



IMS GLOBALTM
Learning Consortium

Series on Learning Impact

Harvard Business Publishing Provides Seamless Integration of Content Through IMS Global Learning Consortium Standards

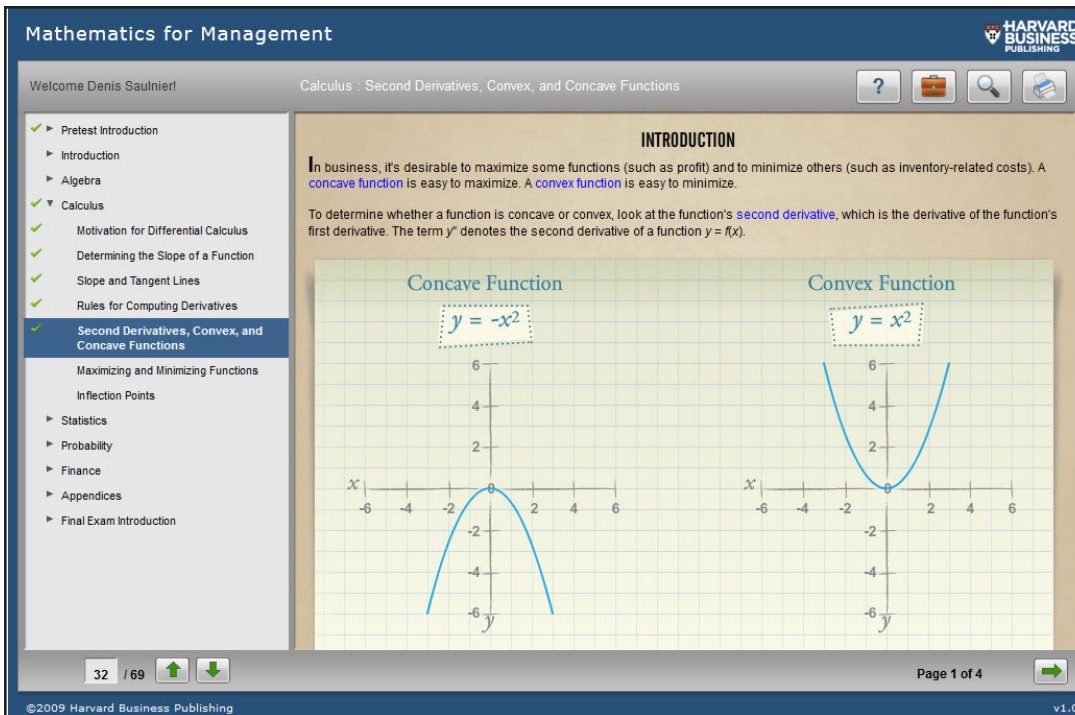
As the publishing arm of Harvard University's Business School, Harvard Business Publishing (HBP) provides content to academic customers in virtually every region of the world, and supplies 80 percent of cases used in business schools worldwide. One of the reasons for its ease of use, say administrators, is the organization's ability to scale content in a variety of formats and on many different platforms. And that interoperability, they say, is largely made possible through standards provided by the IMS Global Learning Consortium.

"Using interoperability standards made available through IMS Global Learning allows us to satisfy customer demand for more seamless content access and consumption and we're seeing that demand grow and grow," said Denis Saulnier, director of HBP's Learning Services. "Many of our customers have students logging on to their learning management systems (LMS). They don't want them to then have to link off those sites to six different provider sites, requiring multiple sign-ons."

"It's all about getting technology out of the way and getting directly to the content," added John Gayle, technology solutions architect for HBP's Learning Services.

One of the oldest and most respected providers of business content, Harvard Business School created HBP in 1994 to improve the practice of management and its impact on the changing world. The company

consists of three market groups: Higher Education, Corporate Learning, and Harvard Business Review Group. In addition to distributing content created by the school, HBP also distributes content created by other entities such as Babson College and Stanford University’s College of Business.



“Part of our mission in the higher education group is to not only disseminate content produced by the business school, but also to evangelize the case method of teaching and learning, which we call participant-centered learning,” said Saulnier. “The idea is that, used in its true fashion, business case studies involve the teacher acting as a facilitator with a significant amount of peer-to-peer learning taking place.”

Harvard Business Press Makes Leading Online Courses Available in Common Cartridge Format for Inclusion in Any Learning Platform

The dis-aggregated content HBP offers, Saulnier said, is shorter than the traditional textbook, trends toward more experiential content, and has a lot of interactive, multi-media elements embedded. The content can be hosted by HBP or can reside on customers’ servers.

Case studies and Harvard Business Review articles have for years been provided to customers in pdf and other static formats, he said. As that content evolves into XML-enabled formats and e-book documents, there is a continuing need to move away from one-off solutions that are not scalable. Since HBP content is already dis-aggregated, offered at a reasonable cost, and known for its quality, the company needs to

“Using interoperability standards made available through IMS Global Learning allows us to satisfy customer demand for more seamless content access and consumption and we’re seeing that demand grow and grow,”

– Denis Saulnier

continue to focus on removing the biggest barrier which is ease of use, he added. “We need to continue to focus on making our content easily accessible and adhering to standards is critical to achieving that goal.”

Prior to joining HBP, Gayle had worked with another publisher in developing online experiences for their textbooks. “I took a lot of that content and put it into what we called cartridges. I was familiar with the SCORM concept, but not with IMS Global Learning. When I met Denis three years ago, IMS was one of the things he had me look at and it seemed very exciting. Here was this standards organization that really pushed interoperability and it seemed they were doing everything right.”

While IMS has not provided solutions to all of HBP’s challenges, standards provided through Common Cartridge and Learning Tools Interoperability (LTI) has enabled the business publisher to package and distribute content much faster than if they continued to do it themselves.

Saulnier said one of the things they value about IMS is that the non-profit organization brings together executives at all levels, from user institutions and open-source providers to vendors and publishers, to work together to create a seamless environment for teaching and learning.

“We need to continue to focus on making our content easily accessible and adhering to standards is critical to achieving that goal.”

– Denis Saulnier

“We go to a lot of conferences and gatherings that slice up the world according to channels,” he added. “We go to this conference for publishers or that conference for campus technology. The truth is, as a content provider in the academic space, our ecosystem is more complex than that. We’re concerned with academic institutions and their needs. But we’re also part publisher and concerned with content delivery systems. And we’re concerned with technology and platforms. Attending IMS conferences, we find that it’s the only place that takes a slice across that entire ecosystem. There are people from all of the relevant constituencies represented. We rarely have the opportunity to have that kind of conversation in one place.”

The company’s objective going forward, Saulnier said, will be to continue to make their content available in whatever format the student, the faculty member, or the program wants it. “However they want to consume it, on whatever device, we want our content to play nice. Also, rather than delivering content to our customer institutions, we may choose to create an online space where customers can come to us to access content. But to do that, we really need to make it seamless.”

About Harvard Business Publishing

HBP was founded in 1994 as a not-for-profit, wholly owned subsidiary of Harvard University. Its mission is to improve the practice of management and its impact in a changing world. Harvard Business Publishing has approximately 300 employees, primarily based in Boston, with offices in New York City, India, and the United Kingdom. The company is comprised of three market groups: Higher Education, Corporate Learning, and Harvard Business Review Group. Through these publishing platforms, Harvard Business Publishing is able to influence real-world change by maximizing the reach and impact of its essential offering — ideas.

<http://harvardbusinesspublishing.org/>

About IMS Global Learning Consortium

From Innovation to Impact

IMS Global Learning is a nonprofit member organization that strives to enable the growth and impact of learning technology in higher education, K-12, and corporate education worldwide. IMS Global members are leading corporations, higher education institutions, school districts and government organizations worldwide that are enabling the future of education by collaborating on interoperability standards and major adoption projects for the digital support of education and learning. IMS Global also sponsors Learning Impact: a global awards program and conference that recognizes the impact of innovative technology on educational access, affordability, and quality. For more information visit www.imsglobal.org or contact info@imsglobal.org

Copyright © 2012 by IMS Global Learning Consortium, Inc.

All Rights Reserved.

The IMS Logo is a registered trademark of IMS Global.

tel: +1 407.362.7783

fax: +1 407.333.1365

<http://www.imsglobal.org/articles/>

