MOODLE CERTIFIED
SERVICE PROVIDER
OF THE YEAR

MOODLE
WORKPLACE
2021

Moodle insights

The experts guide to getting more from your Moodle

Welcome

Whether you're entirely new to Moodle, or an experienced admin that has used it for a long time, there are always improvements that you can apply to make your LMS experience a better one.

Because Moodle LMS is open-source, new and exciting tools and features are added to the platform every day by the people who use it the most. Still, it's impossible to keep track of every single newly introduced change, let alone knowing which ones are best for your LMS, or even the best place to look for these recommendations.

We have created this guide to introduce you to some of the common pitfalls and traps people encounter when using Moodle, some considerations you need to take into account when implementing Moodle and expert commentary from the Moodle team at Titus.

Contents

Learner Engagement

Learner Engagement

When it comes to an LMS, every organisation's goals are ultimately the same – to keep its learners engaged with its resources and provide effective training. That's why it's essential you consider how the learner will interact with the platform.

Learners have high expectations when it comes to their online experience. Modern apps have been expertly curated to keep the user engaged, so it's important that your platform follows suit. However, balancing that ease of use with complex organisational and business needs is a challenge we all face.

For both learners and tutors, exposing three critical elements of your site creates an online learning environment that's dynamic, reactive, informative, task-driven, and drives engagement.

The past. What has happened that I need to pay attention to?
Use forum posts, feedback received, grades received, messages, and notifications.

Now. What can I do next/now?
Tools such as My course progress, topic progress, and activity progress.

The future. What is happening soon that I need to do?
Make sure to use deadlines for assignments, lectures, seminars and collaboration meetings.

When creating courses for learners, applying the framework of past, future and present can make a huge difference to the effectiveness of your platform.

Content

Importance of content for your Moodle

Without great content, it's challenging to get great results. So it's vital that your LMS also engages your tutors as well as your learners.

For many tutors creating online courses can be challenging. There is a learning curve, time limitations, and technological barriers.

Many Moodle platforms that we see fall into three categories. Understanding where you sit within these categories is key to improving your Moodle experience.

The content repository

This is typically where your platform is used simply for storing documents.

Pdfs, slides, and YouTube videos are all uploaded to a course for learners to download or view elsewhere, directing the user away from the platform.

Detailed course content

The platform has detailed course content such as text, images, and videos.

Users can access content in their browser, on any device, without downloading it and opening it in a separate application.

Interactive online learning

Alongside static course content are interactive activities the learner can do online, on any device, to learn from, test,

practice and apply their learning.

Courses included interactive social activities such as forums, video hangouts, collaborative workspaces and peer assessments.

Activities are recorded for learners, tutors and organisations to see achievements, targets and goals.

The goal of any organisation is to reach the level of interactive online learning, proven to be most effective at engaging learners, maximising outcomes.

Understanding where you sit on this hierarchy and what elements are missing from your learning to reach the next level is a good first step in improving the effectiveness of your Moodle platform.
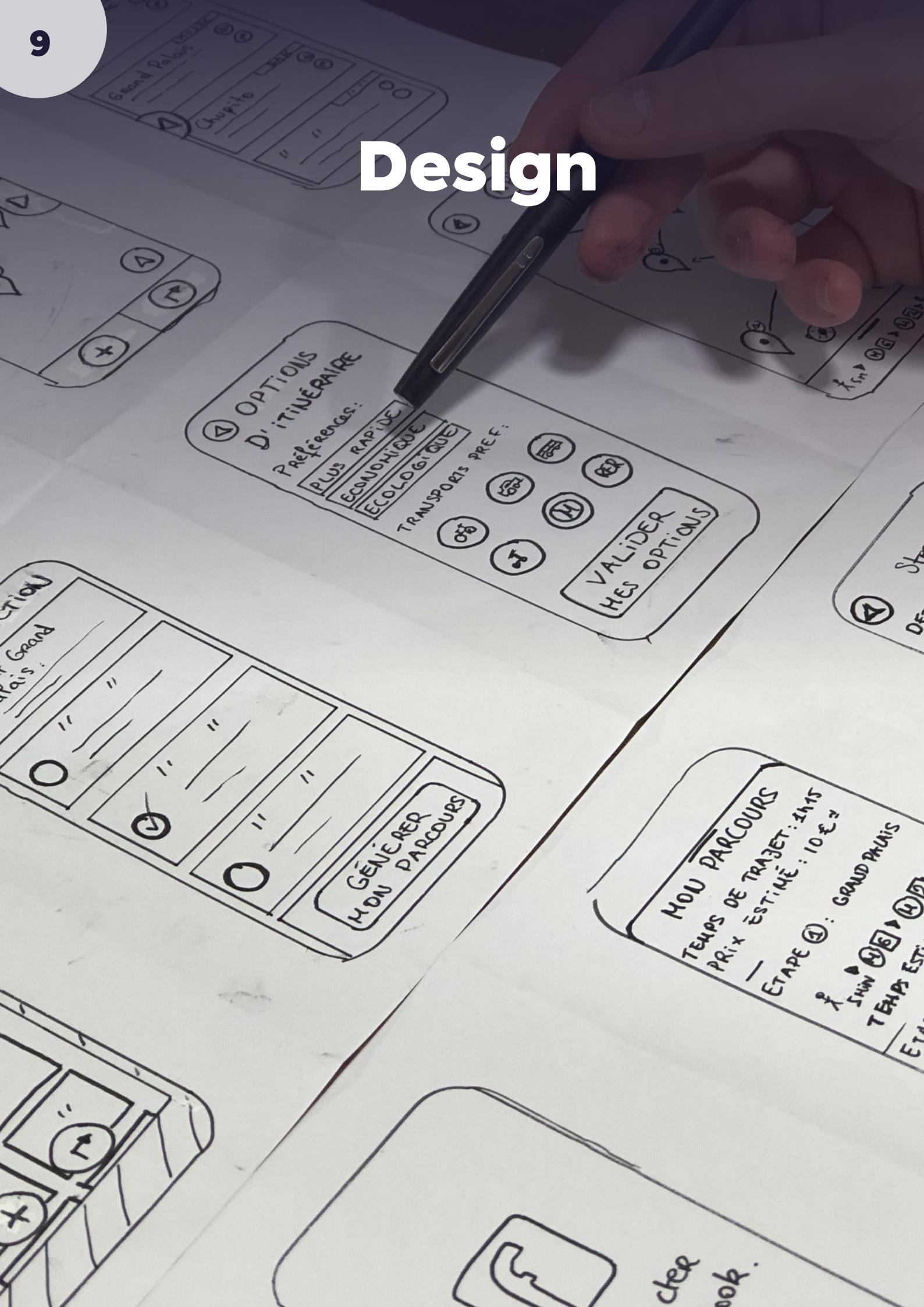
Moodle Tip - Utilise H5P

H5P is an incredible open-source tool that allows you to easily create rich and interactive HTML5 content that fits directly into your website or Moodle - all for free.

Check out some examples of what you can create with H5P here – https://h5p.org/.

Design

Design
Expert Insight

"An often overlooked but ideal way to improve the Moodle experience for both your learners and your tutors is through changes to the site's design.

Typography, white space, and images all feed into our instant reaction to any website. We all judge how we feel about a website in less than five seconds based on this.

Customising your LMS to incorporate your brand identity, tone of voice, colours, typography, and imagery through a theme makes it feel like an extension of your organisation, and the central hub of the learning experience.

It's also essential that you don't allow business needs to overwhelm the users' needs.

LMSs can often feature lots of menus and links to organisation pages, email accounts, Twitter feeds and business information. Clicking on these can distract learners.

Having a Moodle site that engages the learner, rather than directing them elsewhere, will increase engagement.

Luke Watts
Delivery Manager

Luke's responsibility at Titus involves working alongside our customers, ensuring that their Moodle site is built specifically to their brief. He also supports customers through Moodle training, making sure all stakeholders are fully skilled up so they can get the most out of their platform when launched.

How Moodle design can support Tutor engagement

Following Luke's advice, we can see the difference theme design can have on the success of an LMS. Here are some changes you can make to your site theme and structure which will have an immediate

- **Understanding your tutors' needs when you're designing your site.** Focus on the primary workflows you want tutors to use and make the most frequent tasks easy and obvious.

- **Use a custom theme –** it makes the content look great out of the box, from setting the right typography to making courses work responsively across desktop and mobile.

- **You can use images across your site to make it more engaging without changing much.** For the platforms we develop we use the 'Tiles Format' plugin and encourage tutors to upload images associated with their courses.

- **Make sure your learners remain on the site by not having downloadable content which learners can view elsewhere.** By redirecting them to other sites your platform will quickly turn into a simple document repository.

By considering the tips above you'll save time and money on training staff on how to use the system, allowing them to focus on what's important - the learning experience.

Plugins
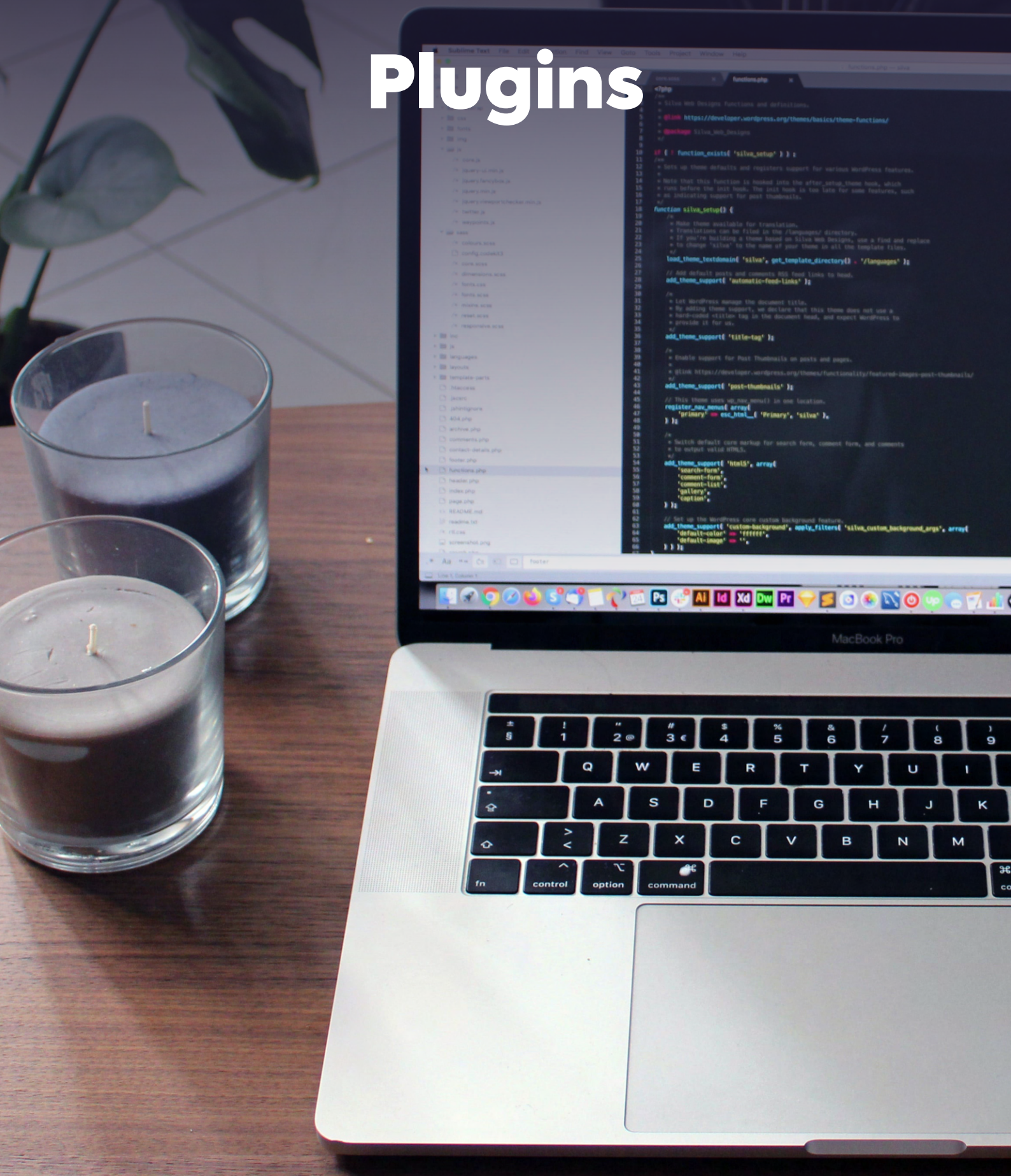
Plugins
Expert Insight

"**Moodle Plugins are essential to creating an effective Moodle platform. In a similar fashion to how people can modify their cars for a better experience, people can modify their Moodle platform also.**

Moodle is the most expansive LMS platform available. Beyond the standard features it comes with, Moodle also allows you to choose the advanced feature set that you want.

It's common on proprietary systems to see a limited feature set available by default, and that's true for Moodle as well. But where Moodle goes beyond is that you have the option of adding nearly 2,000 extra features to your platform.

Beyond this, an integral part of the strength of Moodle is the community that surrounds it. Millions of people have used Moodle in plenty of different ways and have added their own developments to the platform, all of which you can access.

Before you use Moodle, or even if you are using it now, I encourage you to look through the plugin directory to get a feel of the scale of the tools available to assist you.

Marcus Green
Moodle Developer

Marcus is a senior developer at Titus responsible for our plugin development. He released his first Moodle plugin in 2012 and is also the developer of the Gapfill and WordSelect question types.

Reporting

Reporting

Expert Insight

"**A successful e-learning solution can not afford to be static.**

Each learner will have unique expectations and preferences when it comes to their learning experience. Specific resources which work well for a particular type of content delivery might not work well with others. The best way to understand what content works best is through seeing how your learners interact with it.

Reporting functionality allows you to see the complete picture of your learning provision, from the initial content creation to how your learners interact with it. Information such as which resources are utilised more than others and data from specific learning activities allows you to understand what's working and where it's worth investing more resources.

Reviewing and fine-tuning your learning provision based on its success with your learner will enable your platform to support all of your e-learning goals."

Kris Hargreaves
Delivery Manager

Kris is a Delivery Manager at Titus who works closely with our customers supporting them through training to help them achieve the best out of their Moodle platform. In previous roles, he has been responsible for deploying Moodle sites for British Weightlifting and private sector sport.

Intelliboard

If you're using version 3.11 of Moodle or above, your Moodle platform will already come with analytics and reporting capabilities. Your Moodle admin will have to enable this within the settings, but once set up, you will have access to information on how your course content is used.

While Moodle analytics work well for many organisations, they can be limited in their scope, particularly for larger organisations with specific reporting requirements. In this case, we recommend the Moodle Plugin IntelliBoard.

This paid-for solution provides Moodle users with in-depth learner statistics, visualisations, and reports for their platform. The software allows them to extract statistical data from Moodle and display it on a single, attractive dashboard.
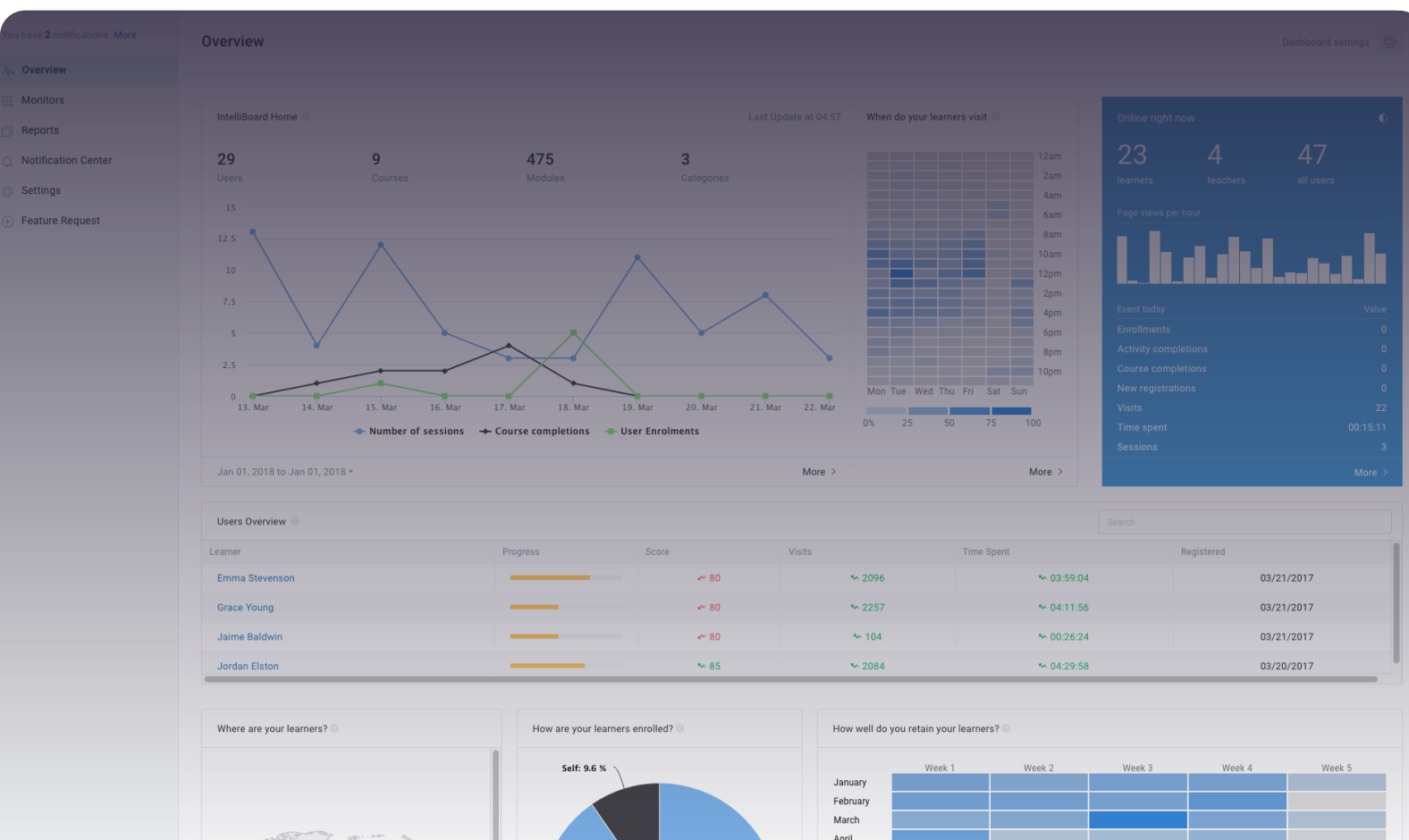
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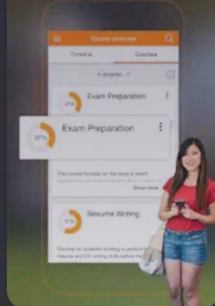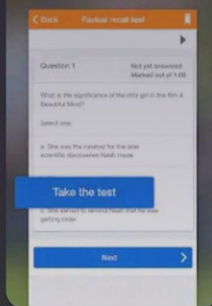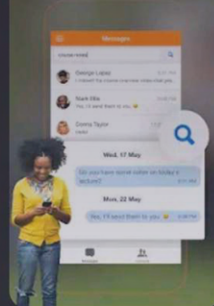
You should use the Moodle Mobile App

Learners have high expectations when it comes to their learning provision. This is particularly true when it comes to accessing their content.

To keep your learners engaged, it's essential that your Moodle platform replicates this and affords your learners the freedom to choose when and where they access their content.

Moodle comes with two options when it comes to a mobile app.

Moodle App – A Moodle App that your users can access your Moodle platform from their Moodle device. Two of the main benefits over browser access are that it allows you to send push notifications to your learners and, more importantly, allows your learners to download course content providing offline access.

Moodle Branded App – All the above features, but whereas the Moodle App comes in standard Moodle design with a default name, the Moodle Branded App allows you to have your very own app fully branded and downloadable from the IOS or Google Play Stores.

Moodle App
Download our free Moodle App today

Available on the App Store

GET IT ON Google Play
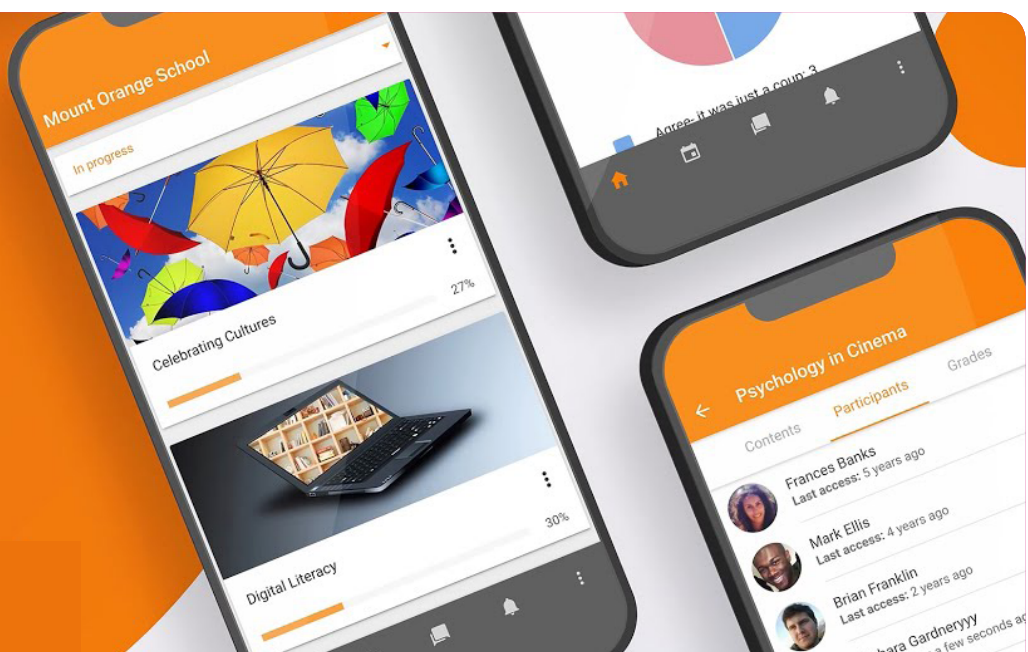
moodle

Need support?

At Titus, we have hundreds of years of combined Moodle experience and have worked with a range of organisations to provide them with the e-learning solution they require, including Network Rail, Superdry, Dermalogica, The Labour Party and The Ministry of Defence.

For any Moodle problem, big or small, we're here to help.

Get in touch using the details below to speak to one of our team.
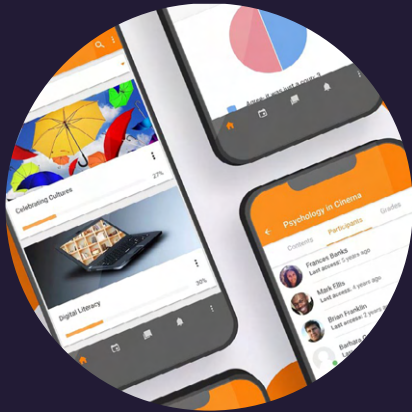
Recommended Resources

Moodle.com This is Moodle's website and contains information about Moodle itself and the products which form part of its suite, as well the latest platform news. Moodle has an incredible community surrounding it and you will also find information surrounding local Moodle events you can get involved with.

Moodle.org The technical side of Moodle.com, Moodle.org has many tools and features to assist you in your Moodle use. A dedicated forum allows you to post questions you have about the LMS that other Moodle users will answer. It also has many technical resources and the ability to request changes directly to Moodle HQ.

Moodle Plugins Directory A part of the Moodle.org site, the Plugin Directory is where you can search and download any plugins for your site. There are nearly 2,000 to choose from, and they can be sorted by type so you can easily find the ones you need.

Titus Hub At Titus, we have over a hundred years of combined Moodle experience and regularly post news relating to Moodle news, tips and best practices.

Moodle YouTube The Moodle YouTube channel regularly posts videos explaining changes brought about by new versions, information about new products, as well as general tips and tricks.

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