



## BUILDING SUCCESSFUL CME WITH E-LEARNING

THE CHECKLIST FOR ACHIEVING GREATER  
CME OUTCOMES WITH LESS LMS STRESS

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# INTRODUCTION TO CME WITH E-LEARNING

**Coordinating and Administrating CME for Modern Healthcare is not for the faint of heart! If these situations apply to you, upgrade!**

- You work long days, filled with hours of tedious manual data entry using a software system that, all too often, seems to have a stubborn mind of its own.
- Phone calls and emails from frustrated organization members wanting help with lost passwords or “gotta have it now” transcripts don’t leave much time for staying focused on the CME program’s bigger picture.
- Compliance to regulatory requirements and accreditation standards continue to be a critical and time-consuming task for you and your organization. Keeping on top of the latest guidelines could be a full time job in and of itself.

Up against such conditions how do you provide CME that does more than comply with regulations (as important as those are)? How do you coordinate and administer CME that rises to a standard of excellence? How do you provide CME that succeeds?

# CASTING THE VISION FOR THE CME “VOYAGE”

## And How to Make it Work for You

Maintaining focus on your organization's vision for lifelong medical learning will go a long way toward achieving CME success. Sir William Osler, the “father of modern medicine” has a quote which we use for motivation and continued learning here at EthosCE.



*“If the license to practice meant the completion of his education, how sad it would be for the doctor, how distressing to his patients! The training of medical school gives the man his direction, points him the way, and furnishes him a chart, fairly incomplete, for the voyage, but nothing more.”*

Over 100 years later, Osler's words (despite their exclusion of women) have lost none of their relevance.

Even the most casual consideration of the health and medical knowledge that has accumulated since Osler's day, let alone the exponential growth of the technology used to acquire and distribute it, makes clear why relevant, high-value CME is more urgent than ever. This is the mission your work makes possible: CME that your organization's learners find genuinely rewarding—not simply required.

# CHARTING YOUR CME COURSE **WITH THE RIGHT LMS**

## Leveraging vendors for the perfect LMS

No learning management system (LMS) alone can keep that vision front and center—but choosing and using the right one, which is specifically geared for meeting your organization's needs, definitely helps.

What does this mean for you? You must make sure that you and your LMS vendor are on the same page.

Don't hesitate to ask potential vendors questions like these:

**Do you appreciate CME's distinctive nature and purpose?**

**Are you willing to listen to our concerns about and hopes for our CME program before pitching your platform?**

**Does your platform support capabilities that do more than merely deliver content?**

**Does the platform enhance healthcare professionals' learning experience or are they doing generic adult learning?**



When you have discussions like these with potential LMS vendors, you're demonstrating your commitment to first-rate CME for your organization. You're actively charting your CME program's course toward success.

# DEFINING SUCCESS IN **MEDICAL E-LEARNING**

## What makes a successful LMS?

In order to be called “successful,” CME delivered through LMS technology must serve the same purpose traditional CME serves. All CME must, as the ACCME defines it, “maintain, develop, or increase the knowledge, skills, and professional performance and relationships that a physician uses to provide services for patients, the public, or the profession.”

In other words, if the electronic courses and learning activities your organization offers aren’t focused on improving clinicians’ practice or their patients’ health outcomes in some way—if they are abstract, overly academic exercises not closely connected to the everyday work healthcare professionals do that makes real differences for individuals, society, and the medical field—then no amount of technological features can make them “successful.”

Your first step in creating successful e-learning, then, is determining which knowledge or practice gaps your practitioners most need to be bridged. Wherever there’s a disconnect between the actual and the ideal in your organization’s delivery of health care—a lack of up-to-date knowledge leading to misdiagnoses, for instance—there’s an opportunity for introducing relevant CME that brings the two closer together.

# LMS FEATURES SETTING YOU UP FOR CME E-LEARNING SUCCESS

## The COMPLETE Checklist

No LMS, of course, can determine the gaps in your organization for you. But once you identify where they are—through a variety of methods: patient and physician surveys, direct observation of and interaction with practitioners, data from public health sources and peer-reviewed studies, and even simply the introduction of new tools and techniques—you will want to choose an LMS that offers every advantage in bridging them.

### ✔ **Comprehensive Course Creation Training**

Unless your CME department has a dedicated IT team, you'll want your LMS to include a user guide full of frequently updated instructions and video tutorials for creating courses. Vendors who offer multiple types of instruction on the tasks involved, such as creating course objects, establishing user profiles, administering assessments, awarding credit units, and more, demonstrate a commitment to your CME success.

### ✔ **Integration of pre-existing CME content**

You or members of your team should be able to incorporate pre-existing, on-topic content—whether it comes from your organization's own library or from external, authoritative sources—into your current CME offerings with an absolute minimum of trouble. You shouldn't need any additional software or advanced computer programming skills. The LMS should expand the education your users can experience.

### ✔ **Dependable technical support**

You'll also need your LMS vendor to offer excellent ongoing technical support. Knowing your investment includes regular maintenance, timely security patches, emergency assistance, and real-time tracking of how problems are being addressed and resolved will free you and your users to focus on lifelong learning.

### ✔ **Powerful multimedia support**

In today's CME, multimedia learning is not a luxury. It "brings alive everything from cell biology to patient case studies with a level of three-dimensional insight the printed world simply can't match," wrote Laurie Stoneham in *Texas Medicine*. Your LMS must, at the very least, support recorded and live video and such multimedia apps as Adobe Captivate or Adobe Presenter in order to fully engage users.

# LMS FEATURES SETTING YOU UP FOR CME E-LEARNING SUCCESS

## The COMPLETE Checklist (Part 2)

### ✔ Collaborative learning capabilities

Your LMS must also facilitate learners' communication and collaboration via email, online chats, message boards, and especially social media. Healthcare professionals have always relied on each other for information; today, social media allows them to take part in what Dr. Ryan Radecki calls "accelerated knowledge translation." When learners can learn from each other, they are likely to learn better, and your LMS should encourage that peer interaction.

### ✔ Easy-to-administer assessments

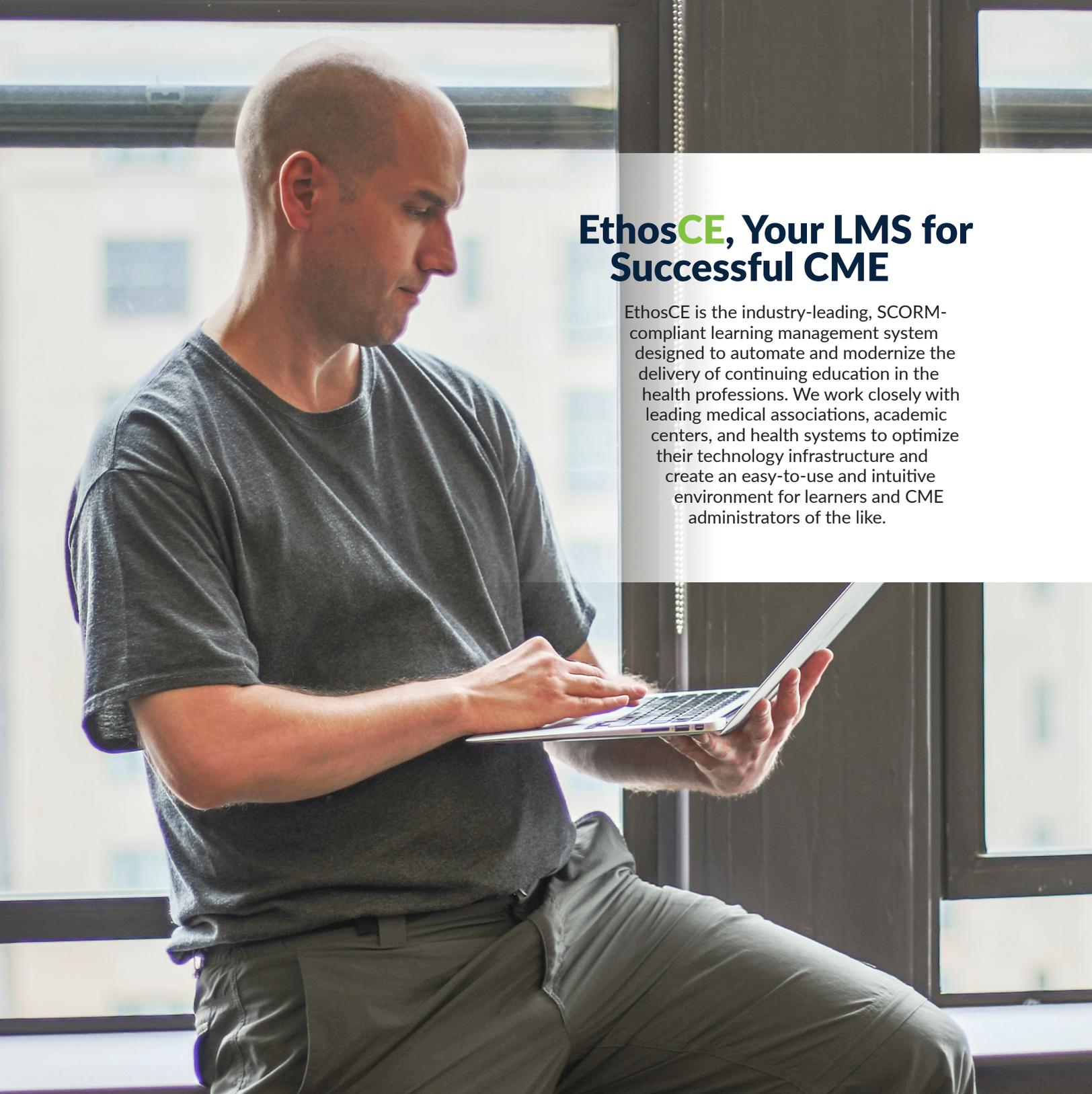
"Successful outcome measurement is not without barriers to success," observes Fission Communications' Mario Nacinovich, "but experienced providers know how to navigate getting the audience to provide feedback." Your LMS should equip you to get CME feedback at a number of levels: from customizable demographic analyses of who participated, true/false or multiple choice questions that indicate the declarative and procedural knowledge those participants gained, and surveys and open-ended assessments that can indicate how they will apply that knowledge to achieve better patient outcomes and improved community health. LMS vendors who offer multiple methods for measuring contribute to the long-term health of your CME program.

### ✔ Making revenue from original CME content

Increasingly, with the pharmaceutical industry's support for CME in decline and institutional budgets not always able to make up the gap, CME departments are expected to become financially self-sustaining operations. Think ahead and make sure your LMS includes features that will allow you, easily and quickly, to distribute and monetize original CME courses and learning activities that you create. Course cloning, integration with popular online webinar hosting services, and subscription-based e-commerce tools are a few examples of features that will empower you to create new revenue streams for your department and organization.

### ✔ Automated progress and CEU tracking

Your LMS must also contribute through the automated awarding, tracking, and reporting of whatever type of CE credits your learners need to earn. While successful CME is about more than merely accumulating credits before fixed deadlines, credits do matter. Participants should be able to use the LMS to self-monitor progress through courses and curricula, review and print transcripts and certificates on demand, and confirm that their credits are being reported to the proper accrediting bodies. Shifting these tedious administrative tasks to users gives you more time and energy for planning your CME program's growth.



## EthosCE, Your LMS for Successful CME

EthosCE is the industry-leading, SCORM-compliant learning management system designed to automate and modernize the delivery of continuing education in the health professions. We work closely with leading medical associations, academic centers, and health systems to optimize their technology infrastructure and create an easy-to-use and intuitive environment for learners and CME administrators of the like.



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