrased the question. I know both these organisations are doing some great work with e-learning.

• *"Presently we specify a minimum requirement of SCORM 1.2 compliance for all vendors of course content, custom rapid content authoring tools (such as Adobe Captivate), learning management systems, and any other technology platforms.*

In view of our available resource, size and online learning 'maturity' of the organisation, our approach is to ensure that all online learning is vendor (content or

tool) based; with status, knowledge checking and reporting to SCORM 1.2 standards – either through selected learning management systems or other learning delivery technologies. The degree of detail varies.

It is not current strategy to develop more advanced tracking and book-marking for vendor content or tools, or to develop custom content from scratch to SCORM standards – we choose to leave that to the experts! This allows trainers to focus on improving their instructional and cognitive design skills."

Steve Goodwin – Wiltshire Police

• *"We do not use the standards to their full potential and this is for a number of reasons.*

We have two staff looking after the delivery of over 100 courses to over 5,000 users and we are primarily interested in 'who did what, when'. We do not have an advanced enough LMS to collect complex interaction

On the www.towardsmaturity.org website there is a poll running. The question, answers and results at the time of writing are as follows:

"How useful have the AICC/SCORM standards been in helping your e-learning implementation?"

- Not really 42.86%
- Quite useful 21.43%
- I don't know what they are 21.43%
- Very useful 14.29%

Have look to see if these results have changed and cast your own vote.

data and at this stage there is no demand for that kind of information from the business. We build in feedback collection using email and where competence is required, we include quizzes that must be passed before completion occurs, which for the type of training we deliver (i.e. not mission critical aviation simulations), is adequate. You could call that a workaround but I would say it's a pragmatic approach.

We work with a range of suppliers to ensure that all our courseware meets our reporting requirements and this can be challenging enough in itself! The additional time we could spend setting up complex interactions and tracking each click or response from each user is, for us, unnecessary and unachievable within the types of timescales and budgets we work to.

Maybe one day we will be in the luxurious position of being able to monitor all our e-learning to that level of minute detail but in reality, we are busy enough procuring, authoring, reporting on and updating a wide range of courses. You wonder if there is a 'silent majority' who are using the bare minimum 'just to get by' – perhaps there is a silent majority using what is appropriate, achievable and satisfactory for their needs."

Anonymous

If anything strikes a chord in either agreement or disagreement then please do get back to me! (leteney@bizmedia.co.uk) You could be part of my next column in October.

Next time I will be giving a couple of example organisations where the e-learning standards have worked well and where they seem to have failed miserably. 