

WebCT Campus Edition and WebCT Vista are industry-leading e-learning systems, designed to help colleges and universities achieve their unique goals with online learning. While both platforms offer leading-edge teaching and learning tools, there are important differences between the two products that help to distinguish which is the best solution for your particular institution. The intent of this document is to assist you in understanding the key differences in design and functionality between WebCT Campus Edition and WebCT Vista.

## **CMS vs. AES**

WebCT Campus Edition is a global market-leading Course Management System (CMS). As a CMS, WebCT Campus Edition enables excellence in the campus-wide delivery and management of individual courses. The system's administration and integration capabilities make it is easy to deploy at all stages of campus e-learning adoption.

WebCT Vista - higher education's first and only Academic Enterprise System (AES) - is an entirely new, enterprise e-learning system. WebCT Vista builds upon course delivery, providing an enterprise-wide framework for institutions to fully leverage their content and learning assets, as well as significantly advanced capabilities for ultimate scalability and extensibility of the e-learning environment.

## **System Design and Structure**

WebCT Campus Edition is a Course Management System that is designed to manage access to content, tools, and information at the *individual course level*. For example, an instructor can provide access to a content module or to learning tools, such as Discussion or Chat, within an individual course. WebCT Campus Edition is designed to support a single institution deployment, with customization and branding either for individual courses or system-wide.

As the first of its kind Academic Enterprise System, WebCT Vista is designed based on a Flexible Learning Framework that offers institutions a wide range of flexibility in how they deploy and scale e-learning. The Flexible Learning Framework consists of multiple learning contexts that allow institutions to administer the system, as well as store and share content and learner performance data, at the Server, Domain, Institution, Group, Course, and Section levels for maximum efficiency. WebCT Vista enables institutions to centrally support multiple institutions, colleges, and departments in a cost-effective single installation, while preserving operational independence and individual branding.

## **Content Management and Delivery**

WebCT Campus Edition includes powerful options for content delivery within individual courses. Using drag-and-drop capabilities, uploading WebCT course content is as simple as moving files on a desktop. Different kinds of content can be delivered in integrated units that can include text, images, video, discussion topics, quizzes, and so forth. WebCT Campus Edition also gives instructors the flexibility to dynamically direct student movement through course materials based on pre-defined time or performance parameters. For example, an instructor can specify that students must achieve a passing grade on a quiz before advancing to the next content module.

In addition to all of WebCT Campus Edition's content delivery capabilities, WebCT Vista's content architecture gives institutions the unprecedented ability to store and share content *beyond course boundaries* in a centralized content repository, facilitating the effective and efficient use and reuse of content throughout the enterprise. Using the Flexible Learning Framework, content creators can store content at the Institution, Group, Course, and Section levels and share that content according to pre-defined rules or permissions. For example, a virtual frog dissection lab could be made available to all biology instructors. Similarly, an instructor can edit his or her course materials once, and automatically distribute that new content across all course sections.

### **Student Learning Data Management**

WebCT Campus Edition gives institutions the ability to track and collect student data that drives the continuous refinement and improvement of the online learning experience *at the course level*. Faculty can monitor and analyze factors in individual courses such as usage patterns, individual and class performance on tests and quizzes, and how students navigate through online materials.

WebCT Vista also gives instructors the ability to access, track, and analyze student performance data at the course level. The important difference is that WebCT Vista - unlike any other e-learning system - enables access to aggregate student learning data *at the enterprise level*. Having the ability to extract data about the learning process across courses allows organizations to have a better understanding of their e-learning programs and to leverage that data for strategic improvement. For example, institutions may extract cross-sectional student performance data that can be instrumental to program assessment, reviews, and broader institutional studies.

### **Product Architecture and Scalability**

WebCT Campus Edition is built on scalable, standards-based technology to deliver a highly reliable e-learning solution that enables easy, single server, campus-wide deployment. WebCT Campus Edition provides solutions for integration with all major commercial, as well as homegrown, student information systems and portals. WebCT Campus Edition is the first Course Management System to provide a uPortal Channel Utility, enabling integration with campus portals based on JA-SIG's uPortal open standard portal framework. For those campuses that have implemented LDAP or Kerberos-based authentication schemes, WebCT Campus Edition provides a ready-to-use solution for rapid integration.

WebCT Vista is designed for enterprise-scale e-learning deployments. The structure of WebCT Vista's state-of-the-art, multi-tier architecture -which leverages the BEA WebLogic Enterprise Server at the application layer and the Oracle 9i Database and Oracle Internet File System (IFS) at the database layer - enables flexibility, scalability, and extensibility to meet the needs of even the largest institutions and consortia. WebCT Vista builds upon Campus Edition's integration capabilities in two ways: 1) an SDK to extend WebCT functionality by integrating innovative new learning applications or services, and 2) greater flexibility in campus systems integration for different institutions, groups, and courses.

### **Meeting the Diverse Needs of Higher Education**

E-learning needs and priorities vary from institution to institution. WebCT believes that the best way to address these needs is with multiple products and licensing options, appropriate for institutions at all stages of e-learning adoption. We are committed to continually delivering leading-edge technology solutions that help all of our customers achieve their core mission and goals.

If you have questions about which e-learning system is the best match for your institution's environment and evolving needs, please contact WebCT at 1-877-WebCTme (1-877-932-2863) or 781-309-1000 (outside North America).