

EUNIS 2008: What are the “Its” on Learning Management Systems - from scratch to the next generation of a LMS

Arne Bergby, CEO *it's learning*, arne@itslearning.com

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Teaching in higher education is going online. There are a number of Learning Management (LMS)-systems, which offer different pedagogical services. While these services are becoming more and more part of higher education, so are the users' requests for LMS-systems that are integrateable with other educational and social softwares.

1.1. Background

LMSs cater to different educational and administrative requirements. The most basic LMS used by universities and colleges allow academic staff to manage their courses, exchange information with students for a course, make simple assessments and display scores and transcripts. In this first generation of LMS the focus has very much been on the usability for the instructor, less so for the student. However, it is well known that students are online whenever they study, actively using various different technologies apart from the LMS offered at their institution.

1.2 Present generation

We will be using our LMS – *it's learning* – as an example to illustrate the development of an LMS as a product of, not only technological possibilities, but also of the interplay between the user and these possibilities. In the development of *it's learning*, we keep a keen eye on how the users interact with educational technologies in their daily practices as teachers and learners. We look at how new available technologies are adopted and how the users constantly develop their skills... It is on the basis of these observations, that we form our assumptions on how our future users will be working within and what they will be requiring from the next generation of LMS.

1.3 Next generation

On the basis of development of the user, we will show what actual facilities and services will be required in the next generation of our LMS *it's learning*. As we see it, the next generation is not only extending tools which are already there, but also has to challenge the user to further development and exploration of digital technologies for teaching in higher education.