

2026

LMS Buyer Office Hours

**Session 1: How to Buy a
Learning System**



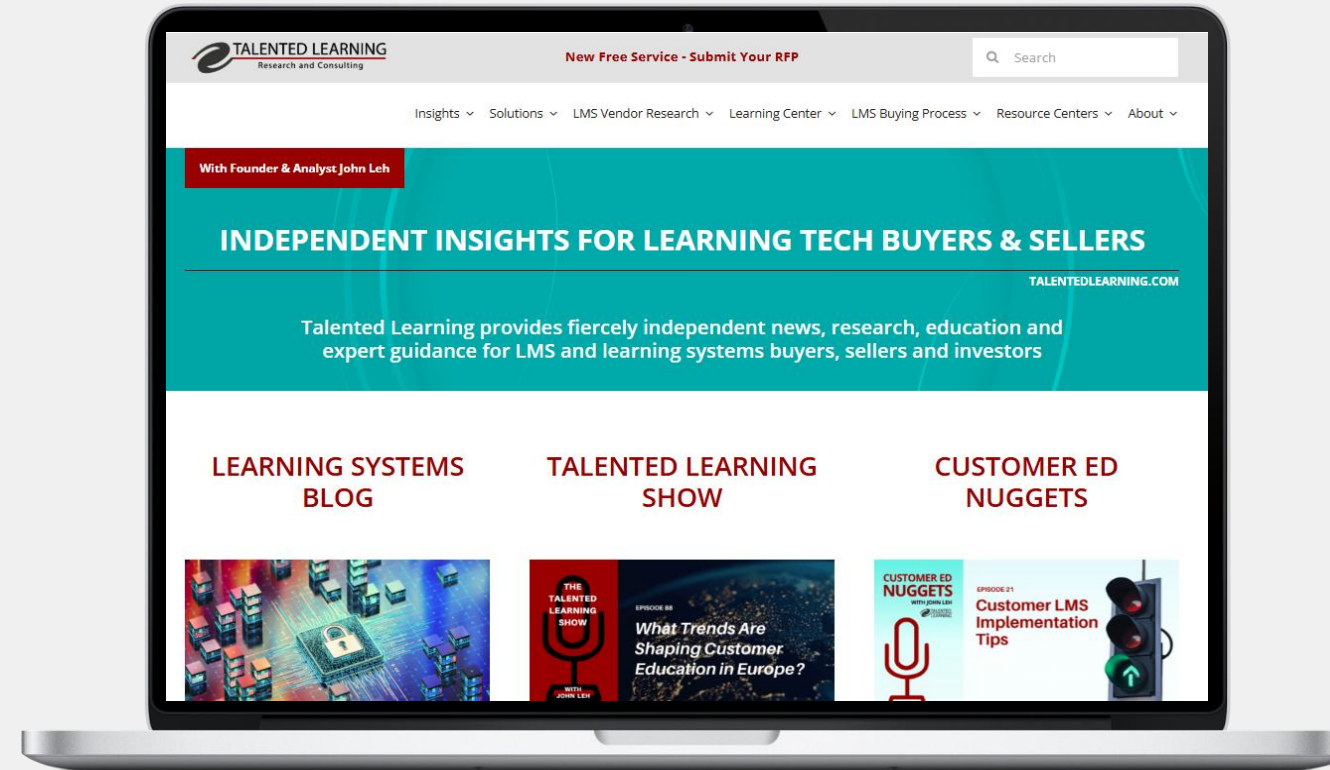
About Talented Learning

Fiercely independent research and consulting firm dedicated to the business of learning technology

Helping buyers buy their best LMS since 2014

Founded by John Leh

- [Learning Systems Blog](#)
- [The Talented Learning Show Podcast](#)
- [Customer Ed Nuggets Podcast](#)



About John Leh



- Founder, CEO and lead analyst of Talented Learning
- 25 years LMS buying and selling LMS experience
- Trusted advisor, blogger, podcaster and educator
- Helped hundreds of organizations select their best LMS
- You can connect with John on [LinkedIn](#).

Office Hours Agenda – How to Buy a Learning System

- 50% education /50% discussion
- Why LMS selections fail
- Brief market overview
- 6-Step buying process
- Q/A and open discussion on anything LMS



Why Do LMS Selections Fail?

- Start too late
- Don't follow a defined process
- Too many vendors
- Lack of defined requirements
- Unaware of existing resources
- Subjective, rapid decision-making



eurekaos

Sana™

CYPHER Learning™



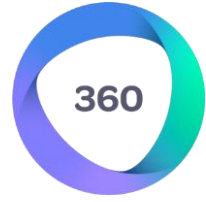
litmos

LearningCart

sumtotal.

Thought INDUSTRIES

D2L DESIRE2LEARN



SmarterU TRAIN · LEARN · RETAIN

totaralearn



learningpool



OPENedX

schoox

GROWTH IN ENGINEERING

canvas BY INSTRUCTURE

LearnDash

lemonadeLXP

thinkingcap™

UPSIDE LMS

skyprep



docebo®

Administrate

skilljar by Gainsight



digitalCHALK

Propelr



moodle

bongo™



schoolology™

northpass

skilljar

VALAMIS

iSpring Learn

degreed.

brainier™ educate. engage. empower.

Learn Dash

elcomi



MATRIX

CROSSKNOWLEDGE Learning Suite LS



cornerstone eThink

Learnie Community Microlearning

ProProfs Training Maker

incentli

edcast ClearCo.

talentlms

LifterLMS

moodle Partner

totara PLATINUM PARTNER

COURSE CONTAINER

digitalCHALK

LMS Vendor Differentiation

1. Business goals
2. Use case specialization
3. Functional capabilities
4. Technical capabilities
5. Services and support
6. License and cost
7. Vendor experience



Talented Learning's Independent Research

[Learning System Directory](#)

[Case Study Directory](#)

[Annual Awards](#)

[In-Depth Demonstrations](#)

[Reviews by John Leh](#)

2025 Talented Learning Awards
Best of the Best
[CHECK OUT OUR AWARDS POST FOR MORE DETAILS!](#)

TOP 10 ENTERPRISE LMS
absorb, cornerstone, CYPHER Learning, D2L, docebo, LearnUpon, litmos, Propelr, schoox, totara

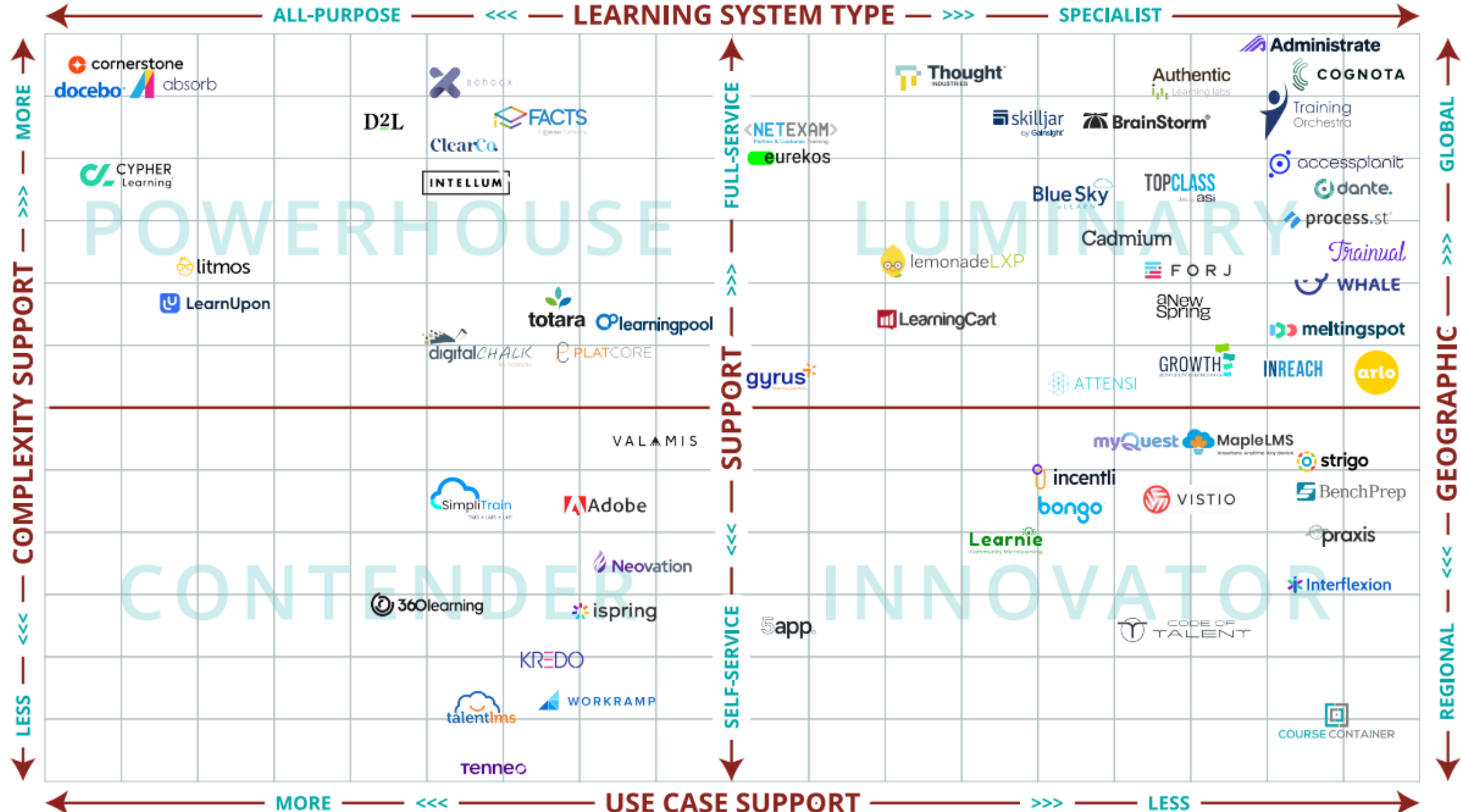
TOP 10 EMPLOYEE LMS
360learning, ClearCo, continu, digitalCHALK, V Scheer IMC, KREDO Learning Platform, lemonadeLXP, Neovation, PLATCORE, Sana, tenneo, VALAMIS

TOP 10 CUSTOMER/PARTNER LMS
Adobe, BrainStorm, eurekaos, INTELUM, meltingspot, NETEXAM, pendo, skilljar, Thought, Trainn.

TOP 10 PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION LMS
Authentic Learning Labs, BeachPrep, BrainCert, Cadmium, FORJ, kajabi, LearningCafe, LearnWorlds, MapleLMS, OasisLMS, PathLMS, TOPCLASS

TOP 10 LEARNING OPS SYSTEMS
accessplanit, Administrate, arlo, axcelerate, cloud assess, COGNOTA, connecteam, SimpliTrain, Training Octave, Trainual

TOP 10 LEARNING TECH INNOVATIONS
bongo, Clueso, COURSE CONTAINER, evolve, hubLMS, Interflexion, incentli, instruct, Learnie, LearnExperts



6-Step LMS Buying Process

Proven process to overcome challenges and confidently find your best learning system



Business Case

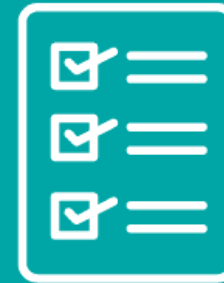
- Stay or go?
- Cost / usage patterns
- Cost of manual workarounds
- Opportunity costs
- Measurable success criteria



**BUSINESS
CASE**

Define Requirements

- Business goals
- Use case specialization
- Functional capabilities
- Technical capabilities
- Services and support
- License and cost
- Vendor experience



**DEFINE
REQUIREMENTS**

Vendor Shortlisting

- Most overlooked step
- Better to highly evaluate fewer qualified vendors vs. trying to qualify many vendors
- Deeper level of evaluation
- Most productive use of limited time



RFPs and Proposals

- Most hated step (not for me)
- Mandatory
- Define the scope and parameters
- Independent templates and help
- Complimentary review



**RFP &
PROPOSALS**

Use Case Demos

- Tied directly to your use case – not vendor's feature demo
- How features and functions work together
- Shows clicks, not what the vendor wants to show
- Basis for sandbox/POC evaluation



**USE CASE
DEMOS**

Verify and Negotiate

- Sandbox and use case testing
- Client references
- Network references
- Negotiation strategy
- What's negotiable?



**VERIFY &
NEGOTIATE**

Question / Answer / Discussion

This portion will not be published

- Questions on today?
- Your use case? Audiences?
- 1st solution / replacing?
- Biggest challenge you are facing?
- Vendor questions?



Find Your Best Learning System



- Don't reinvent the wheel – follow a proven process
- Leverage our free research and tools
- Get started yesterday
- Book a complimentary consult with me

Upcoming Office Hour Sessions

2nd Wed Every Month @ 11am ET

Feb 11 – How to Build a Strong Business Case for LMS Replacement: Stay or Go

March 11 – How to Define Requirements:

April 8 – How to Build a Qualified Shortlist

May 13 – How to Write a Valuable RFP

June 10th - How to Manage Vendors

Send email with follow-up and links to resources

