

MEDIA REVIEWS

LMS Breakdown

Reviewed by Harris Grossman for *Training Media Review*

A few of the easy-to-understand features of a learning management system are automated course registration, reminders, and recordkeeping. Now, consider the many organizations in which people perform those tasks manually, at the cost of many hours and dollars. You probably see where this is going. But aren't LMSs expensive? you ask. Not necessarily.

You don't have to buy an entire LMS to enjoy some of the benefits. In fact, you don't have to buy anything—just rent it from an application service provider. (An ASP provides a software application over the Internet. You, the client, need only a Web browser.)

Online Registration Center 3.0 from BizNet Internet Services provides a turnkey ASP registration service that's easy to use, has many features, and appears to provide good customer support. The service is appropriate to register employees, as well as customers, for classes, meetings, and other events.

Users access the system via a link on their organization's Website. The corresponding Webpage lists events and allows online registration. Online Registration Center provides all needed functionality, including coding for the links on your site.

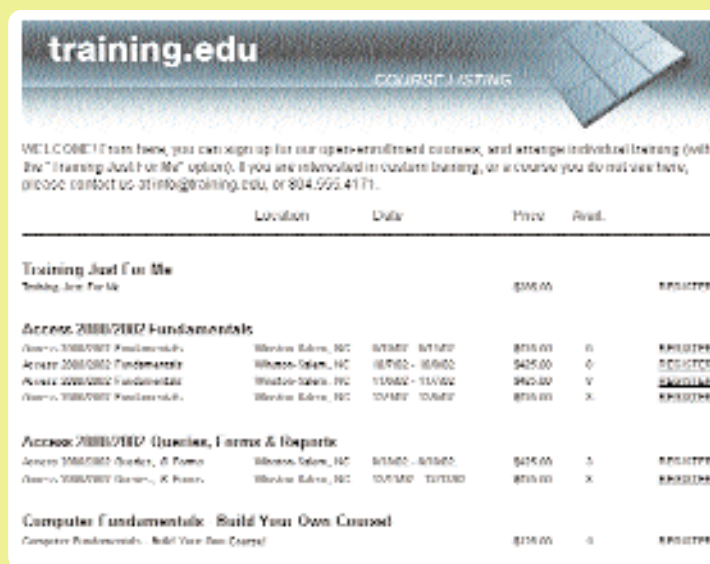
To give you an idea of what the system can do, I'll discuss some basic functions. You create courses or events by manually entering or cutting and pasting information into the system's data-entry interface. Unfortunately, you can't transfer data in electronic form directly into the system. Once you've created your events, however, you can duplicate them quickly for different dates, times, and locations.

The first step is developing a module profile, a template that contains fields for the terms of use and cancellation policies and procedures. It also determines the layout and appearance of your registration screens. By clicking simple check boxes,

registrants can set the required fields to enter such information as last name and email address. You set the use of credit cards or other payment options the same way.

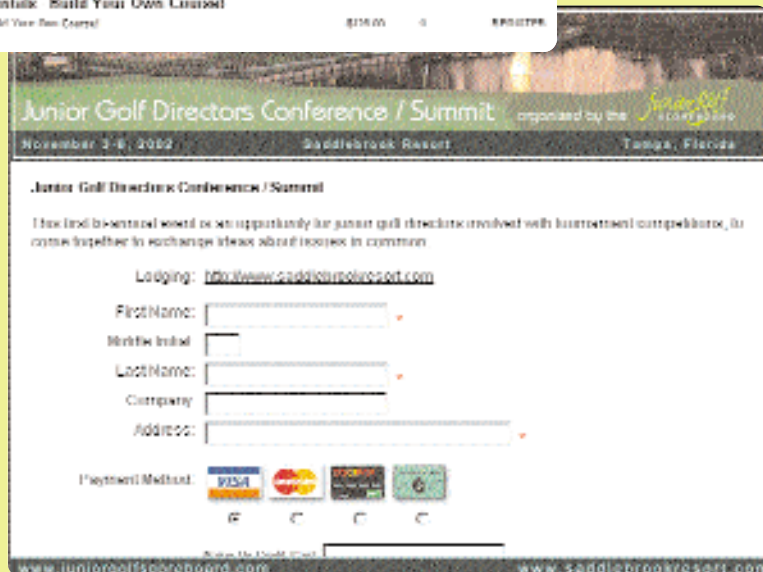
Designers determine the look and feel of the screens through the choice of colors, fonts, imagery, layout, and so forth. The screens have predefined, required fields, but HTML and simple graphics can be embedded to add visual appeal. The system generates automatic customer correspondence, reporting, and email reminders. You can modify the screens for future events or reuse as is.

Next, you create a record that contains event-specific



The screenshot shows the training.edu website with a "COURSE LISTING" header. Below the header is a table of courses. The table has columns for Location, Date, Price, and Avail. The courses listed are:

	Location	Date	Price	Avail.	
Training Just For Me Training Just For Me			\$50.00	REGISTER	
Access 2000/2002 Fundamentals					
Access 2000/2002 Fundamentals	Winston Salem, NC	07/07 - 07/07	\$75.00	0	REGISTER
Access 2000/2002 Fundamentals	Winston Salem, NC	08/02 - 08/02	\$45.00	0	REGISTER
Access 2000/2002 Fundamentals	Winston Salem, NC	11/02 - 11/02	\$45.00	0	REGISTER
Access 2000/2002 Fundamentals	Winston Salem, NC	10/07 - 10/07	\$75.00	X	REGISTER
Access 2000/2002 Queries, Forms & Reports					
Access 2000/2002 Queries, & Forms	Winston Salem, NC	01/02 - 01/02	\$45.00	0	REGISTER
Access 2000/2002 Queries, & Forms	Winston Salem, NC	10/10 - 10/10	\$75.00	X	REGISTER
Computer Fundamentals: Build Your Own Course Computer Fundamentals: Build Your Own Course			\$75.00	0	REGISTER



The screenshot shows the registration form for the Junior Golf Directors Conference / Summit. The event is organized by the Junior Golf Association and is held at Saddlebrook Resort in Tampa, Florida, from November 3-6, 2002. The form includes a login field for the website (http://www.saddlebrookresort.com) and a registration form with the following fields:

- FirstName:
- Write Initial:
- LastName:
- Company:
- Address:

Payment Method: VISA MasterCard Discover American Express

www.juniorgolfdirectorsboard.com www.saddlebrookresort.com

information: event name, summary description, internal identification number, waiting lists, and the like—even lodging information with Web links for separate accommodation registration.

Upon successful registration, a participant receives a confirmation by email automatically; the designated administrator receives a copy. You can specify up to four rounds of scheduled email reminders to participants. Again, you perform much of this work by checking appropriate fields.

Online Registration Center has the tools, including templates, for creating feedback questionnaires that can be filled out online. Requests for your customers to complete feedback or evaluation questionnaires are generated and emailed by the system automatically.

Version 3.0 offers several new features, including a calendar for registrants and the creation of name badges from the data stored in the system's live rosters.

The system also offers several different types of reports; you can filter the information as you choose.

Online Registration Center has export options for delimited data files for ODBC and spreadsheet imports, with a number of choices for establishing delimiters, data sets, and so forth. It's possible to export data on registration, customers, and courses and events. Maintenance tools permit users to purge data. Access to most maintenance sections can be controlled by security options.

The online help is excellent, providing screen shots and detailed information about how to do what you're trying to do.

Recommendation

An online registration system is justifiable because it can save money by freeing employees to do higher-value work.

Is this system worth the cost? You'll spend US\$6277 a year for an enterprise license. The sum doesn't include the time required to create and administer your events, and that cost will probably decide whether the system is for you. Full-time employees dedicated to administering this function run up your direct costs quickly. If you have repeating events, you'll realize economies because you won't have to re-create registration materials.

If the costs make sense and your target audience is comfortable performing tasks online, I highly recommend BizNet's Online Registration System. Any organization running courses, seminars, and any other types of events that require registration will be well served. The system is easy to use and provides the necessary flexibility and simplicity. The support is excellent, and the help features are very descriptive. BizNet constantly adds new features and, instead of ducking their customers, invites them to make suggestions—and, yes, BizNet even implements them.

Online Registration Center 3.0

N/A	Ease of installation
★★★★★	Presentation
★★★★★	Production quality
★★★★★	Ease of use
★★★★★	Value of purpose
★★★★★	Value of content
★★★★★	Value for the money
★★★★★	Documentation
★★★★★	Overall rating

Course Details

Online Registration Center 3.0, online, 2002, BizNet Internet Services: 804.755.4885, www.onlineregistrationcenter.com. Purchase: direct, license and setup US\$1980 or \$50 per month with \$2.20 per registration; enterprise, license, and setup \$5377 or \$75 per month, no registration fees.

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RATINGS KEY

★★★★★	Outstanding
★★★★1/2	Very good
★★★★	Good
★★★1/2	Above average
★★★	Average
★★1/2	Below average
★★	Poor