

The Definitive Buyer's Guide to Training Software

Welcome

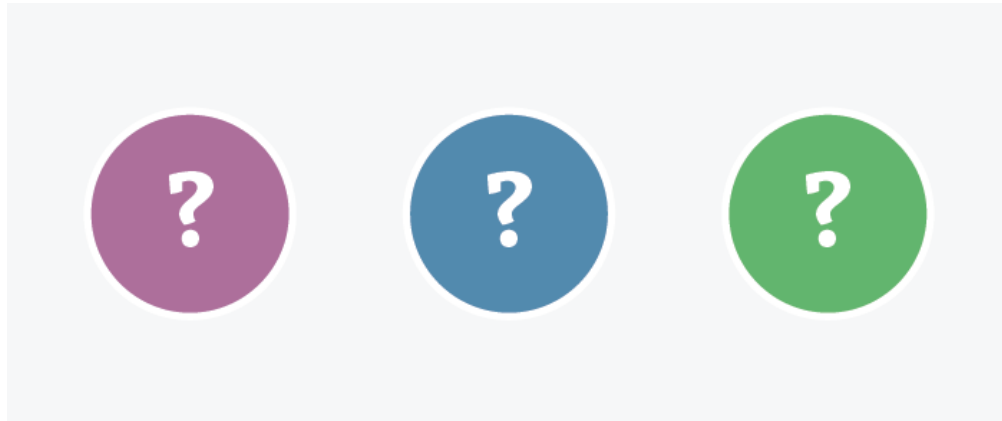


The Definitive Buyer's Guide to Training Software

Lessonly

Click the rightward-facing arrow to begin.

About this Guide



If you have ever ventured out on your own, hoping to find the perfect training-software solution for your company, you know how overwhelming the journey can be.

That's why we made this guide: it exists to help you ask the right questions and give you confidence in your decision-making process.

Onward!

Part I: Know What Success Looks Like



What problems hurt the most? What problems are you solving?

The most important part of the training-software buying process is taking a step back to understand why you're looking for training software in the first place.

Use the following steps as a guide.



Step 1: Create a performance goal

We all want better training programs, right?

Wrong.

What we all want is more productive, smarter, happier, better teams. Put another way, a strong training program is not the desired outcome; it's the vehicle that makes it easier to arrive at the desired outcome.

To begin walking down the path of better performance for you and your team, write down your desired outcomes. Do your best to make them specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely ([more on SMART goals here](#)).

Example outcome: Newly hired sales reps should close their first deal by their sixth week of employment.



Step 2: Outline the Curriculum

Once you have a SMART goal for performance in mind, identify

what the curriculum looks like to take your employees from where their performance is today to where it needs to be.

In this stage, describe all of the tasks that are necessary for the performance to be achieved. Then, jot down all of the knowledge that must be acquired to succeed in each task.

EXAMPLE

1. Build a targeted list

Things to understand: buyer personas, current clients and their case studies, list-building software, CRM software

2. Contact members of list and set meetings with them

Things to understand: effectively writing emails and leaving voicemails, asking pertinent discovery questions, per-user pricing model

3. Demo software application

Things to understand: how to navigate and use all elements of the software, while explaining their value

4. Create proposal and close deal

Things to understand: proposal-creation software, proposal delivery, follow-up templates

5. Kick off relationship with client-experience representative

Things to understand: how to properly transfer relationship to the proper client-experience representative



Step 3: Media selection

Identify what media will transfer your information most effectively.

This is typically a choice between classroom-style training, e-

learning, shadowing (i.e., buddy system), group activities, role playing, assessments, or a combination of any or all of the above.

For our example, a combination of web-based training and on-the-job shadowing should do the trick. We can transfer most of the software, protocols, and personas with web-based software, while using shadowing to impart the nuances of sourcing and closing a deal.

To be thorough and to improve retention, reps should also be provided with an easy way to reference the on-demand material at a later date. To track the retained skills, think about planning an assessment one week, one month, and one year after the training.



Step 4: Implementation

We have come a long way in a short time!

Now, it's time to actually create the content and deliver it to your team.

Part II: Understand the Benefits



Training software positively affects the time, money, effort, and effectiveness of your company.

The verdict is in: when companies train without training software, they do so at the expense of time, money, effort, and effectiveness.



Time

As our most precious resource, time savings alone can be enough to justify the purchase of training software. For starters,

training software reduces the amount of in-person training that is required to get an individual up-to-speed.

This gives your colleagues more time to get their jobs done, all because they are spending less time helping the newbies understand their jobs. Training software also saves on travel expenses and lodging.

Most importantly, though, training software empowers your people to take charge of their training destinies—no waiting for others required.



Money

Corporate financial responsibility is essential in both good times and bad. We find that Lesson.ly's training software helps our

clients reduce costs in both curriculum development and turnover expense.

Speaking of the latter, every \$30,000 per-year employee that doesn't stick around [costs a company roughly \\$6,000](#). Further, forty percent of employees who receive poor training [will leave within their first year](#).

Yikes, all around.



Effort

Stop repeating yourself, and stop tracking everything by hand.

With training software, you can skip the manual data entry and spend your bonus time reviewing the data and analytics you're gathering, helping you make strategic decisions on what's working, what's not, and what to do about it.



Effectiveness

After one hour of in-person training, studies show that learners retain only forty-five percent of the information they are

processing. After six days, [that number drops to twenty-three percent](#).

Using training software as a repository for all of your training materials allows learners to refresh their memory anytime and, thusly, perform better.

Part III: Identify Required Features

Which features are dealmakers, and which are dealbreakers?

At this point, you have nailed down why you are investing in learning software, and you understand the primary benefits of doing so.

Now, it is time to examine what you need from the technology.

With all the providers out there, it can be difficult to decide. We find it best to review the questions below to understand what features you need, which ones you want, and which you can live without.

How will your training processes scale over time?

In addition to the features in the checklist above, another concept to keep in mind is scale. Training 10 employees is different than 1,000.

The two areas we see companies scale their training efforts are due to trainee growth and department sprawl.

Learner growth

Understand how many people you expect to train over the next year. You can break this down into how many people, on average, will be trained each month; then, multiply by twelve.

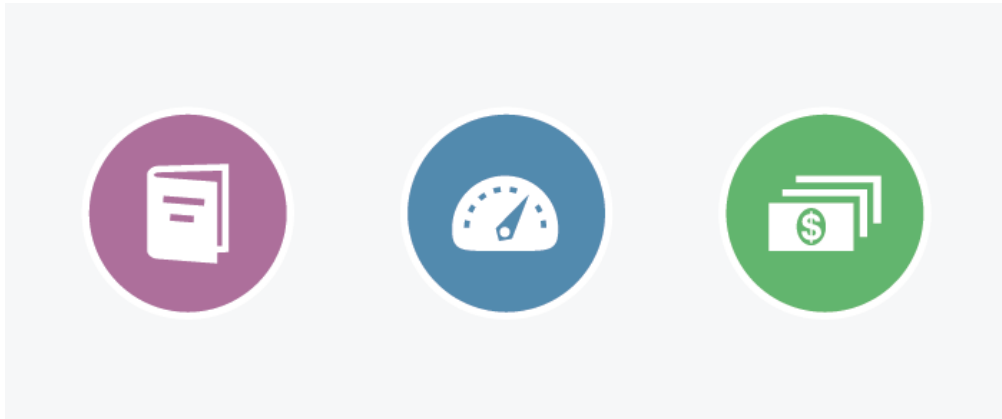
The more trainees or learners that will benefit from training software should dictate what type of training methods you use. We have seen companies implement training software for teams in the double digits, as well as those in the thousands.

Departmental sprawl

For example, many of our customers begin working with us to train their customer-service teams; later, they add Lessonly to their onboarding process for all new employees. As the initiative grows and proves itself, more people at different levels of the organization need different levels of access and functionality.

If a similar reality is a possibility in your organization, we recommend you discuss these forward-thinking needs with your software provider of choice.

Part IV: Know the Details



What, if anything, is hiding behind the curtain?

In today's world of digital communication, it is easier than ever to become fully informed before you put your John Hancock on the dotted line.

We recommend that you do three things to make sure you know what you're getting into *before* signing:

1. know the product

2. verify performance, and,
3. understand hidden costs.



Know the product

To know if things are really the right fit with a given training software, you need to make sure you actually use the app yourself. If there is a free trial option, take advantage. If there is a live-demo option, take the sales team up on the offer; then, be sure to ask a million questions when you're on the call—the more you dig, the more informed you will be.

What we also highly recommend adding — or having your software provider add — some of your current training content to the application; this allows you to test out the assigning and tracking features before purchase, and get feedback from your stakeholders on how they favored or disliked the application experience.

Again, we see success from customers who have a plan for exactly what content they want to build with their training software.

Moral of the story: Don't go into it blind; have a plan, and evaluate software based on that plan.

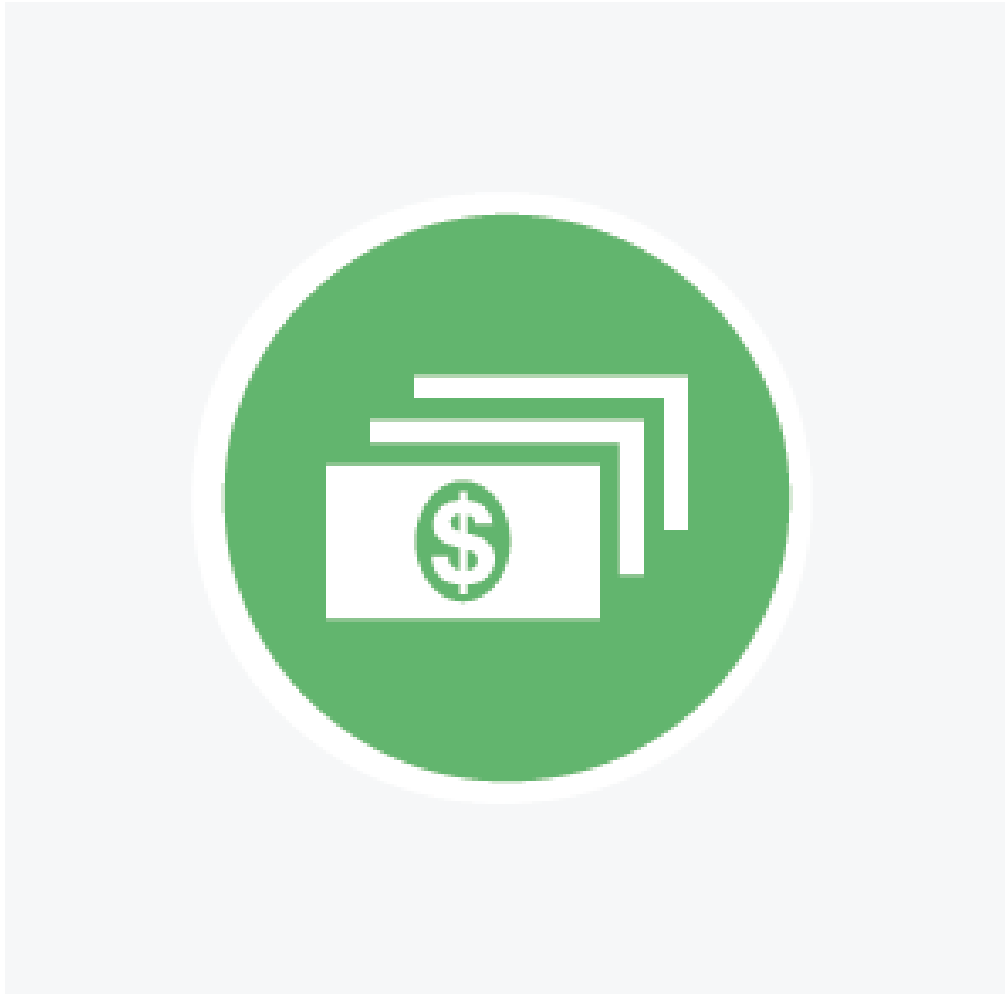


Verify performance

Every training-software provider wants you to think they are the very best for your needs. In some cases, this will be true, but it is

important to get outside opinions. Ask the company for introductions to other clients. If this isn't possible, ask why. If they claim their policy doesn't allow for such behavior, you can either abandon ship (that's what we would do), or dive as deeply as you can into case studies to verify that others have been successful on the road you're about to travel.

Added bonus: references will likely have plenty of lessons learned from their training-software experiences. Listen hard for these, as their wisdom may positively impact the way you plan and implement your efforts.



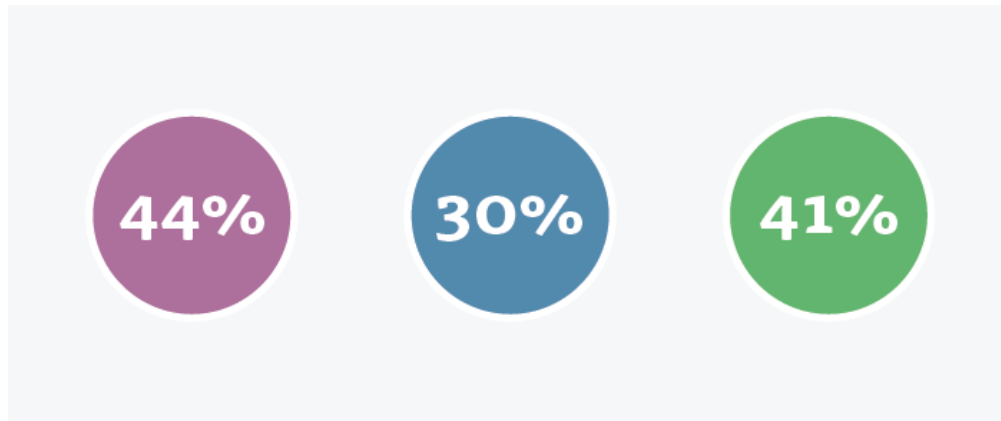
Find the true cost of the software

Frequently, companies use nuance when they discuss their costs. Don't let them. We recommend asking your short list of

vendors about the cost of implementation, any need for external authoring tools, and even the level of ongoing client-service you can expect from your provider.

The answers to these questions are much better understood pre-purchase—nobody likes to pay more than they expected—so be persistent here.


Part V: Keep an Eye on ROI



Is training software worth it?

The most important part of the training software buying process is understanding if your investment will actually pay off. Will the net gain in time, money, effort, and effectiveness discussed earlier be worth the additional investment?

We recommend thinking about the training ROI calculation in the same way Wayne Gretzky thought about winning hockey games:



Don't skate to where the puck is;
skate to where the puck will be.
- Wayne Gretzky

If training increases, it's often difficult to know what the future will hold in terms of employee output. Here are five statistics that may help you feel more comfortable with the possible outcomes of a strong training program:



1. Improve Financially

Systematized training earns 44% greater shareholder return.

[*\(Source\)*](#)



2. Increase Productivity

Every dollar spent on training yields a 30% increase in productivity within three years. ([Source](#))



3. Retain Employees

41% of poorly trained employees plan to leave within one year.

(Source)

As the above statistics illustrate, ROI metrics vary across companies. Whether it is employee-turnover rate, revenue per employee, or even time to productivity, pick a metric that makes sense for you and track it over time. Keep in mind that this means the metric needs to be easily — and, preferably, automatically — tracked.

For instance, one of our customers, Peddle, uses customer-service adoption time as their ROI metric. Using Lesson.ly's easy building, sharing, and tracking tools to train their customer service team,

Peddle has reduced their adoption time by 66%; in other words, what used to take three weeks, now takes five days!

Do your best to use these statistics to project the value of a strong training program in your organization. If you are like most of our clients, you will likely find the investment to be a no-brainer.

Part VI: Next Steps



Interested in learning more about Lesson.ly?

Sign up for an *unlimited, 15-day free trial* [here](#), or watch the 60-second demo above, detailing how we can help you train your team in a fast, easy, and trackable way.