

# The CAPDM demonstration course 2023 – the story

The story behind the [CAPDM demonstration course 2023](#) actually starts many years ago, before learning environments like Moodle, Canvas, Blackboard or Brightspace even existed, when the bleeding edge of distance learning was the creation of a “companion website” to go alongside the printed course book.

The idea was simple: the way people consume learning is going to change as technology changes, so let’s not build courses in whatever the current delivery format is and be constrained by its capabilities; let’s build courses so that they can be used in **any** delivery format, and let’s make sure they embody the pedagogy and features **we** want.

And so *Courseworker*<sup>®</sup> by CAPDM was born, although we didn’t call it that back then. (We didn’t really call it anything, we were too busy building [the world’s largest distance learning MBA](#) and doing [lots of other interesting things](#).)

We started with learning objectives, making sure everything else revolved around them. We captured content semantically, building up smart, flexible materials for each subject. We built an extensible production system that could evolve to deliver into whatever was needed – including, by the way, the print

outputs. We added support for language translation, clean editing workflows and revision control. And we developed innovative ways of tracking student progress against learning objectives, adding a few other tricks along the way.

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The end result wasn’t just high-quality courses. It was courses that could be much more easily maintained. It was internal hyperlinking that worked seamlessly even when content was moved around or revised. It was questions that were

interactive online, and laid out cleanly with answers at the back offline. It was, above all, courses that focused on the learning, not the features of the current delivery platforms, and in so doing was able to take advantage of the features of every delivery platform, now and in the future.

But we hope that when you look at the [CAPDM demonstration course 2023](#) you won’t see the open standard XML in which it was captured, the learning objectives and other metadata that drives the functionality, or the Courseworker production environment that turned that content into web pages and PDF pages.

We hope you’ll just see a good-looking, highly-effective and very reproducible piece of learning. And you’ll see how you could produce the same for yourself.