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LMS: responsive vs App-based approach

What are the pros and cons of adopting a responsive LMS or an LMS in app format? Which is more useful for your employees' needs?

In recent years we have witnessed a real explosion of on-the-go technology: the use of mobile devices, including tablets and smartphones, has literally exploded.
Just like the world of technology, the eLearning world has evolved too: it is increasingly attentive to the use of mobile courses, in compliance with the requests of learners.

When it comes to mobile devices, it is important to consider the Learning Management System (LMS) used to deliver the courses. There are 2 main strategies (not mutually exclusive) that provide ease of use to users:

1. Responsive design

The term "responsive web design" (RWD) was coined by Ethan Marcotte, a web designer, and disseminated in an article in May 2010. Taking a cue from the RWD definition, a responsive LMS is described as a platform that provides usable courses on devices with different screen sizes allowing continuity, tracking and reporting on these devices. So a responsive LMS allows users to access the course from any device, easily switching from one device to another and recovering from where they had been left without any loss of information or tracking.

2. App-based approach

While responsive design provides the same content and features with a resized layout to fit the mobile device, apps, especially native apps, take full advantage of the power and flexibility of mobile devices. This approach includes generic apps that work on any device (without download) and downloadable, platform-specific "native" apps for Android, Apple, Windows and Blackberry. The main benefit of native apps is the ability to take advantage of touch and swiping technology, geolocation (location), use of the phone, camera and SMS.

Responsive or app-based LMS?

Both present pros and cons. The choice of the approach should be guided by shared and explicit business needs, not by fashion and because "everyone is doing it".

Before making a decision it is useful to ask yourself some questions:

- What kind of learning needs do my employees have?
- What kind of devices do they use?
- How many employees work in the offices, how many are in the field and how many work remotely?
- What features of the mobile platform can I use to improve the students' experience?
- What are the savings on the expected costs or the return on investment I get when I choose one of the two approaches?

Neither approach is better than the other, it's just a question of needs. As mentioned earlier, the two modes are not exclusive: you can choose a hybrid approach.

link: https://elearningindustry.com/mobile-lms-dilemma-responsive-app