



Sana™

Enabling the learning analytics of tomorrow

Roundtable
White Paper

Introduction

A paradigm shift is happening in L&D. As learning metrics move increasingly from attendance and engagement towards business impact, the modern learning leader needs to be able to do more than extract LMS/LXP data. Instead, they need to combine learning and business data to understand correlations—no wonder the L&D teams of tomorrow require a new set of skills and competencies.



To better understand this shift, we gathered HR and learning leaders from the financial, hospitality, medtech, consumer goods, shipping, and security industries.

The discussion covered three areas:

- 01 Seeking out the new L&D data scientist
 - 02 Setting the record straight on correlation and causality
 - 03 Getting your fundamentals right and picking your battles
 - 04 Improving data quality and access
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01 Seeking out the new L&D data scientist

There are two key steps on the path to measuring business impact:

- 01 Gathering and accessing business data—everything from IT tickets and production deviances to safety and sales data.
 - 02 Analyzing business and learning data together to draw meaningful conclusions
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To succeed in these steps, L&D needs data science skills.

“ It's one thing to export data from an LMS system, and it's another thing to go out and investigate the impact on the business. You need someone who can go into the business and ask for data, connect that through APIs to our systems, make a data lake, and quickly build out dashboards.

While this process requires a new set of skills, the people with these competencies are closer to hand than L&D might think.

“ I'm in a house with hundreds of people in other departments working with spreadsheets all day long, so I probably have hundreds of colleagues who have the skillset that I need in my team.

02 Setting the record straight on correlation and causality

For L&D teams, proving business impact from learning activities is the holy grail. However, there is a big difference between seeing a correlation between a learning intervention and a business impact and proving that the learning intervention resulted in a business impact.



“ There are so many confounding variables. A person can do a training session, speak to a colleague, read a book, watch a documentary, and do millions of other things that we are not measuring and don't have access to in our data. We can never prove that learning interventions make a difference to the impact or lead to full ROI. We can only show strong correlations.

03 Lay the foundation and choose your battles wisely

Decisions on the learning ecosystem and infrastructure have ripple effects on the possibilities and limitations of learning analytics. If L&D executives want to measure business impact, they need to lay the right foundation. That might include centralizing the HRIS and LMS or setting up integrations between critical data sources.

“ It's so tempting to boil the ocean. But getting your fundamentals right and picking your battles is really important.

When coupling learning and business data to understand correlations, L&D teams should start small. Find low-hanging fruits where there is both an identified business need and easily accessible business data. Measuring ROE (Return on Expectations) rather than ROI could be an alternative to evaluate the learning interventions.

04 Improving data quality and access

Poor data quality is a barrier to measuring business impact because it makes the data less reliable. If we can't trust the data, how will we be able to draw conclusions from it?

While extensive data cleaning is often necessary, L&D teams should still leverage the data they have. The quicker they can demonstrate value from that data collection, the easier it will be to convince other parts of the organization to provide more data access.



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Imagine going out and showing the business functions what you are doing with the existing data and saying, 'We can actually see the impact of our learning, which means we can help people develop in the right direction going forward—if you could just update this table!' People are much more likely to get on board.

This white paper is based on insights generated from a roundtable discussion moderated by Peter Manniche Riber (Novo Nordisk) with participation from Jenny Evelius (Securitas), Kim Degn Kristensen (Nykredit), Kristine Østensen (Too Good To Go), Linn Steer (Getinge), Maud Samuelsson (Scandic), Pieter-Anthony De Haes (Maersk), and Samuel Björklund (Sana Labs).

