

# Intentionally Create Your Learning Tech Ecosystem!

All organizations have a learning tech ecosystem - some just work better than others.

Our recent research identified four major themes on how forward-thinking companies intentionally plan and create their learning tech ecosystems.



## DESIGN FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION

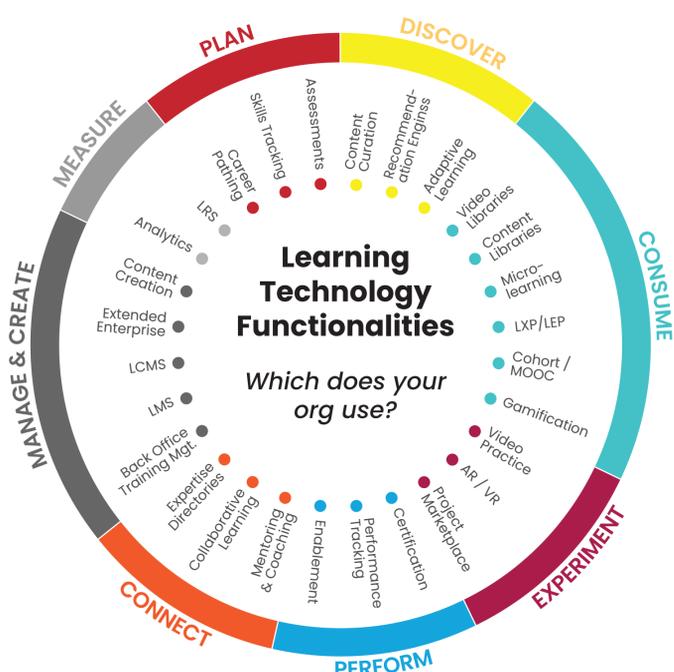
Forward-thinking L&D functions are moving from providing content to stewarding learning and development wherever it happens. L&D should leverage technology to create the conditions that encourage development.

Based on our research, organizations tend to use an average of 11 learning tech functionalities.

Most functionalities used are focused on helping employees CONSUME content.

### BEST ADVICE WE HEARD:

"Just because you can doesn't mean you should: don't be distracted by shiny things."



## THINK SUSTAINABILITY

Good tech ecosystems are sustainable - and more forward-thinking L&D functions create sustainable ecosystems by paying attention to two things: long term viability of vendors and buy-in from internal stakeholders.

### Involve stakeholders:



Senior Leadership



HR Partners



IT Function



Embedded L&D



Users / Employees

The biggest challenges identified by interviewees were choosing vendors and meeting internal stakeholder needs.

### Vet vendors for:



Customers with similar challenges



Confidence of investors



Robust & innovative roadmap



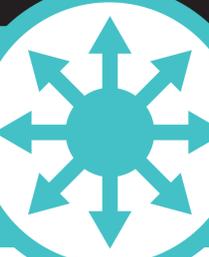
Longevity in the market



Evidence of partnering, not just supplying

### BEST ADVICE WE HEARD:

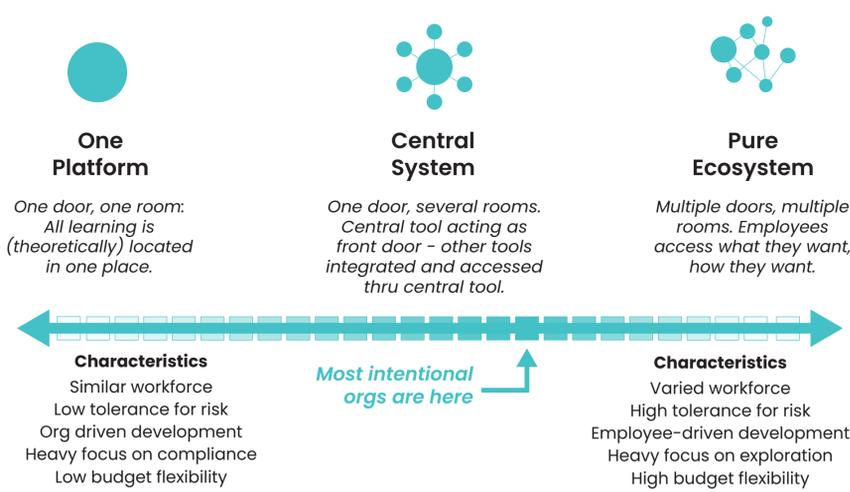
"Pull vendors into the same room to solve problems together."



## CREATE ORDER OUT OF CHAOS

Intentionally creating a learning tech ecosystem helps organizations avoid chaos. Although we found no two ecosystems that looked exactly alike, companies with intentional ecosystems tended to fall on a spectrum, ranging from simple to complex. What is right for your organization depends on several characteristics.

Most organizations we spoke with chose a structure somewhere between a central system and a pure ecosystem.



### BEST ADVICE WE HEARD:

"Be a signal through the noise: choose the structure that will be easiest for users to navigate."



## CONTINUALLY EVOLVE

Just like a natural ecosystem, learning technology ecosystems should continually change and adapt to their environments. Forward-thinking L&D functions monitor their ecosystems, always looking for ways to improve.

### Constantly monitor your learning technology ecosystems for:

#### User Experience

- Offers employee choice
- Goes beyond formal
- Motivates development
- Easy to navigate
- Unambiguous

#### Effectiveness

- Improves performance
- Fuses with the work itself
- Serves all employees
- Focuses on building needed skills

#### Alignment

- Shares info with employees
- Connects employees
- Provides actionable insights
- Integrates with larger ecosystem

### Common phrases from our interviews about evolution:

"Divest to invest"  
"Indecision kills the vision"  
"Nothing is permanent"  
"Understand usage"

### BEST ADVICE WE HEARD:

Use your data to understand what is working and what should be modified or sunset.

Want a more in-depth view of the research? Start here:  
<https://redthreadresearch.com/2019/05/28/learning-tech-ecosystems/>

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