Release Notes

Release Information

Original Launch: June 19, 2013

Requirements:

- Blackboard Learn requires Service Pack (SP) 10 and later. To learn more, see Blackboard Learn Requirements.

- ANGEL requires 8.0 SP 4 and later. You can request integrating your ANGEL learning environment with xpLor by submitting a ticket through Behind the Blackboard or contacting your ANGEL Engagement Manager. To learn more, see the xpLor announcement for ANGEL.

- Our partners at Netspot, a Premium eLearning Technology Services Partner to education organisations within the Asia Pacific region and an official Moodle Partner, support core Moodle features (version 2.3 or later). To learn more, contact Netspot.

- xpLor will be available in the Blackboard Open LMS' Joule 2 platform with the Summer 2013 Release. To learn more, see the Joule Summer 2013 Release Brief.

Release Highlights

xpLor is a cloud-based learning object repository that is designed to work with multiple Learning Management Systems (LMS). It is built on open standards and allows for the creation, discovery, and sharing of rich learning objects. You can share learning objects beyond the confines of a single LMS. Shared objects work in any supported system without alteration. You can move existing content from the LMS platform to xpLor, making it accessible in multiple courses on multiple platforms.

The xpLor Dashboard summarizes a user's activity and gives direct links to available actions within the system: Authoring, Sharing, Copyright, Discovery, and Delivery. To learn more, see About xpLor.

Basic and Premium xpLor

xpLor provides two models: basic and premium.

The **basic** model requires acceptance of the xpLor license, but it does not require any additional charges. Users have access to a restricted subset of xpLor functions and are limited to Open Educational Resources (OER) sharing and discovery.

The **premium** model allows full access to all xpLor functions.

The following table illustrates the difference between the basic and premium models.

Feature	Basic	Premium
Content Creation	• Pages • Links • Assessments (limited) • Assignments (limited) • Discussions (limited)	• Pages • Links • Assessments (full) • Assignments (full) • Discussions (full) • Files • LTI Tools • Collections
Content Search, Discovery, and Delivery	Yes	Yes
LMS Gradebook Integration	Yes	Yes
Personal LOR	Yes	Yes
Institutional LOR	No	Yes
Upload Files and Images	No	Yes
Discussion Scope Management	No	Yes
Assignment Submissions	No	Yes
Channel Management	No	Yes
Institutional Administration	No	Yes
Copyright Management	No	Yes

*To visually determine which license xpLor is operating under, look at the application itself. For example, on the **Create** page, basic users have certain sections disabled. A rollover pop-up will alert you that the feature is not available in the basic version.*

Important Notes

- xpLor is much more than a content repository. It has tools similar to those in the LMS that offer options to content creators and consumers that were not available before. While xpLor is tightly integrated with the LMS, choosing to use a tool in xpLor could mean less integration with other features in the host environment (LMS). On the other hand, xpLor content is shareable and reusable across courses, the institution, or the world in ways that native LMS content is not. The best option will depend on both individual and institutional goals. Therefore, **we encourage clients to pilot xpLor thoughtfully and to engage with Blackboard to learn how to best leverage this transformational technology. We advise clients to have a communication plan in place before**

enabling the integration. Blackboard has comprehensive consulting and training services to help clients, as well as many online resources clients can access as they explore the possibilities.

- xpLor communicates synchronously with the LMS using an open standard called Learning Tools Interoperability (LTI). xpLor is currently operating on LTI v1.1 framework, but is also accessible using LTI 1.0 without grade pass back. To learn more, see Learning Tools Interoperability (LTI). This Troubleshooting xpLor help page should be reviewed to ensure availability of xpLor is properly configured.

- xpLor resources are loaded within an iframe in the LMS.

- xpLor can pass back grade information to the LMS for interactive resources, eliminating the need for duplication or transfer of grades between systems.

- In addition to the information passed using LTI, xpLor has developed deeper integrations with the various LMS systems to make the interaction between systems more robust. These integrations include passing information about:

  ◦ The structure of courses.

  ◦ Resource titles.

  ◦ Resources present within a course.

- xpLor only supports the import of resource and questions types that are outlined in the Common Cartridge specification. To learn more, see Common Cartridge.

- It is important to note that Common Cartridge is not a perfect standard. Different systems export into Common Cartridge format in different manifestations.

- You can export content from xpLor in "light" Common Cartridge format. This means that users can export LTI (or External Tool) links to content stored within xpLor. Users cannot directly export the content out of the system.

- There are two main types of Digital Rights Managment (DRM) within xpLor: Creative Commons licenses and custom institutional or organizational licenses. To learn more, see About xpLor and Copyright.

Known Issues

The localization of xpLor for languages other than US English has not been finalized. We are working to identify areas of improvement and fix issues in the coming releases. Identified known issues will be added to the Known Issues list, and we welcome your feedback on issues that you may encounter. Please submit a ticket to your Client Support representative.

You can view and track known issues on Behind the Blackboard.