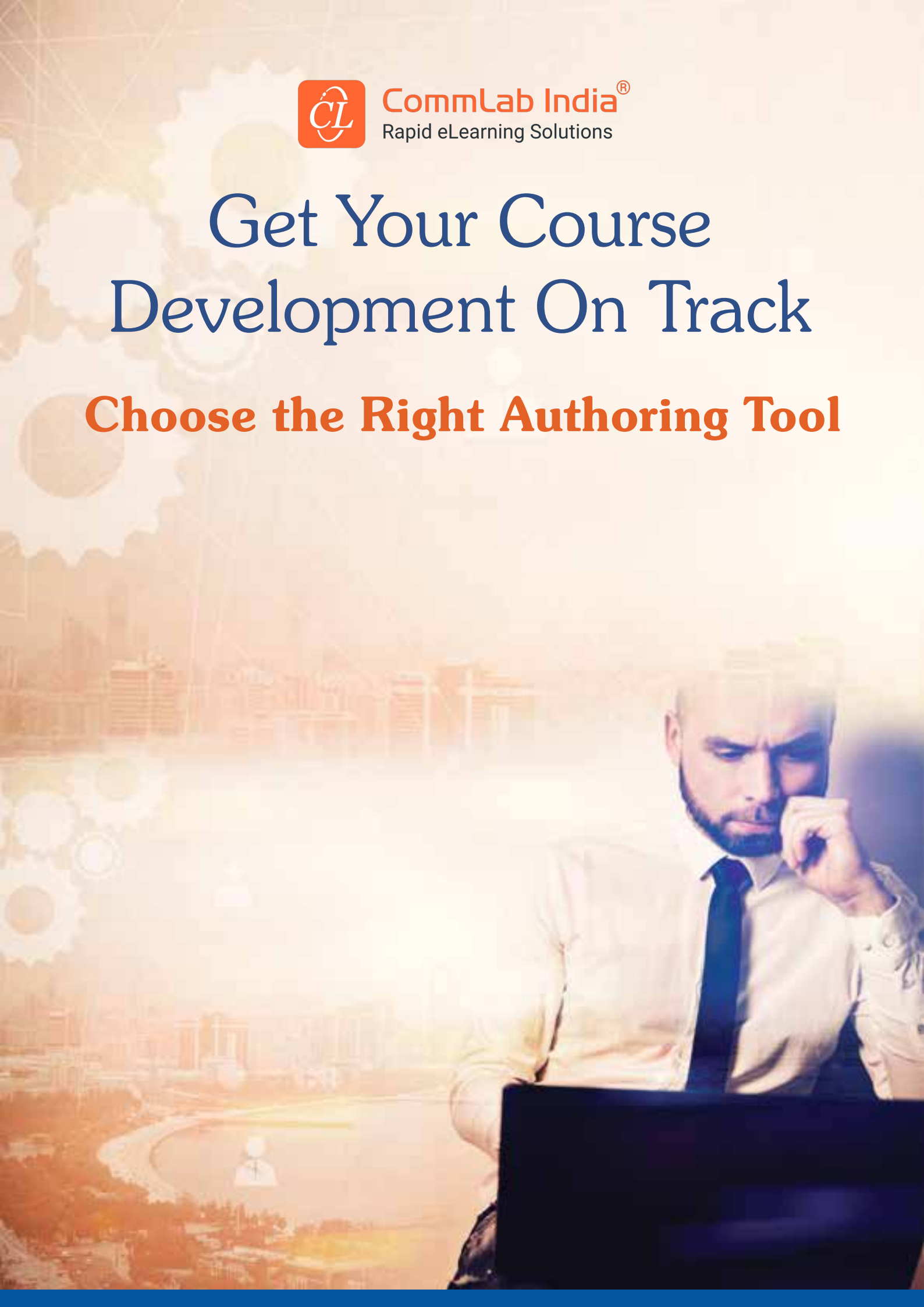




**CommLab India®**  
Rapid eLearning Solutions

# Get Your Course Development On Track

**Choose the Right Authoring Tool**



# The Need for Rapid Authoring Tools

After the learning objectives are set and the content is presented based on the instructional, media, and assessment strategies, it is time to develop the course.

With changing business dynamics, organizations need quicker rollout of training programs, and this is where rapid authoring tools contribute by helping develop e-learning courses at a rapid rate.

A few factors that led to the rise of rapid e-learning include:

- The need to develop courses quickly, in multiple languages
- The demand for low cost courses due to shrinking training budgets
- The need to address reducing attention spans of learners
- The growing use of mobile devices to access learning








# How to Select the Right Rapid Authoring Tool

With several e-learning development software available today, choosing the right rapid authoring tool is a major challenge.

Authoring tools differ in their suitability for particular styles of learning, platforms of delivery, file formats, support for e-learning standards and development workflows. Selecting a tool not fully optimized for your needs, can result in you losing much more than just time and money.

The productivity of your people suffers as a result of poor e-learning.

While there are several criteria that help pick up the right authoring tool for your training, we will look at 5 *major influencers* in this mini guide.

-  Training requirement
-  Nature of content
-  Multilingual requirements
-  Publishing options
-  User-accessibility features

5



# 1 Training Requirement

This is the most important factor in selecting a rapid authoring tool.

Do you wish to educate your sales force on handling customer objections effectively to close deals? Do you wish to train on global employees on using the new ERP system for their tasks? Need to rollout quick demonstrations of product updates?

**Analyze which tool best suits your requirement.**

For instance, if you decide to use scenarios to teach customer-handling skills, Articulate Storyline is the preferred choice as it comes with several characters in different poses and backgrounds. Adobe Captivate is the go-to choice if you need to develop simulations.





## 2 Nature of the Content

Different types of content – facts, concepts, procedures, processes, and principles – are best taught through different strategies.

For example, concepts are effective when taught using analogies and examples & non-examples; processes can be explained better through case studies and scenarios of problems.

Consider whether you are developing a simple page-turner course or a course with complex branching, and multimedia elements.

The authoring tool you select should provide the necessary support, seamlessly.



## 3 Multilingual Requirements

In today's era of globalization, organizations need to rollout courses in the native languages of their employees rapidly.

From product training to compliance courses, most e-learning courses need to be translated to multiple languages.

Articulate Storyline, Adobe Captivate and Lectora Inspire, all offer the flexibility to develop multilingual courses with minimal efforts.



# 4

## Publishing Options

With the growing use of mobile devices, employees with jobs that leave them little time for long training sessions, are increasingly looking to access short learning modules that can be accessed on their mobiles, on the move.

To be compatible with multiple devices, courses have to be published to the HTML5 format.

Most modern rapid authoring tools provide the option to publish courses to HTML5, apart from others such as Video, and PDF.



## 5 User-accessibility Features

E-learning courses need to be accessible by learners irrespective of their physical abilities. This is also being increasingly mandated by governments across the world.

A few standards/guidelines to develop accessibility-enabled e-learning courses:

- **Section 508**, an amendment to the United States Workforce Rehabilitation Act, that stipulates online courses must be accessible by all learners.
- **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines** (WCAG), a set of standards developed by the World Wide Web Consortium with the goal of providing web content accessibility to individuals, irrespective of their physical limitations.

Apart from being compliant to these standards, rapid authoring tools should also support features such as:

- Closed captioning for audio/video
- Work with screen readers
- Text-to-speech conversions



# A Look at 9 Popular Authoring Tools

Having seen the top criteria to select the right rapid authoring tool for your requirement, let's look at some commonly used rapid authoring tools:

- Articulate Storyline 2
- Articulate 360
- Adobe Captivate 9
- Adobe Presenter 11
- Lectora Inspire 16
- Lectora Online 3
- iSpring Suite
- Claro
- Gomo Learning Suite



# A Look at Popular Authoring Tools

## 1 Articulate Storyline 2

Articulate Storyline 2 makes e-learning course development very easy and quick with its easy-to-use features, templates, triggers, and more.

- It allows different types of *interactivities* to be customized; the best part is, no coding is involved in this process.
- Triggers make the course engaging; triggers allow developers choose *what action must occur* (e.g., jump to next slide), *where this action occurs* (e.g., next slide), and *when it occurs* (e.g., when the user clicks a button).

It also allows for the *translation of courses* into a variety of languages to cater to the learning needs of global audiences.



# A Look at Popular Authoring Tools

## 2 Articulate 360

Articulate has integrated all of its existing and new independent tools into one simple package – **Articulate 360**. It consists of various tools for Desktop, Web and iPad.

- *Storyline 360*, the Desktop version offers a responsive player which can automatically adapt the screen layout to all mobile devices – Smartphones and tablets. It also offers a responsive preview toolbar.
- *Rise*, the web-based application can be used to develop fully responsive courses. Courses developed using this tool work perfectly on all desktop and mobile devices. It adapts content according to the device's screen size.

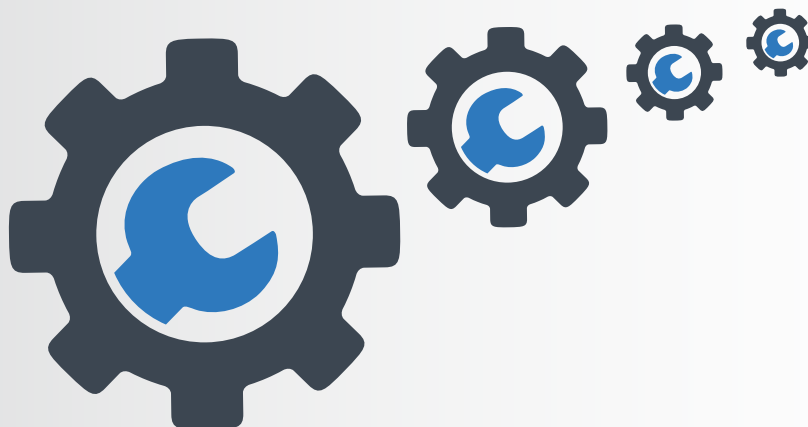


# A Look at Popular Authoring Tools

## 3 Adobe Captivate 9

Adobe Captivate 9 allows developers to quickly and effortlessly create interactive courses.

- *Widgets* can be resized without compromising on the quality of the course.
- Adobe Captivate has an *Asset Store* of over 50,000 assets that can be used to create any kind of interactive eLearning content
- The *responsive feature* of this tool makes it stand out from the others – one course is created and Adobe Captivate 9 adjusts this course to the device screen size and orientation.
- *The eLearning Course Previewer* lets you take a sneak-peak at the what the course will look like on different screen sizes, before actually publishing the course.





# A Look at Popular Authoring Tools

## 4 Adobe Presenter 11

Adobe Presenter 11 facilitates the conversion of PowerPoint slides to engaging e-learning courses.

- Developers *don't need technical expertise* to work with Adobe Presenter 11.
- *YouTube videos* can be streamed to make courses interesting.
- *Templates* are available in different backgrounds, colors, styles, and fonts.

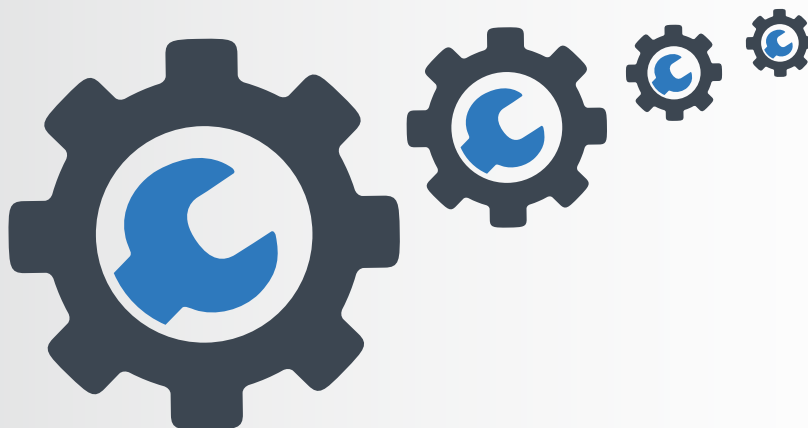


# A Look at Popular Authoring Tools

## 5 Lectora Inspire 16

Lectora Inspire allows developers to create interactive courses without any programming.

- *Actions* that make a course interactive can be applied to almost any object and used to launch pop-ups, show and hide objects, close windows, navigate to pages, display feedback, drag and drop objects.
- Developers can change the shape, effects, and style of a variety of *states* – the states in Lectora Inspire include Normal, Over, Down, and Disabled.
- This tool has a *multi-lingual graphic user interface* that can be used to develop courses with a switchable graphic user interface (GUI). This lets learners switch languages anytime and anywhere in a course.



# A Look at Popular Authoring Tools

## 6 Lectora Online 3

Lectora Online 3 is the collaborative, cloud-based version of Lectora. It allows multiple stakeholders to work on a course simultaneously.

- They can be assigned *permissions* to work on specific parts of the course.
- It allows *content sharing*. Team members can work from anywhere and can add/exchange notes.
- Lectora Online 3 supports *Responsive Course Design*. This enables courses to be developed for all devices – desktops, tablets, and Smartphones.

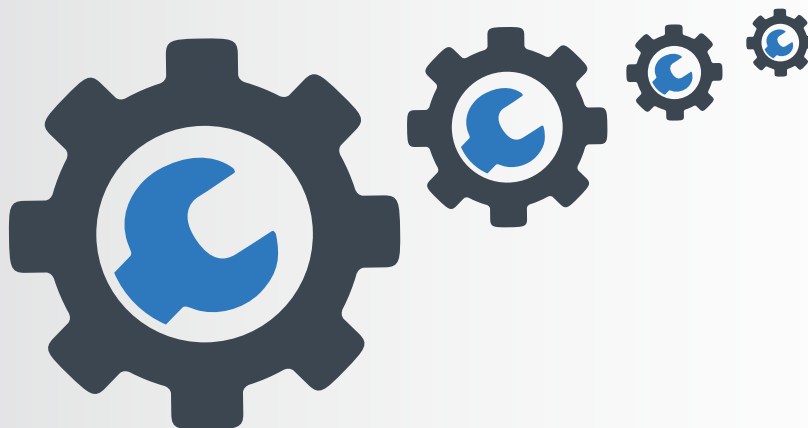


# A Look at Popular Authoring Tools

## 7 iSpring Suite

iSpring Suite is a PowerPoint add-on used to develop professional e-learning courses in PowerPoint. Once installed, all iSpring functions can be accessed, allowing PPT-based courses to be published to the new format (Flash or HTML5)

- Rapidly *converts existing PowerPoint decks* to Flash, HTML5, and videos without interfering with the existing presentation
- Allows existing *elements to be transported* to the new format – to any device, thereby saving development time and costs
- Animations, effects, sounds and audio, SmartArt, text, and fonts are not affected by the conversion, *making conversions seamless*





# A Look at Popular Authoring Tools

## 8 Claro

Claro is one of the few tools in the market that meets today's need for 'rapid, collaborative, team-based development'.

It enables several people to work on a project at the same time.

Stakeholders from within the organization and outside the organization can view the content of an ongoing project and approve/reject any part of the course.

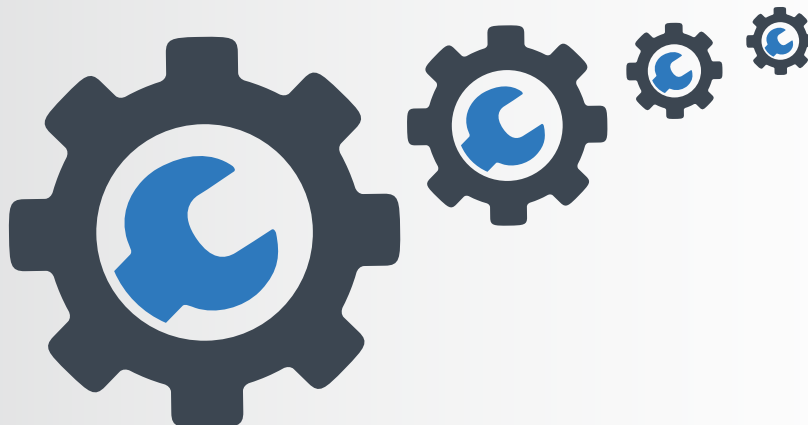


# A Look at Popular Authoring Tools

## 9 Gomo Learning Suite

Gomo Learning is a cloud-based tool that supports collaboration among users who need to access courses from multiple devices or locations.

- It allows *several users* or a group, including subject matter experts to *review courses online* and make edits and reviews concurrently.
- *Resources*, content templates and variables *can be shared* by teams across projects. They can also exchange and also review notes.
- The Gomo Learning Suite allows developers to create *responsive, HTML5 content* to fit all screens, across devices.



# Authoring Tools that Address Business Challenges

The current business environment has given rise to new training requirements such as the rapid conversion of classroom material to the online format, the need to develop courses that work across multiple devices, and real-time course reviews.

Let's look at *5 major business challenges* and the rapid authoring tools that meet the resulting training requirements.

- Challenge 1: Rapid Conversions
- Challenge 2: Interactive E-learning
- Challenge 3: Quick Translations
- Challenge 4: Responsive E-learning
- Challenge 5: Ease of Online Review



# Challenge 1

## Rapid Conversion of ILT Material for Online Delivery

Converting classroom training material to the online format offers organizations several benefits – in terms of saved costs, time, and improved efficiencies.

Employees spend less time away from work and can access training whenever they need, from their preferred location and device.

Popular authoring tools that help in the rapid conversion of ITL material to the online format include:



iSpring Suite



Adobe Presenter 11





# Challenge 2

## Interactive E-learning for Immersive Learning Experiences

Interactive e-learning courses help engage learners with short attention spans and making learning an active process. They compel learners to participate in the course by doing an activity, taking decisions, viewing a video, and more.

Current generation authoring tools come with the ability to develop scenarios, simulations, and games with little effort and time. Popular tools that offer interactive online courses include:



Articulate Storyline 2



Adobe Captivate



Lectora Inspire



# Challenge 3

## Quick Translations for Global Audiences

With organizations expanding globally, employees, vendors, external partners, and customers are spread across the world.

It has become imperative for firms to train their employees in their native languages to ensure they speak the same language and adhere to the organization's policies, mission and vision, despite their cultural and linguistic differences. Training members of the extended enterprise is also crucial in today's interconnected business landscape.

Popular tools that offer quick translations include:



**Articulate Storyline 2**



**Lectora Inspire**



# Challenge 4

## Responsive E-learning for Multi-Device Compatibility

The immense usage of mobile devices and learners' preference to access training on their Smartphones and tablets are propelling the need to develop online learning solutions that can be accessed seamlessly on all devices, irrespective of the screen size.

In responsive e-learning, a single version of the course is delivered on multiple devices, thereby eliminating the need to develop a separate version of the course for each device it needs to run on.

Popular tools to develop responsive courses include:



Lectora Inspire



Adobe Captivate 9



Gomo Learning Suite



Articulate Presenter 360



# Challenge 5

## Ease of Online Collaboration & Review by Multiple Stakeholders

In the current scenario, stakeholders, subject matter experts, and development teams in organizations are spread across locations and time zones, and online course reviews and updates are becoming time-consuming.

Reviewers and SMEs are looking to collaborate and review courses in real time and make changes and edits from wherever they are.

Popular tools that allow online collaboration include:



Claro



Lectora Online 3



Gomo Learning Suite





# Comparison Chart

We leave you with a quick look at the features of 5 widely used rapid authoring tools.

Feature	Articulate Storyline	Articulate Studio	Adobe Captivate 8	Lectora Inspire 11	iSpring Presenter 7
Cost of one license (as on 10-June-2014)	USD 1398	USD 1398	USD 999	USD 2495	USD 697
<b>Audio Capabilities</b>					
Can embed audio files	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Can audio in interactions	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Can set audio quality and other options	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Can record narration audio	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Can perform basic audio editing	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Can store audio in a library	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Can export recorded audio to MP3	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Can record system audio	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Can add links to external audio files	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Can perform advanced audio editing	No	No	No	Yes	No
<b>Assessments Features</b>					
Can choose from wide variety of question types (including multiple choice, fill-in, and hot spot)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

# Comparison Chart

Can require questions to be answered	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Can show review of question after score	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Can format question pages as desired	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Can track assessments	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Can create randomized questions	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Can create global quiz preferences	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Can shuffle answers	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Can add media to questions	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Can randomize questions from banks or pools	Yes	Yes	Yes (Using customization)	No	Yes
Branching and Navigation Features					
Can add simple branching	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Can add custom navigation	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Can add complex branching	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Graphics and Animations Creation					
Can make objects on the screen interactive	Yes	Yes (Limited)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Can animate screen elements	Yes (We have only limited 6 animation style)	Yes (All PPT Animation)	Yes	No	Yes
Can edit images, basic	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Can insert HTML5 animations	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

# Comparison Chart

Can choose from multiple transitions	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Can insert Flash animations	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Can insert text animations	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Can use built-in characters	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Can edit images, advanced	No	No	No	No	No
Support for Videos					
Can embed video files	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Can trigger video in interactions	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Can link to external or web video files	Yes	Yes. Hyperlinks can be provided.	Yes	Yes	No
Can set video quality and other options	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Can record screen video	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Can export recorded video	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Can pan and zoom	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Can store video in a library	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Can perform basic video editing	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

# Questions You Might be Having...



1. What is the most user-friendly rapid authoring tool?
2. Which tool can be learnt in the shortest time?
3. Which authoring tool should I choose for developing a simulation-based e-learning course?
4. What is the perfect tool to convert my online training material into interactive eBooks?
5. What is the best tool for creating on-demand webinars?
6. What is the ideal tool for delivering online training through videos?
7. I need a tool that is highly customizable. Can you suggest one?
8. What is the most flexible tool for creating interactive assessments and publishing them?
9. Which tool has the feature of a library to store audio and video files?
10. Which tool allows me to publish SCORM compliant courses easily in quick time?

For answers to these questions, our recommendations and more, access this comprehensive [eBook](#) that deals with authoring tools.

# About Us

CommLab India is the most sought-after global leader for its rapid eLearning solutions. It has been ranked first among top providers of Rapid eLearning and Blended Learning Solutions for 2020 by eLearning Industry.

With our formidable authoring tools expertise and decades of experience in corporate training and instructional design, we offer rapid eLearning solutions for speed, scale, and value...with any authoring tool!

What we do:

1. Convert ILT material into instructionally sound, visually appealing, engaging eLearning curriculums, virtual sessions, and other digital learning formats.
2. Convert legacy courses developed in Flash or any other authoring tool to HTML5, even without the source files.
3. Translate English eLearning courses into 35 international languages – both text and audio.



**#1**  
**Rapid eLearning**



**#1**  
**Rapid eLearning**



**#1**  
**Blended Learning**



**#2**  
**Microlearning**

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'Become an eLearning Champion', dedicated to learning professionals, is a distillation of CommLab India's 20 years' experience in instructional design, eLearning, corporate training, and technology-enabled learning.

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