

SharePoint Workflows & Version Control for Learning Managers



Workflows and versioning address Learning Management Challenges

In the corporate world, Microsoft's® SharePoint® has caught on like wildfire. Many functional business areas, including learning management, have access to this enterprise content management solution. Learning managers have discovered how easy it is to store content in SharePoint. However, there are many learning management challenges beyond storing training content. These challenges include:

- Finding useful preexisting course materials in MS Word, PDFs, and media files
- Bringing preexisting course material up to date
- Collecting and organizing new and updated material from course presenters
- Ensuring course developers and reviewers follow a robust content-review cycle
- Providing finalized course materials to the right people at the right time

What are SharePoint Workflows and Versioning?

SharePoint has workflow and versioning capabilities to help learning managers with all of these challenges. Here, in brief, is what these features do.

SharePoint workflows orchestrate the progress of training materials through the stages of development, collaboration, editing, finalization, and approval. They embody the consistent flow of events and actions that result in approved course material. Once defined, SharePoint workflows are ready for reuse, streamlining the enhancement of existing course material and the development of new courses.

SharePoint versioning tracks successive iterations of training content as content team members create, review, edit, and approve content. Throughout the material development workflow, versioning helps learning managers ensure content team members are on the same page, both literally and figuratively.

SharePoint subsite templates contain both SharePoint workflows and versioning settings. Templates are reusable patterns of SharePoint sites that contain predefined workflows and versioning settings. For creating a new course, or updating an existing offering, SharePoint site templates make an entire set of predefined development processes available in a single click.

Solve L&D Challenges with SharePoint Workflows and Versioning

Let's review some L&D challenges to see how SharePoint Workflows and Versioning help you.

Set up the collaborative environment for the training development project team with a single click. With SharePoint's site templates, you will be able to create your SharePoint training development sub-sites with predefined workflows and versioning settings, so everyone associated with authoring, editing, and approval will collaborate on producing course documents.

Save time and avoid mistakes and repetitive drudgework. When properly configured, your SharePoint site template will contain workflows that remind you to answer all necessary questions such as: Which materials do I need for this course? How do I notify my community of interest? How do I gather feedback from the course audience? The template workflows will also remind you of everything else you need to plan and prepare a training course.

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Find the right materials for the course you are building or updating. SharePoint version control is useful for repeated training, especially when you need to find the exact version of a document among a number of slightly different course versions. In addition, SharePoint workflows and versioning deliver value for training in highly regulated companies at which control over the material development and approval process is especially important.

Bring preexisting course material up to date. Version control means you will know which version of your course material was presented last, and you have direct access to that material. When your training content team updates this set of materials, SharePoint assigns a new version number, keeping things orderly. If you need to return to a prior version, you can do so easily.

Collect and organize new and updated material from course presenters. Refreshing existing courses or creating new ones means collaboration and document management. SharePoint provides comprehensive collaboration and document management capabilities integrated with workflows and version control. Rather than relying on multiple copies of documents, and external, insecure instant messaging and screen-sharing technology, SharePoint integrates these capabilities as a secure, efficient, and effective training content development platform.

Ensure course developers and reviewers follow your intended content review cycles. SharePoint allows you to create a separate workflow for each type of document in your training content. For example, you can develop separate creation and review workflows for written content, PowerPoint presentations, and media files. Building review workflows based on document types means you can specify extra review cycles for regulated content.

Provide finalized course materials to the right people at the right time. If you used file storage or shared disk for your course material, your content would live separately from its metadata or information about which courses the content supports, which categories of learner should receive it, and similar related information. Instead, SharePoint offers Compliance Collaboration that permanently links your content to its metadata. Important information about the content's course affinity and routing stays with your content. An added benefit for learning managers in highly regulated industries is that you have a durable and reliable content update lineage. This reduces reporting challenges during a course audit.

These are a few of the ways that SharePoint workflows and versioning make your life in learning management easier. However, when you integrate SharePoint with a powerful learning management solution called ShareKnowledge®, you get even more value from workflows and versioning.

ShareKnowledge LMS Extends SharePoint's Value for Learning Professionals

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If you distribute your training material with ShareKnowledge Learning Management Solutions (LMS), you can extend the SharePoint workflows you used in course preparation to include the learning process. Here are a few examples:

Ensure new training content is properly distributed with one click. When you create a new version of your training material, ShareKnowledge shows you which courses depend on that content and ensures those courses get the new version.

Control restricted materials. You want to make certain you distribute restricted training material to the right learners. Using SharePoint and ShareKnowledge together means your content recipients are the ones you approved in SharePoint. You maintain a single source of truth about your learners.

For example, some training material for third-party business partners may have one review workflow, while confidential internal employee training material might have a different workflow. With SharePoint, you decide which workflow is right for your content elements.

Notify learners selectively. In some of the content development workflows, you will need to define the user groups even before you finalize the material. ShareKnowledge integrates with Active Directory, so you can use exactly the same user groups for content distribution that you defined while creating the content.

For example, if you provide training to a particular geographic region that you have defined in SharePoint, then ShareKnowledge will use that same geographic region. The group will look the same in your LMS. There is no need to replicate it in a different form in your LMS. This ensures you will not miss any potential trainee.

Publish documents as learning material content from SharePoint libraries. If you create and store your training materials such as Word documents, PDFs or PowerPoint presentations in SharePoint, you can include a publishing step directly in the content development workflow, move the content to the learning materials library in ShareKnowledge, and publish it seamlessly. The process of creating the training content flows directly into the process of distributing it and then delivering the course.

Conclusion

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Learning and development managers face many challenges in ensuring that training content stays current, content teams collaborate effectively, and learners stay involved in their courses before, during, and after **training delivery**. SharePoint offers compelling workflow and versioning features that address these learning management challenges. In conjunction with ShareKnowledge LMS, the workflow and versioning features extend to content distribution and update delivery. ShareKnowledge LMS integrates directly with SharePoint, ensuring content publishing for new content and updates. Together, SharePoint and ShareKnowledge deliver full life cycle training effectiveness and efficiency.

We hope you enjoyed this eBook and found the information we provided helpful. If you would like to learn more about ShareKnowledge, please click on the link at the bottom of this page.

