

# How Learning Management Systems are Integrating Social Learning Technologies



Review and Outlook

By Janet Clarey, M.S. Ed.





**Brandon Hall Research**

*Independent, Innovative Intelligence*

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## Research Methodology

This research is based on our research surveys, experience and observations in the field, analysis of case studies, blogs, conferences, and literature reviews. For the LMS reviews, vendors submitted answers to a questionnaire on the capabilities of their solutions.

## About the Author



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Janet Clarey is a researcher and writer at Brandon Hall Research. Her background is in corporate workforce development where her focus was designing, developing, and implementing learning solutions and strategies. She has served as project manager for several large training initiatives, including the implementation of learning management, learning content management, and talent management systems. She has also managed several social networks for learning professionals. She has an M.S. in Education from Capella University with a specialization in Instructional Design for Online Learning and is a Ph.D. student at Syracuse University in the School of Education's Instructional Design, Development, and Evaluation (IDD&E) program. She can be reached by e-mail at [janet@brandon-hall.com](mailto:janet@brandon-hall.com), and through Skype at janetclarey. Janet blogs at <http://brandon-hall.com/janetclarey> and is an active member in several professional online social networks. She works virtually from her office in New York.

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### What's different about this report?

This report has a companion Website. The Website is designed to help you experiment with new tools, communicate with others, and interact with several of the social learning technology tools featured in this report. The companion Website is located at: <http://brandonhallnetwork.com>





## About this Report

More and more, learning management systems are seeing the need to expand their solutions beyond a learning environment where classes and courses are the center of activity. Many companies are branching out into the Web 2.0 space where learners create more of an ad hoc environment that is loosely structured and more personalized.

This report highlights several social learning technologies, tools, and services, provides resources and for outlook on each tool.

We analyzed 76 LMSs reviewed in our 2008 LMS KnowledgeBase for collaborative features. Then, we went a step further and asked LMS companies with collaborative features to provide answers to questions around specific social learning features within their systems. In this report, we feature LMSs with social learning technologies built within the system or integrated through a third party.

Our current LMS KnowledgeBase 2008 provides data for the following collaborative learning tools:

- Learner-to-learner e-mail
- Learner-to-instructor e-mail
- Standard threaded discussion
- Moderated threaded discussion
- Live, instant messaging
- Live chat
- Ability to cluster learners into workgroups for group study sessions
- Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP)
- Webcasting
- Virtual whiteboard
- Application sharing

This report goes beyond the collaborative tools featured in our 2008 LMS KnowledgeBase. We also review the following collaborative learning tools in LMSs:

- Blogs
- Wikis
- Media sharing
- Peer rating of content
- Informal collaboration space
- Team calendar
- Expert exchange/locator
- Collaborative content development
- Search engine
- Tagging/bookmarking
- Private messaging
- Survey/polling tools
- RSS feeds

Social learning technologies are a new approach; a state of mind. That's one of the reasons we're providing a NEW add-on to this publication: direct access to the Brandon Hall Research analyst in a collaborative, networked environment. Upon purchase of this report, look for an email invitation to the Brandon Hall ResearchBase.