

# Blackboard provides its clients an open, extensible platform that fosters innovation and creativity.

Blackboard is committed to empowering its clients by providing an open, extensible learning management system. With an active development community, open APIs, forums and sample code Blackboard has provided Learn developers with the resources to take advantage of its open platform. Developers are also supported by Blackboard's dedicated, world-class technical staff. Here are some of the highlights.

## Building Blocks™

Through the use of Building Blocks™, Blackboard has provided a “plug-in” model for its Learn platform since 2001. Blackboard developers have developed hundreds of Building Blocks™ that have helped extend the Learn Platform.

Blackboard has a variety of technologies to support integration with the Learn platform. The popular Blackboard Building Blocks™ set of APIs makes it easy to develop plug-ins and extend functionality. APIs for authentication, SIS integration, and web services ensure that the platform will integrate with all of your other systems.

## Open Database

Blackboard Open Database empowers Blackboard clients with direct and documented access to their learning management system database. This enables clients to quickly access their data, trouble-shoot system problems more easily, create custom reports, and share analytical data with others.

## Open Standards

Blackboard recently added support for IMS Common Cartridge and Basic LTI standards to the Blackboard Learn platform. We continue to work closely with organizations including IMS Global and InCommon, supporters of federated Shibboleth authentication, to expand standards support in our software and lead in the establishment of other industry standards.

## Branding and Themes (CSS)

Through support for Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) and documented page structures, you can develop custom themes for Blackboard Learn so it will look and work how you prefer.

Blackboard is committed to openness. We show it by providing technologies to extend, enhance, and integrate the Blackboard Learn™ platform. Developers can leverage all of the technologies mentioned above to build or integrate tools, customize the environment, and access data through supported and documented interfaces.

