

Case Study

CYPHER Learning



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- ✓ Review by a Real User
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What is our primary use case?

We onboard all our students into the platform and use it on a day-to-day basis for lessons, online classes, assessments, grading, and tabulation. We use it administratively and operationally.

How has it helped my organization?

CYPHER Learning is a core part of our students' journeys, as well as a core part of our lecturers' processes. Especially with the pandemic, everything has moved to digital. Today and for years to come, even if COVID is no longer around, the hybrid mode of learning will stay within our organization at least, because of the direction that our company is going. It's a nine out of 10, because we've built everything that we

have operationally in CYPHER Learning. The product itself is amazing in terms of helping us to streamline all the processes and it saves us a lot of time.

The time savings are the result of a number of things. First, all tabulation of data has been automated. In the past, we would need to manually move things from paper to Excel and then do some manual calculations or use formulas in Excel to determine a student's grade. Now, we can set the rubric and everything is automated. If it is set up well, I just go in and export. That saves a tremendous amount of time. Another area that it helps us save so much time in is the administration of adding and updating student information, communicating with students, and making sure they are aware of what classes they're supposed to be in and their schedules. All that is communicated via CYPHER Learning. That has



streamlined our processes and saved a lot of our time for the administrative staff.

What is most valuable?

We use CYPHER Learning for assessments but because most of our assessments go through Turnitin, the ability to integrate it with a lot of our third-party service providers like Turnitin, through a plugin, is helpful. There aren't many learning management systems that integrate so well with different APIs and LTIs, especially when a school has various tools in its tech stack. In addition to Turnitin, we are also subscribers of Coursera, LinkedIn Learning, and Skillshare. Integrating those platforms and having our user profiles, as well as progress and results integrated fully with our LMS, has been very helpful because it becomes like a one-stop center. Everything works perfectly and smoothly and is good for our customer experience.

Also, the way that we work is that our organization is a group of companies. We might have one program that we run in a couple of different schools. We can create content in one place and then very quickly duplicate the classes. CYPHER Learning has what it calls "parent" classes, that are like templates. We can duplicate them and create child classes from there. That makes content creation very easy. And it's very easy to update as well. We just update it in one place and sync it across all the child classes. It saves us time because we just do it once and then the system helps us to

replicate it over time.

The ability to track student progress on a competency basis through a mastery grid is very important to us and it's not just for teachers and our lecturers. It's also helpful for our administrators. We have a talent management department that looks into job placements for students. Information on student skills development—what level of competency they have acquired thus far—is relevant to that team.

And especially for our pre-university program, we encourage lecturers to utilize the group function to reach out to students and communicate with them. That really opens up room for our students to ask any questions about a particular class. If a student is not very interactive in class, they have other means of reaching out to their lecturers.

What needs improvement?

When it comes to automating assessments and providing recommendations, I would rate the solution at eight, on a scale of one to 10. I just got off a call with our CYPHER Learning contacts this morning and one of the things that I brought up was that we have 100 percent of our students on the platform, but not 100 percent of our students have access to third-party platforms like Coursera, Skillshare, and LinkedIn Learning. Some form of customization would be good in terms of the API and how it integrates with third-party platforms. If we had control of that, I would give it a nine out of 10.



Also tagging classes and assignments with competencies is seven or seven and a half out of 10. We need the customization part sorted out so that we can control who has access to what kind of content. That's an area that needs improvement.

I would also like to see improvement to the mobile app, because our students are mobile-first. In our day-to-day interaction with students, if they can do everything on their mobile phones, that would be what they would appreciate the most. We know that's not entirely possible, especially when it comes to assessments.

Also, there are certain push notification features that I have noticed CYPHER Learning does not have. It does send notifications via the app, but not push notifications. I tested it this morning and it doesn't quite work, so that would be another area for improvement. Students really need the app to work better.

For how long have I used the solution?

I have been using CYPHER LEARNING since 2016, but more extensively since 2019.

What do I think about the stability of the solution?

It's generally stable. Recently we've had some caching issues. Every once in a while we run

into errors. But with the customer support team, everything feels very manageable. If a system fails, as long as the support team is able to answer our questions, we are able to provide the necessary support to our end-users.

Overall, it's fairly stable, with occasional errors or problems. But the support team is top-notch and that gives us a sense of trust.

What do I think about the scalability of the solution?

It's very scalable.

BAC Education Group consists of 42 companies, but in terms of educational institutions, there are six. One is a training company targeting working adults and professionals. The rest are tertiary education institutions. We deploy CYPHER Learning for all these institutions. We also use it for training and development of all of our 350 to 400 staff. In terms of location, we have students from across the region including the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, and India. They are all over Asia, especially in our postgraduate studies. Overall, we have about 8,000 users.

We use the product extensively for everything to do with learning and assessment.

Administratively, we use it for student data and more. The product is great and fits our use case perfectly. All our assessments have been moved online, so CYPHER Learning is our source of information now. We generate reports to understand how our students are faring in a particular skill or for a particular assignment, or



even on exams.

How are customer service and support?

One of the things that has been a highlight for me is working with the team at CYPHER LEARNING and their customer support, which is incomparable to the support of most other products out there. We get assistance almost instantaneously.

In our organization we get a lot of inquiries from students, especially when it comes to exams where students are highly stressed. If something happens to the system, we need an immediate solution or at least for the service provider to get back to us on what exactly went wrong. Working with their team has been extremely helpful. We can trust that at any point in time we're able to reach out to the customer support team. Sometimes we run our exams in the evening and submissions could be due at 11:59 PM. If something goes wrong at that time, students are extremely stressed out about whether their submissions went through or not. Their support has been very helpful in giving us, as the team that's facing our customers directly, peace of mind. And it indirectly helps our students as well because they get their inquiries answered fairly quickly. If there is anything I want to recommend CYPHER Learning for, it's definitely the support that has been given to us thus far.

How would you rate customer service and support?

Positive

Which solution did I use previously and why did I switch?

BAC Education Group has colleges and nonprofits and we used Moodle previously for our colleges. We explored Canvas as well for some of our programs, because we are partners with certain universities. Our students do use both Canvas and CYPHER Learning, but internally we use CYPHER Learning. For the nonprofit side, we used Teachable before and we are now using a system called Thinkific.

In terms of cost, CYPHER Learning is about the same as what we were using but it's the product offering and the incomparable customer service that are the reasons we have stuck with it for so long. We've stopped using Moodle, Canvas, and Teachable. What drew us to CYPHER Learning is the integration, customer support, the product itself, and the look of the platform for our students.

The reason we're on Thinkific for our nonprofit side is that you pay a fixed amount and then you can reach out to as many students as possible. Because of the business use case, we opted for that rather than CYPHER Learning. Our team is used to CYPHER Learning and we would love for the nonprofit to move into it as well, but it's really difficult, especially because we have



about 200,000 students on that platform. We would like to stick to CYPHER Learning, but cost-wise it just doesn't make much sense for a nonprofit.

How was the initial setup?

We bought CYPHER Learning licenses in 2016. The initial team that was running the e-learning department is no longer around. My team and I took over in 2019 to relaunch it. We weren't there at the beginning in terms of deciding which platform to go with, but we were part of the implementation team and the onboarding and adoption.

When my team took over our organization's e-learning functions, we reached out to the CYPHER Learning team and started from scratch. It was fairly easy. We still had to figure out processes and standard operating procedures, because we were rolling it out campus-wide, but the CYPHER Learning team was very supportive and they were there when we needed answers.

What was our ROI?

The huge ROI for us is the fact that it's such a core product of our day-to-day offerings to our students. That really speaks volumes.

We have phased out printing some of our books, but the costs of printing have been moved to other requirements because we have had to invest in e-book readers.

What's my experience with pricing, setup cost, and licensing?

For our for-profit entities, CYPHER Learning is the perfect solution in terms of cost. It is not too expensive and is about the same as what other service providers charge.

What other advice do I have?

In terms of competency-based learning, our college has just started looking into micro-credentialing. Most of our students have a set of classes they need to take and anything outside of that is up to their own discretion to pursue. But now, if a student is in the school of hospitality, for example, we don't just upskill them within the scope of hospitality, but we also try to impart or get them to complete courses in Coursera and Skillshare and LinkedIn Learning on things like communication skills or project management. We are starting to go into skills development, looking at the more holistic side of things, and that means looking into skills competencies. Micro-credentialing is very important and I would love to see CYPHER Learning really driving that and making it easier for students to display the talents and skills and projects that they've worked on in their profiles.

When it comes to skills development, a lot of it is about the content. CYPHER Learning has become that one platform that all of us, lecturers and students, use. It's like a staple in our



everyday lives. It has been really difficult for us to inculcate that behavior. We've finally been able to. I'm very happy that the platform's features have helped us to get to where we are today. It plays a very core role in skills development for our students. It's the backbone of that process, along with our content.

I would definitely recommend using CYPHER Learning. We looked into various solutions prior to this one and there's a reason we have stuck with it for years. In fact, we have increased our subscriptions and onboarded new customers into it. I would definitely recommend CYPHER Learning, as long as it's for a for-profit organization.

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