

# What You Need to Know About SCORM



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# What is SCORM?

## **SCORM** (noun)

- : a set of standards used in learning management systems that allow SCORM compliant systems to communicate with SCORM compliant courses, and vice versa.

If you're just starting to investigate purchasing learning management software, you're probably running into a lot of industry terms that are unfamiliar to you - among them, SCORM.

So what exactly is SCORM?

SCORM is an acronym that stands for '**Sharable Content Object Reference Model**'. Still not sure? The acronym doesn't explain much about what it is or why anyone would want it.

## **A Brief History**

The Department of Defense (DOD) established the ADL Initiative in 1997 to standardize and modernize training and education management and delivery. The vision of the ADL Initiative is to provide access to the highest-quality learning and performance aiding that can be tailored to individual needs and delivered cost-effectively, anytime, and anywhere.

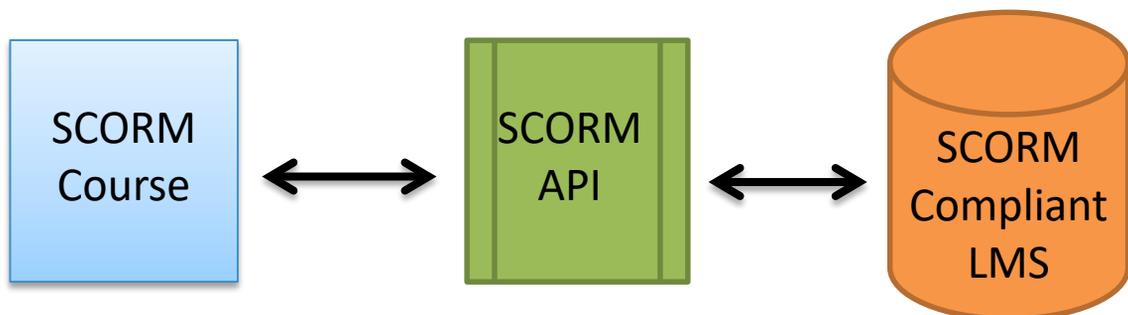
Find out more at: [adlnet.org](http://adlnet.org)

# How It Works

The concept of 'standards-based' computing may not sound familiar, but PDF documents are a good example. They can be read on any computer - PC, Mac, Linux. A PDF document is created based on a set of standards, which allows them to be read on any device. They are considered 'platform independent'. In contrast, Word documents can't be read on any computer - only on a computer that has Word installed. They are considered 'proprietary documents' rather than platform independent.

A SCORM compliant LMS is built to 'talk to' SCORM compliant courses using a set of communication standards. The standards were developed by ADL, a research group sponsored by the United States Department of Defense. Because all SCORM LMS' use the same set of standards, SCORM courses can communicate with all of them - regardless of the brand.

This makes SCORM courses 'LMS independent' - as long as the LMS is SCORM compliant.



# Why SCORM Matters

**SCORM is standards based and ‘platform independent’. What does that mean in concrete terms?**

SCORM courses 'talk to' your LMS . During a training sessions there is a conversation going on between the course and the LMS. The LMS starts the conversation when the trainee begins the course. The course replies with something like, ‘We’re good to go.’

As the trainee progresses through the course, the conversation continues with the course passing along information for the LMS to store in the database. If the trainee exits the course, planning to return later to complete the training, that information is sent to the LMS and stored as a bookmark – so the trainee can resume training where s/he left off.

Information like quiz scores, status, pages viewed, and training time are sent to the LMS from the course. All of this information is available in the LMS for tracking and reporting purposes.

# About SCORM Courses

So, how do you get SCORM compatible content?

There are two ways: purchase an off-the-shelf SCORM course, or develop your own course using a SCORM compatible authoring tool, like [Articulate](#) and [Adobe's Captivate](#). These tools have all of the communication standards built in, so you don't have to worry making it work in your SCORM LMS.

The reason SCORM courses need to 'talk to' the LMS is to pass along information about the learner's training session: like, quiz scores, bookmarks, status, pages viewed, etc. All of this information is stored in the LMS for tracking and reporting purposes.

## Popular SCORM authoring tools



# Do I Need SCORM?

Should I look for a SCORM compliant LMS?

A SCORM compliant LMS is more flexible and extensible than a non-compliant LMS. You can create your own content, AND you can purchase off the shelf content or SCORM compliant rapid e-learning tools.

Even if you don't anticipate taking advantage of this feature immediately, it will extend the life span of the LMS software well into the future.

Ready to try a SCORM compliant LMS for yourself? Or just want a walk-thru of what a SCORM LMS can do?

Contact us at [info@traincaster.com](mailto:info@traincaster.com) or 1.888.475.3165 to schedule a demo at your convenience.

Can't wait to get started? Sign up for a FREE 30 Day Trial now.