

INDUSTRY INSIGHTS

Compliance Training Cannot Succeed without an LMS.

Protect your company and reduce long-term costs with an effective LMS.

By: Adina Sapp

“Compliance isn’t sexy, but it’s important,” says Michelle Sullivan, senior director of marketing at Meridian Knowledge Solutions. “Organizations in every industry must deliver some level of compliance training — whether to comply with government regulations, meet industry standards or to earn and maintain certifications and qualifications.”

Compliance is particularly important in high-consequence industries such as health care, pharmaceuticals, manufacturing and finance. These industries face a high level of regulatory requirements and the very real threat of penalties for noncompliance.

For most organizations, research shows that the cost of noncompliance is typically 2.71 times the cost of maintaining or meeting compliance requirements.¹ But in extreme cases, violations can result in fines of millions or billions of dollars.^{2,3}

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Reduce Costs with a Comprehensive LMS

“A learning management system (LMS) is a critical component of any organization’s ability to ensure compliance and minimize risk,” Sullivan continues. “It’s also a worthwhile investment from a budget perspective.”

Organizations can be at risk for loss of life, loss of revenue, stoppage of operations or regulatory fines when they are out of compliance. “Compliance failures often expose organizations to significant reputational

damage, turnover of staff, loss of customers and substantial fines from regulatory bodies.”⁴

While the risks of noncompliance can be costly, they are also completely avoidable. A comprehensive LMS will reduce the complexity of compliance management and focus your resources on innovations that make compliance training more effective and impactful.⁵

Choose a Good Service Partner

“When choosing an LMS, you’ll want to pick a partner who will stay involved past the sale, through post-implementation and beyond,” Sullivan advises. One of Meridian’s differentiators is that it can provide implementation and administration services when needed, because unlike many of its competitors, it has not outsourced support to third parties. “We focus on long-term customer relationships,”⁶ Sullivan explains.

Organizations planning to change their LMS need to ensure their service provider will be able to pull historical records into the new system and create a migration plan that meets industry requirements for record retention and version control. And while some service providers have this ability, some don’t.

For example, training records that have version control are not included in all systems and may not be addressed in the migration plan. To meet compliance requirements, it is important that the LMS be historically auditable, keep a record of e-signatures and prevent users from being able to go back and change data — even after a migration.

Include the Right Decision-Makers

It’s also important to include all the right decision-makers when choosing a compliance solution.

¹ *The True Cost of Compliance with Data Protection Regulations*. The Ponemon Institute.

² Leu, E. (2018). *The Highest Compliance Fines in History*. EU GDPR Compliant.

³ Merle, R. (2018). “Wells Fargo Fined \$1 billion for ‘Reckless Unsafe or Unsound Practices.’” *Washington Post*.

⁴ *Compliance for High-Consequence Industries: Strategic Compliance Management*. Meridian.

⁵ *Compliance for High-Consequence Industries: Strategic Compliance Management*. Meridian.

⁶ *Who We Are: Improving People and Organizations with Learning*. Meridian.



“This isn’t just for HR or L&D,” Sullivan says. “The legal/risk/compliance team should be a part of the effort. They will have different questions.”

IT leaders should also be included in the decision. Although some solutions such as Meridian are intuitive for admins to set up, the ongoing administration level depends on the organization.

There may be other questions to consider as well, such as integration, security, firewalls and the ability to perform single sign on (SSO). “A lot of organizations will attach their LMS into their physical security system, or have personnel records updated upon achieving training compliance,” Sullivan explains. “Some organizations have their LMS behind a firewall, in a multi-cloud or private cloud, or have a long history and depth of functionality that require special considerations.”

Meridian’s implementation and support team will work with IT and other contributors to provide guidance on these issues.

Effectively Manage Your Organization’s Learning

Inspections and regulatory audits typically include the review of compliance training records. Organizations need to ensure training records are

up to date and consistent with standard operating procedures (SOPs). A good compliance LMS such as Meridian can meet all these requirements through:

- Highly detailed, defensible training records.
- Dashboards with the flexibility to drill down for further details and analysis.
- Real-time training data for proactive compliance reporting.
- Records of staff certifications and accreditations.
- xAPI support and a learning record store (LRS) to track learning wherever it occurs.
- Auditing, versioning control, e-signatures and reporting to meet 21 CFR Part 11 and EU GMP Annex 11 compliance.⁷

Meridian also helps ensure compliance is achieved in advance of the due date. “Out-of-date training can cut off access to facilities, which is a good kick in the pants,” Sullivan says. Meridian’s reports and dashboards will give managers a good view of their team’s level of compliance to ensure they stay on top of it.

Learn more at <https://www.meridianks.com/lms-solutions/compliance/>.



Meridian’s award-winning learning management system allows organizations to personalize learning, share knowledge, increase revenue and manage compliance requirements for their employees, customers, partners and suppliers.

Meridian has been chosen by leading organizations including U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Johnson Controls, K12 Inc., HAI Group, and The Society of Actuaries. Meridian is headquartered in the Washington DC metro area. For more information, visit <http://www.meridianks.com> or follow @MeridianKS on Twitter

⁷ Compliance for High-Consequence Industries: Strategic Compliance Management. Meridian.