Track Skill Demonstration with xAPI

xAPI and the Adobe Captivate Prime LMS

ABSTRACT

As learners demonstrate skills they have learnt in the real world, track the experiences in your LMS. Reward learners, calculate the impact of your trainings, and use feedback to refresh/update your trainings.

Product Management, Adobe Captivate Prime

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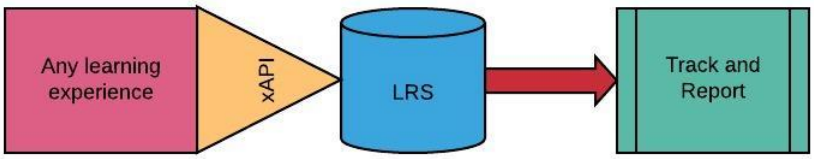
When Would You use xAPI?

An organization often provides a variety of training to its employees through the LMS. But when it comes to measuring the efficacy of that training or determining if it has had a real-world impact, how would you go about it?

One traditional mechanism has been to include Quizzes or Assessments as part of your eLearning modules in the LMS. But that often doesn't capture the real data. A great way would be to look outside your LMS and see how learners are performing in the real world. In such cases, however, you face the challenge of how to record such learning related experiences in a trackable and quantifiable manner. This is where xAPI or the Experience API comes in.

The Experience API (xAPI): A Technical Primer

- The Experience API (xAPI) is a kind of learning technology (API = Application Platform Interface).
- It allows you to collect data about various experiences that a person has both online and offline.
- To record an activity, an application needs to send secure statements in the form of "noun, verb, object", e.g. Sam watched a video, to a learning Record Store (LRS).
- An LRS is nothing but a database that either resides independently alongside other LRSes or may also reside inside an LMS.



Advantages of the xAPI

- ✓ Record any learning experience in the form of a statement so long as it has the noun-verb-object format (someone-did-something).
- ✓ You can store the information and share it over time between LRSes.
- ✓ Record the activity, no matter what, in a way that is quantifiable, sharable and trackable.
- ✓ Any enabled device/application can send xAPI statements e.g. key applications like Salesforce, Zendesk can be made to send such statements using xAPI apps.

- ✓ You do not need constant connectivity – occasionally getting online to connect is fine.
- ✓ The activity does not have to start or end with the LMS – the content you want to consume is not tied to the LMS.

Fun fact: xAPI is also called Tin Can. The developers named it Project Tin Can in 2010 as a metaphor for a real step towards bettering a process – in this case, improving eLearning standards.

Adobe Captivate Prime and xAPI

Adobe Captivate Prime supports xAPI which means it allows you to register an external application within the LMS and thereby track activities that occur in this external system. Captivate Prime has an LRS that accepts xAPI statements from external applications. The LRS stores these records until they are required for analytical purposes. In this manner you can register several external applications and track all learning experiences that happen there.

When creating a Course in Captivate Prime, you can select xAPI as the type of Activity Module. The Module is given an IRI. This allows the LMS to track the activity and generate reports.

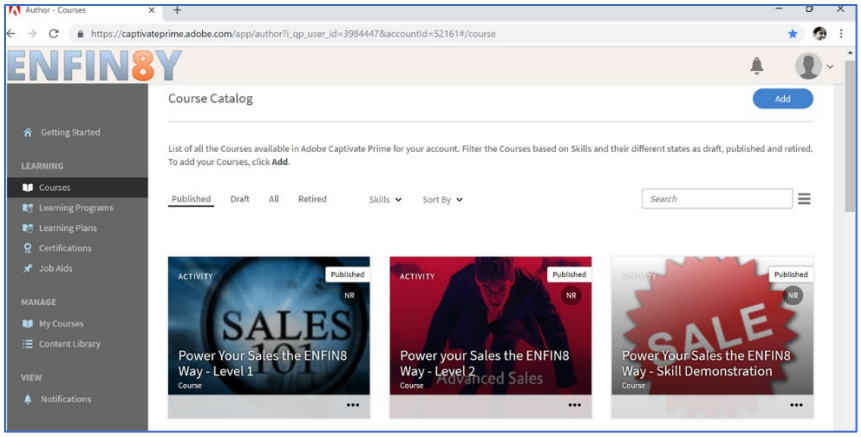
Find out more about using xAPI in Captivate Prime here.

Use Case Scenario 1 – Train sales personnel and then track their performance as they close deals in the CRM.

Here is a story that demonstrates how Captivate Prime uses xAPI to track the performance of a sales person as demonstrated by the closure of deals outside the LMS.

ENFIN8Y has a Skill called Sales Training. Sales Training has three Levels, attained through three Courses:

1. Level 1 – Course: "Sales 101"
2. Level 2 – Course: "Advanced Sales" – Simulation.
3. Level 3 – Course: "Skill Demonstration".



Data regarding learner performance is spread across these sources:

- The LMS – Course 1
- In-person simulations – Course 2
- Real-life sales closure recorded in Salesforce – Course 3

In order to get a good understanding of the impact of their trainings, they need data on:

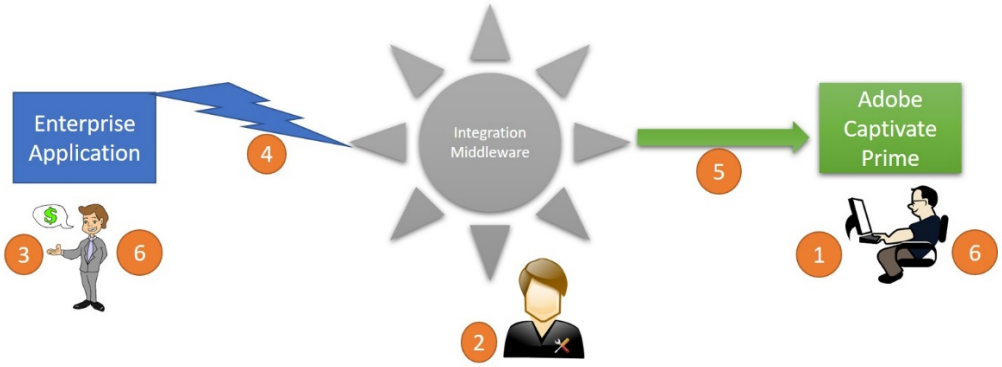
- Course completion in the LMS.
- Instructor feedback on simulation/ uploaded analysis report learners submit.
- Data from Salesforce regarding closure of an actual sale.

The first Course is a blend of classroom training, self-paced eLearning and virtual classrooms. Learners can take these trainings within the LMS. Scores are recorded and tracked using in-product features.

The second Course is an early demonstration of skills in a simulated scenario that is evaluated by a designated instructor. Built using an activity module, learners must attend a training workshop where learners do a case study analysis and submit a report. The instructor approves or rejects the submission thereby marking the Course as complete/incomplete.

Course 3 requires learners to demonstrate actual sales skills on the job. The information required here to mark the module as complete is the closure of a sale by a learner. When a learner closes the sale, it is captured in the app Salesforce which is the CRM used by ENFIN8Y. Using xAPI the information is posted by the connecting middleware to the Captivate Prime LRS. Admins and managers can now track the learner's progress in the LMS. The learner earns his/her badge, etc. and is certified as skilled in Level Three of Sales Training.

The illustration and steps below demonstrate the process:



1. The author creates the Skill Demonstration Activity Module.
2. The Integration Administrator hooks up the external enterprise application (Salesforce) with Captivate Prime using an Integration Middleware (like Microsoft Flow, Snaplogic, Zapier or IFTTT).
3. The learner completes the activity (closing a sale), which is captured by Salesforce.
4. Salesforce triggers the integration middleware about the event.
5. An xAPI statement is posted to the Captivate Prime LRS with details of the completed activity.
6. Admins and Managers tracking progress in the LMS are notified.
7. The XAPI data can be exported to a visualization tool like Power BI to generate reports showing the impact of training on sales performance

Use Case Scenario 2 – Provide training to the Support Team and then reward selected engineers as they successfully handle a certain volume of cases in a month.

In the previous use case we wanted to track the performance of all sales personnel.

What if we wanted to reward only certain employees based on a performance criterion? For example, what if we wanted to award a badge to Support engineers who close more than 50 cases of a particular topic (on which they have been recently trained) within a month?

Captivate Prime now has a "transformer application" that can help you do that. You can, for example, create a rule in this application to count 50 instances of a specific event and generate an xAPI statement of the same.

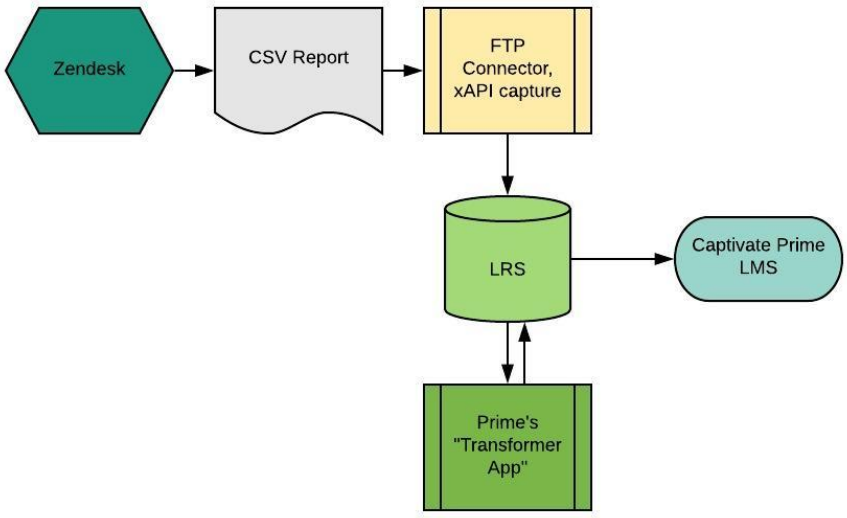
A Zendesk Use Case:

You have a new recruit in the Support Team. She must undergo various trainings. You enroll her in a Skill called 'Support Skills' which has three levels:

- Level 1: Product Knowledge – Training about the product through a Course – available in your Captivate Prime account.
- Level 2: Managing customer relations – also through a Course available in your Captivate Prime account.
- Level 3: Close Tickets – she must demonstrate proficiency in closing tickets in Zendesk. To achieve competency, she must close 50 tickets in her first month.

To successfully gather all required data, the account Admin sets up the FTP connector to import xAPI statements into the LRS from CSV reports generated by Zendesk. Post import, an xAPI statement looks something like this: "this support agent" "closed" "customer query". This is an example of a granular xAPI statement.

With the new xAPI "transformer app" you can generate a higher order xAPI statement. Therefore, when she achieves the number of tickets she needs to close, it is recorded in Zendesk, exported as a CSV file to the FTP connector, from where xAPI import the data, the transformer app counts the number of events as per the rule you set, sends it back to the LRS, and you can now generate a higher order statement.



The completion of this activity module can then be linked to awarding of a Skill or a Badge or even a follow up learning plan if you so desire.

The advantage of a higher order xAPI statement is that you can choose to increase/decrease/be flexible about the threshold that you want to track. In this case, the number of tickets the recruit closes can help you decide if she has had sufficient training or if she requires more training to be able to demonstrate skill competency.

Summary

Use xAPI to link real world experiences to your LMS and thereby to your training initiatives. Make inferences about the impact of your training, reward your learners, and use the feedback to augment your trainings as you go further.

Please do contact your Captivate Prime Customer Success Manager to find out how you can use xAPI to enhance learner experience in your Adobe Captivate Prime account.