ELEARNINGNEWS ARTICLE

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Statistics and eLearning: how to use student data to improve an online course

The statistics of an online course are a mine of useful information not only to evaluate the results achieved by students, but also to adapt the content of the course to their needs. Here are some data to monitor carefully.

Students continuously produce data useful to the trainer while taking an online course. The statistics of an LMS, Learning Management System are not obtained only when students answer online tests and verifications, but during the entire duration of the course. Knowing how to analyze them, for an online trainer, means being able to monitor the progress of the course and have a database on which to work in the next online course. Here are three examples of parameters to be taken into consideration while students take an eLearning course.

1. The number of students who give the wrong answer to the same question as a quiz

When a significant percentage of the students in their class give the wrong answer to the same questions, for the trainer it means only one thing: he has not been able to transmit adequate knowledge to a large number of people. LMS statistics can process data for many students. If the wrong answers concern the same topics, it means that the trainer must change the content or the format of the content. For example, instead of a text written to explain the behavior to be followed in the event of a fire, he could think of an interactive game where the answer is given by performing an action directly on the screen. The concept of a significant percentage may vary according to the type of course and the objectives to be achieved.

2. How many students skip an optional content in an online course?

Data on the number of people completing an optional unit can give the trainer a clear indication of what students consider to be a priority. Most people will tend to skip the optional modules. The interesting fact is when instead a high percentage of students focus on that type of content, although it is optional. In the following online course, the trainer can insert that module among the compulsory ones, thus increasing student involvement and responding in more detail to a training need that may not have emerged during the preliminary analysis of the course.

3. In what order are the modules followed in open navigation?

Other very important metrics in an online course depend on the course settings. If you set the open navigation, you can have key information on the structure of the course and understand the data relating to the time required to finish a course or why people leave the course. With open navigation, in fact, a student is free to decide in what order to use the online forms. With this tool a trainer can understand if the structure of the course is suitable for his target or if he needs to modify it. Often structuring a course, the wrong way is one of the reasons why the course completion time is getting longer and the students drop out. Sometimes there is a tendency to start from too elementary content or on the contrary, challenging topics are treated with little preliminary information. All this lengthens the time and reduces the involvement of the students.

The statistics of an online course clearly indicate if the content of the training is adequate, if it is relevant for the students and if it is presented in the right order. With these data, the trainer has a precise idea to make the subsequent online course more suitable to meet the training needs of the students.