

Platform Comparison

Here is a **Platform Comparison** between building your CAPS-aligned LMS **from scratch**, versus customizing existing platforms like **TutorLMS**, **LearnDash**, or **Moodle**. The goal is to determine which option gives you maximum control, AI integration, and future scalability while staying cost-effective.

LMS Platform Comparison: Build vs Customize

Feature / Platform	Build from Scratch	TutorLMS (WordPress)	LearnDash (WordPress)	Moodle (Open Source)
CAPS Curriculum Alignment	✅ Full control & structure	⚠️ Requires heavy customization	⚠️ Requires heavy customization	⚠️ Needs deep config and plugins
AI Integration (Tests, Reports, etc.)	✅ Seamless GPT/OpenAI integration	❌ Needs external APIs + coding	❌ Needs external APIs + coding	⚠️ Possible with advanced coding
Digital Library for eBooks	✅ Built-in, scalable	⚠️ Needs add-on plugin	⚠️ Needs 3rd-party plugin	⚠️ Not native; requires dev work
Live Classes + Video Upload	✅ Custom integrations (Zoom, Jitsi, etc.)	⚠️ Zoom/Jitsi via plugin	⚠️ Zoom via plugin	✅ Native + plugin support
E-Commerce for Content	✅ Full store functionality	✅ WooCommerce integration	✅ WooCommerce integration	⚠️ Requires custom module
User Roles & Permissions	✅ Fully flexible	⚠️ Limited by WordPress roles	⚠️ Limited by WordPress roles	✅ Advanced role control
Mobile App Ready	✅ Can build native app or PWA	⚠️ Web app only unless custom-built	⚠️ Web app only unless custom-built	✅ Moodle mobile app exists
Interface Design Freedom	✅ Total creative control	⚠️ Limited by theme structure	⚠️ Limited by theme structure	⚠️ Basic UX; needs UI overhaul
Scalability (100K+ Users)	✅ Full stack optimization	❌ WordPress hits limits fast	❌ WordPress hits limits fast	⚠️ Depends on server & config
Development Speed	❌ 5–6 months minimum	✅ 2–3 weeks to launch MVP	✅ 2–3 weeks to launch MVP	⚠️ 1–2 months setup time
Cost	💰 R297K–R500K total	💰 ±R5K/year + dev time	💰 ±R6K/year + dev time	💰 Free core, dev time intensive
Maintenance	⚠️ Needs full-time dev	✅ WP plugins do auto updates	✅ WP plugins do auto updates	⚠️ Ongoing tech support needed
Offline/Low Bandwidth Mode	✅ Can build native support	❌ Needs custom work	❌ Needs custom work	⚠️ Some support via plugins

Conclusion & Recommendation

Goal	Best Option
Speed to Market	TutorLMS or LearnDash MVP (3–4 weeks)
AI + CAPS Integration	Build from Scratch – only option for deep automation
Cost Efficiency (Short-term)	TutorLMS (cheap plugins + launch fast)
Long-Term Scalability & Power	Build from Scratch – better control & growth
Blended Approach	Launch MVP with TutorLMS → Build custom AI-powered version in parallel
