

MoOdalis

The Learning Management Framework

Twelve challenges users of Moodle are facing and how they can be solved with the MoOdalis e-learning framework

Who should read this document?

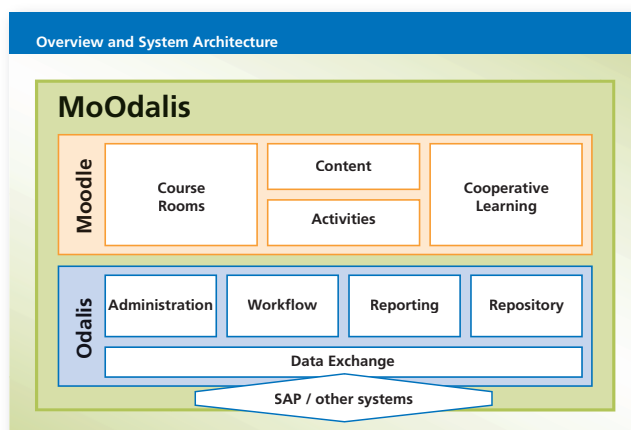
You might be interested in taking a closer look at MoOdalis if one or more of the following statements apply to your organization or company:

- You are already using Moodle to implement your organization’s e-learning strategy.
- You like the open source software philosophy and are generally satisfied with Moodle.
- You administer users, organize course programs and create course rooms on a large scale.
- You are facing certain challenges in the implementation of your e-learning strategy that cannot be solved to your complete satisfaction using Moodle.

Based on conversations with our clients, we have compiled the following representative sample of questions that illustrate some of the challenges faced by Moodle users. These are presented in the form of

- Question or problem
- Short summary of possible solutions to the problem

MoOdalis architecture: Moodle covers the actual learning activities and the communication within the course room. MoOdalis, on the other hand, simplifies processes and tasks, delivers supplementary services for the course room and makes data exchange with external systems possible.



What is MoOdalis?

Moodle + Odalis = MoOdalis.

MoOdalis is based on the integration of Moodle and the Odalis Information Management Framework. Moodle covers the actual learning activities and the communication within the course room. Odalis simplifies processes and tasks and delivers supplementary services for the course room.

The following points explain how the two systems work together.

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1. Administration of resources across course rooms

Question: I would like to deliver videos and SCORM packages for several course rooms. Do I have to copy these into every single course data folder?

For example, when you upload an MS Office or PDF file, it will be indexed, meaning that MoOdalis 'reads' the document and extracts keywords and other metadata (e.g. date of creation). This makes it easier to find document content using the integrated full text search.

Answer: No, you don't. In addition to the course room data folders, MoOdalis provides independent repositories – digital libraries in which you can store different file types and media. You can administer these resources centrally and link them to multiple course rooms without having to create copies.

In addition, the search function can be used to search the entire Moodle system, providing an efficient tool for finding learning content, forum articles and courses.

The repository also manages different versions of a file. When a more recent version of a file replaces an older one, the previous version is automatically archived and remains accessible at all times.

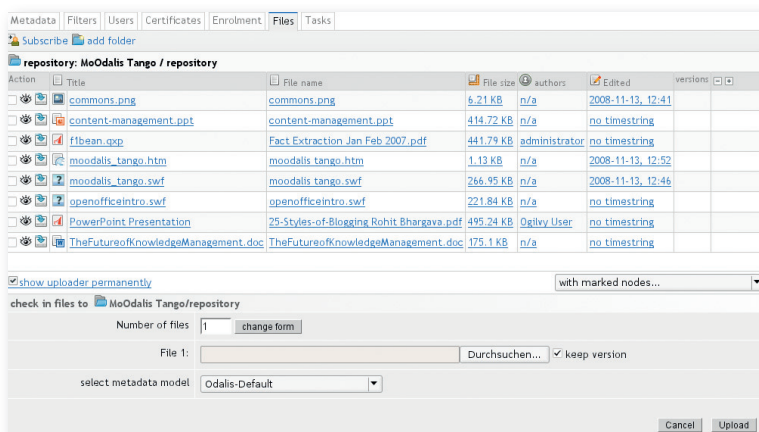


2. Start pages, content that is relevant for all course rooms and content management features

Question: I would like to set up pages that are independent of course rooms, e.g. a start and/or login page for internal employees and one for external employees. And how can I provide additional content that is not specific to a course room, such as help pages or a discussion forum?

Answer: MoOdalis provides a complete content management module that can be used to create start and login pages with a course catalog for different user groups, for example.

In addition to your course rooms, you can construct an entire website that links into the Moodle system from any page. Such a website can also contain interactive modules like a forum, a knowledge database or a webshop.



Multi-course repository for a server node. This might be a remote Moodle server, a country, a company's location or a department.



3. Centralized administration of online and on site training courses

Question: I am in charge of coordinating our whole training program for several locations. How can I keep track of the courses and users? How can I offer a course catalog that displays the course rooms separately according to user group and department? For example, our sales department does not need to view the courses we would like to offer to our production staff. For external partners we would like to offer a completely different selection of courses.

or accounting data and name specific user groups who can access a certain course in the course catalog. Further data fields can be created according to your needs.

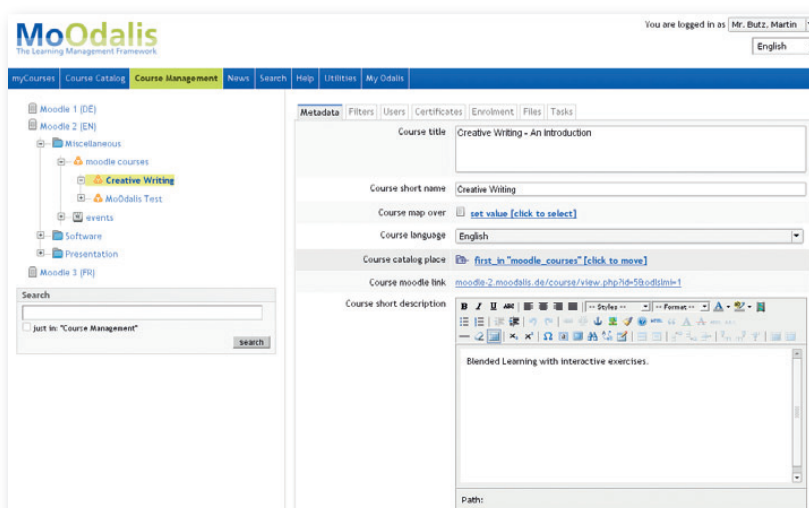
All categories and courses are displayed using a tree structure that is easy to navigate. This can also be used to structure locations in different countries or different departments of an organization (see also points 11 and 12).

Furthermore you can use the LPM to coordinate course creation by managing to-do lists for tutors and content providers. It allows you to track the status of various tasks and provides updates so you know when courses are ready for publication.

Answer: MoOdalis has a learning project management module (LPM). Here you can create and manage new categories, online course rooms and on site training courses. You start by creating a new data sheet on which all necessary course data can be recorded. The options expand Moodle's course management features; for example, you can save comprehensive course room information

A new record within the LPM database can for example be a new online course; the corresponding course room will automatically be created in the related Moodle installation. You can also use LPM to create and manage classroom training, workshops, lectures and educational trips and display them in the course catalog.

There is also a function that allows you to schedule dates and times and book rooms and technical equipment (e.g. projectors).



Screenshot from the learning project management. Here course rooms and classroom training courses are being created and managed.



4. Controlling of e-learning programs and reporting

Question: I need an overview of all courses that are currently offered, the number of registered participants and the participants' results for specific periods and departments. How can I analyze and plan our e-learning activities in the long-term?

Answer: MoOdalis provides tools for the short, medium and long-term analysis of all courses and e-learning activities. The reporting engine is integrated within the learning project management and can access the data in Moodle's gradebook module (course results).

All information about participants' results will be aggregated and can be used to answer the following questions:

- Who has completed which courses, when and with what result?
- Which mandatory training courses will members of my staff have to attend within the next 6 months?
- Which tutors have an especially high number of participants successfully complete their courses?
- How much did our company pay for mandatory continuing professional education in the last year?

Reports will be configured according to the needs of the individual departments and then made available to all authorized users. They can be called up at the touch of a key – no special technical knowledge is necessary. The export and exchange of reports with other systems is also possible (see point 8).



5. Approvals

Question: In most cases our employees have to get approval from their superior before they can register for a training course. Right now we do this by email. Can we optimize and automate such processes?

Answer: MoOdalis has a function to support the approvals process.

Depending on the configuration, once a day the superior receives a list of employees who have requested approval for registration. They can approve or reject the employee's request. Comments can be included with the rejections for later review by the employee council.

If you like we can enable your managers to review and approve registrations using Blackberry when they are out of the office.



6. Curricula and learning paths

Question: Within our educational program we not only have single training courses, but also preconfigured learning paths (curricula). A specific course can be part of several course combinations. How can we implement such interdependent learning sequences?

Answer: MoOdalis allows you to implement learning paths flexibly. For example, you can group several courses into a training sequence that supports the educational value. Any Moodle course room or classroom training can be part of such a group, regardless of the category to which the individual course has been assigned. Participants who have successfully completed a beginner's course can automatically be enrolled in advanced training if desired. Alternatively, they can receive a notification informing them of the next step of the curriculum. In this way mandatory training sequences can be implemented or recommendations for follow-up training given.



7. Course templates

Question: Every term we repeat the same courses and training series with slightly changed and updated content. Can we create course templates to make our work easier?

Answer: Yes, you can create a new course or classroom training based on an already existing

one. All course metadata (title, description, enrollment start and end dates, accounting information) are carried over and can then simply be updated.

Within one of the next MoOdalis releases we will extend this template function to Moodle contents, providing a library of learning resources and activities from already existing Moodle course rooms.



8. Waiting list

Question: We offer training courses with a restricted number of participants (online and on site). When there are cancellations during the enrollment period, how can we fill the vacancies?

Answer: MoOdalis maintains a waiting list of all enrollments; participants are listed in the order they enroll. If a participant cancels their registration, the next participant on the list will automatically be enrolled.

The waiting list also integrates approval workflows, i.e. participants not only wait for vacancies but also the approval of their superiors.



9. Data export and exchange with external systems

Question: How can the human resource department access course and user data from Moodle?

Answer: MoOdalis is able to forward all data (about users, courses and accounting information) to external systems. This can be managed by means of web services and standardized data exchange formats. Please ask us for specific scenarios.



10. Certificates

Question: After having successfully completed a course, the participants receive a personalized certificate. Can we automate this process?

Answer: Yes, the certificate module of MoOdalis allows the creation of personalized certificates

based on templates. You can link any course or classroom training to any certificate. User data is filled into the chosen template, which is then available in PDF and other formats.

The certificate can be sent to the participant as a PDF email attachment after course completion. Alternatively you can print certificates to hand out personally. It is also possible to activate an archive function that interfaces with external systems.

11. Target groups and personalization

Question: We would like to present our course catalog according to predefined target groups, e.g. internal and external participants. In addition, there are learning paths for special user groups.

Based on the user group, the participants should be enrolled automatically so they attend each mandatory unit in the required order. Finally, we would like to inform visitors to our learning portal about new offers based on their educational profile. How can we do this?

Answer: MoOdalis offers several ways to present selections from the course program based on a range of criteria, e.g. target group, previously attended courses, interests, educational experience or job descriptions. You can also set up automatic enrollment of users who fulfill certain criteria, e.g. have completed an introductory training course. Furthermore, users can be automatically reenrolled in courses they have failed or in specific mandatory training courses that must be repeated after a certain period of time.

12. Multitenancy and multiple languages

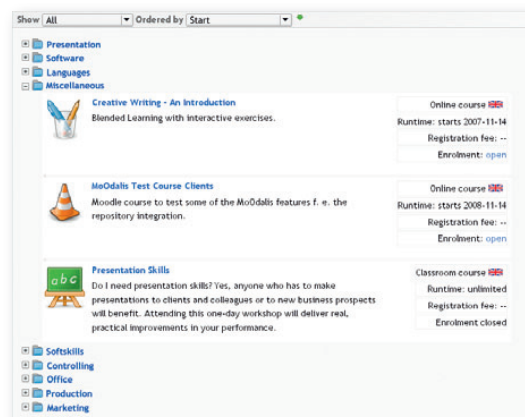
Question: Our company has numerous locations in different countries. Besides a multi-language portal we need to present a customized course program for each country. However, we offer training courses that should be accessible from all locations irrespective of the country. Can we do that with MoOdalis?

Answer: Just as it is possible to categorize by target group and personal data (see the previous point), the course catalog can present a customized selection for each company unit. Usually this concept of data separation is called multitenancy or multi-client capability. A client can be a country, a location, a department or a combination of these. This can reflect a variety of organizational structures.

Clients can be very strictly separated from each other (due to competing interests) or share certain data such as parts of the course catalog. For example, you can offer courses in English for all clients; according to your needs and resources you can translate these into the local language. When configured accordingly, the course catalog will only list the course once, either the English or – if available – the localized version (mapping).

Reports also can be generated and accessed independently of each other within a multi-client structure. By this means you can implement either a centralized or decentralized administration and controlling concept which takes into account the autonomy of each local unit and any data separation requirements.

**Excerpt from the course catalog;
the catalog layout can be modified
according to your organization's needs.**



Technical Information

- Based on open standards: PHP, MySQL, Apache (or other webserver software), XML
- Performance optimized data structure for MySQL, fast search engine
- Seamless integration into existing IT landscape
- Available for Linux and Posix compatible systems, please contact us for support of Windows servers

Contact

sym.net
Martin Butz

Email: butz@sym.net
Phone: 0049 (0)221 37 62 591
Internet: www.sym.net
www.moodalis.de

eLeDia (German Moodle Partner)
Ralf Hilgenstock

ralf.hilgenstock@eledia.de
0049 (0)228 97 746-0
www.eledia.de

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Illustrations partly based on
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