Four Reasons Why Content Curation is the New Normal

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the learning and development function, the overwhelming supply of online content options means that employees have more choices than ever before when it comes to learning. The risks and downside of using online content is that there's no clear identification of what's good or not good, and how content supports specific competencies. As a result, HR and L&D leaders may choose to take on the curation for collections comprised of thousands of assets. Without curation, employees spend too much time self-curating content, which delivers inconsistent learning paths in addition to being less efficient and effective for learners themselves.

Read on to understand four reasons why curation is a critical practice for today's organizations.
INTRODUCTION

When we think of curation, museums and libraries usually come to mind but the reality is that most consumer and business experiences have some form of a curation process. Imagine walking into a grocery store and instead of seeing produce organized by fruits and vegetables, and aisles by food group, all items are displayed at random. Even if every item needed were available, the overwhelming amount of choices—and the randomness of their placement—may make the consumer abandon shopping out of frustration. In the workplace, when an employee searches for a particular topic that yields hundreds of results, that poor experience may in turn make him or her abandon their search.

For learning and development (L&D) leaders, curating learning content for employees is now more complicated than ever before, due to the proliferation of digital technologies and the internet. When training professionals fail to place importance on curation, the organization and employees suffer as a result. Time, context, productivity and value are four reasons why organizations should place importance on curation.

TIME

There is never enough time in the workday for employees to accomplish all of their responsibilities. It’s no surprise that employees struggle to fit learning into their busy schedules. According to Bersin by Deloitte, “1% of a typical workweek is all that employees have to focus on training and development.” L&D leaders need to maximize what little time employees have to get the most out of learning. Organizations risk employees abandoning attempts to learn if it is too time-consuming and difficult to access content. For example, imagine how overwhelming the experience is for employees if they are trying to get an answer to a simple problem and hundreds of choices come up in their search. More content does not equate to more learning if learners are not able to make heads or tails of all the choices. A consequence of employees not connecting with learning and development opportunities—disengagement. According to Gallup, “only 3 in 10 Americans workers are engaged...These employees are emotionally disconnected from their companies and may actually be working against their employers’ interests.”

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CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT: PGA OF AMERICA

“With a great partnership and a careful blend of relevant content, technology, and clever program designs, you stand a better chance of engaging your labor force and improving their performance.”

Dawes Marlatt, Senior Director of Education & Employment, PGA America

By presenting content in an organized manner, that optimizes time, a valuable resource, and engages the learner. Using that time effectively means creating a shared experience that’s personalized for the individual, in order to drive business impact. To achieve a personalized experience, offer a variety of modalities and use the learning platform to filter and refine choices based on specific learner needs.

CONTEXT

Simply providing employees with access to learning content is not enough. Much like how a producer frames the setting for a movie, L&D leaders need to guide employees so they have the framework to proceed with learning.

Learning needs to be relevant and in context. Learners need to be clear about the next logical step(s) as they progress in their journey and receive either discrete direction or soft recommendations.

To make messages resonate, the learning needs to be in the context of the organization and job roles. How do you do that? By recognizing there are different learning styles and needs, and providing a wealth of modalities that align with core competencies. Supporting resources such as assessments, job aids, practice exams and simulation tools help learners understand how to apply their knowledge to the job and give real-life context to ensure the learning is not wasted.

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For every $1 invested there was a $5.14 return.

An industry-wide initiative called Get Golf Ready, yields $58 of benefit to the golf course for every $1.

Overall golf income increased $1,069 per participant includes collaboration and mentoring.

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PRODUCTIVITY

Employee productivity is a top concern for all organizations. According to a study by McKinsey & Company, high-skill knowledge workers spend 19% of their day searching and gathering information. That’s nearly one day per week lost. Employees cannot waste any more hours looking for information and organizations cannot afford to lose what equates to millions of dollars in productivity. Learning needs to be curated so employees understand what they need to know and how to be more productive for themselves, their department and organizations.

Having a good reminder system helps drive traffic to a learning platform and inform learners what they need to complete. Push learning is straightforward because it’s assigned to the user and accessible via a link. Beyond push learning, organizations should strive for learners to find what they need organically. Laddering content into curated channels can encourage learners to “binge watch” course content and explore related topics. However, research in neuroscience tells us that the brain cannot binge learn and requires breaks to process, therefore time is wasted consuming content that will never be retained.

VALUE

There is nothing worse than spending money and not getting a return on investment. However, that’s exactly what happens when organizations invest in thousands of learning assets, providing learners with limitless choice with no semblance of order. To remain in good standing with their stakeholders and to continue receiving budget for vital training resource, learning and development leaders need to demonstrate adoption and usage.

Offering a list is not curation. In the consumer world, employees are accustomed to receiving personalized, expert recommendations on a regular basis. Stitch Fix, a women’s online personal stylist; meal delivery services; and matchmaking services to name a few. To be successful, learners need guidance and structure with recommendations tailored to their needs. While free learning options can serve as a nice complement, trusted providers collaborate with L&D leaders to ensure content aligns contextually with their organization’s needs and that products are being used to their full potential.

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COPING WITH LIMITLESS OPTIONS

In the L&D function, the upsurge of online content options means that employees have more choices. While having more options can be a good thing, too many choice without proper curation can lead to poor business outcomes.

Whether it be done by L&D professionals or a trusted provider, curating content for employees leads to a better return on a learning investment and allows employees to be productive. With the right context, learners are empowered to develop skills to improve in their job function and can maximize what little free time they have by focusing on the most impactful content.

THE NEW INTELLIGENT LEARNING PLATFORM

Today’s learners demand the kind of experience at work that they have become accustomed to from consumer brands like Google, Amazon, and Netflix. Our solution is Percipio, a beautiful, immersive learning platform.

Learners can make the most of their valuable time and create lasting change inside organizations using Percipio. Learners decide when, where, and how to learn through curated learning paths (channels) and micro-learning courses. Administrators are able to create and assign learning paths, visually monitor progress using charts and graphs, and link learning to business objectives to quantify program value.

The learning content was curated by Skillsoft's expert curators into 50,000 competencies that are aligned to the skills most valued by leading organizations. Skillsoft curators take their role very seriously; they provide a point of view on a subject which establishes Skillsoft as a thought-leader on that channel and subject. Having invested nearly 8,000 hours in curation in advance of Percipio’s launch, when asked about what they do on a day to day basis, they have a simple saying—"curation is difference between stuff and the right stuff."

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By investing in Percipio, you can expect to:

- **Accelerate learning and increase utilization**: Engage learners with a consumer-like experience, micro learning (3-5 minute videos) to fit into busy schedules, and a mobile app so learning can happen anywhere, anytime, and on any device.

- **Drive content discovery**: Make it easier for learners to discover useful information that aligns with their interests and learns as they do.

- **Increase learner engagement**: Use an intelligent eLearning platform modeled after the consumer web experiences learners have come to expect with a simple interface, personalized learning playlists, and one-click access to content.

- **Close critical skill gaps**: Experience over 500 pre-curated learning paths (or channels) mapped to the competencies that matter the most to leading global companies, and assign learning paths to specific groups/audiences.

- **Find resources quickly**: Take advantage of elastic search, used by Facebook, Netflix, and eBay to quickly find micro-learning videos, courses, channels, and books.

- **Satisfy multiple learning modalities**: Allow learners to choose how they want to learn with videos to watch, books or summaries to read, and audiobooks to listen.

- **Demonstrate learning impact**: Show how learning activity supports key business objectives, and quantify program value with out-of-the-box reporting using charts and graphs.

- **Deploy and manage easily**: Utilize a cloud-based application that is continuously updated.

Visit [www.percipio.com](http://www.percipio.com) to learn more about Percipio and take a free trial.
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Derek Pleadwell has been in the learning space for 20+ years in various roles from instructional designer, project manager to SME and instructor. Derek has degrees in Education and the Social Sciences as well as also having Advanced Project Management credentials from Stanford. He has been a Chairperson of a Canadian crown corporation specializing in service delivery, served on University board of governors and plays a role in municipal government. He holds numerous certifications ranging from PMP to MCSE and thrives in the fast-paced IT space.
ABOUT SKILLSOFT

Skillsoft is the global leader in corporate learning, delivering beautiful technology and engaging content that drives business impact for modern enterprises. Skillsoft comprises three award-winning solutions that support learning, performance and success: Skillsoft learning content, the Percipio intelligent learning platform and the SumTotal suite for Human Capital Management.

Skillsoft provides the most comprehensive selection of cloud-based corporate learning content, including courses, videos, books and other resources on Business and Management Skills, Leadership Development, Digital Transformation, IT Skills and Certification Training, Productivity and Collaboration Tools and Compliance. Percipio's intuitive design engages modern learners and its consumer-led experience accelerates learning. The SumTotal suite features four key components built on a unified platform: Learning Management, Talent Management, Talent Acquisition and Workforce Management.

Skillsoft is trusted by thousands of the world's leading organizations, including 65 percent of the Fortune 500. Learn more at www.skillsoft.com.