Online-course platforms take a cut of every enrolment, cap your branding options, and own the student relationship. A self-hosted learning-management system puts the course catalog, the payment flow, and the student data on your own domain—where every enrolment builds equity you keep.

## Why Your Courses Belong on Your Own Platform

Hosted course marketplaces solve discovery, but at a cost: they set the pricing rules, insert competing courses next to yours, and keep the student's email address behind their login wall. A self-hosted LMS reverses the arrangement. Your courses live on your domain, wrapped in your brand, indexed by search engines under your authority. Students log in to your site, not someone else's. Subscription revenue flows through your own payment gateway with no marketplace cut. And because the LMS runs inside your CMS, course pages share the same template, navigation, and content ecosystem as the rest of your website—blog posts, landing pages, and membership areas all reinforce one another.

The model works whether you run a solo coaching practice with five courses or a multi-instructor academy with hundreds. A commission system lets you recruit teachers who build courses on the front end while you collect a configurable percentage of every sale—turning your site into a platform, not just a publishing tool.

## How the Course Platform Works Day to Day

Courses are structured as a hierarchy: each course contains modules, and each module contains lessons. A drag-and-drop table-of-contents editor lets you reorder the entire structure visually. Lessons can include any combination of video, audio, text, downloadable files, and SCORM packages—all stored in a central media library so the same asset can be reused across courses. Gradual release (drip content) controls the pace: you decide whether students unlock lessons daily, weekly, or only after completing the previous one.

Three separate interfaces keep roles clean. The **admin panel** manages courses, teachers, students, payments, promo codes, and site-wide settings. The **teacher dashboard** lets instructors build entire courses from the front end—adding lessons, uploading media, reviewing quiz results, and tracking their own commission earnings. The **student interface** shows enrolled courses, progress bars, quiz scores, and earned certificates in one place.

## Feature Highlights

- Unlimited courses, modules, lessons, and media items
- Drag-and-drop table of contents for visual course structuring
- Media library supporting video, audio, documents, and SCORM packages
- Gradual lesson release (drip content) on a daily, weekly, or completion-based schedule
- Quizzes embedded within lessons plus standalone final exams
- Certificates with 16 templates, awarded on course completion or exam pass
- Subscription plans by hours, days, months, years, or unlimited access
- Promo codes with per-course targeting


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- Payment gateways including card processors and digital wallets
- Commission system with per-teacher rates, discount-aware calculations, and batch payout
- Front-end teacher interface for course creation, media management, and earnings reports
- Student manager with progress tracking, quiz scores, and enrolment history
- Jump buttons linking related lessons across different courses
- Forum and comment integration, automated email reminders, and responsive mobile-ready design

## Monetisation: Subscriptions, Commissions, and Promo Codes

Each course can carry multiple subscription plans—a monthly option, an annual option, and a lifetime-access tier, each with its own price and renewal rate. Automated email reminders notify students before a plan expires and again after it lapses, recovering revenue that SaaS platforms handle with opaque retry logic you cannot customize. Promo codes can target individual courses, letting you discount a launch without cutting margins across the entire catalog.

The commission system is what turns a single-instructor site into a multi-teacher academy. You create commission plans—percentage-based, flat-fee, or a hybrid—and assign them per teacher. When a student enrols through a discounted promo code, the system calculates the teacher's share on the net amount actually paid. Teachers track their own earnings, pending withdrawals, and payment history from the front-end dashboard, and a batch-payment function lets you settle all balances at once. Changing a teacher's commission rate applies only to future sales, so historical earnings stay accurate without manual adjustments.

## Who Uses This and How

**Solo instructors and coaches** package expertise into structured courses with quizzes and certificates, sell subscription access through their own website, and keep 100% of the revenue minus the gateway fee—no marketplace commission, no competing instructors on the same page.

**Training companies and academies** recruit multiple instructors, assign commission tiers, and offer a branded catalog. Drip content keeps students engaged over weeks rather than consuming everything on day one, and certificate templates carry the academy's logo rather than a platform watermark.

**Corporations and associations** run internal compliance training, onboarding programs, or continuing-education courses behind a login wall. The student manager tracks who has completed what, quiz results prove comprehension, and SCORM compatibility means content created in standard authoring tools imports without conversion.

**Membership sites** bundle courses into subscription tiers—a free sampler, a standard plan, and a premium all-access pass—using the built-in plan system. Blog content and community features on the same CMS drive organic traffic that feeds the enrolment funnel.


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## The Trade-Off

Self-hosting a course platform means managing video storage or streaming, handling payment-gateway contracts, and keeping the LMS updated. There is no built-in marketplace audience—you drive your own traffic through SEO, email, and content marketing. The return is full ownership of the student relationship, zero platform commissions, and complete control over pricing, branding, and the learning experience from first click to certificate.

**Extension referenced in this article:**

**Guru Pro** by iJoomla / JoomlArt?•?guru.ijoomla.com

Award-winning LMS for the CMS. Unlimited courses, drag-and-drop table of contents, media library with SCORM support, quizzes, final exams, 16 certificate templates, subscription plans, drip content, front-end teacher interface, commission system with batch payout, promo codes, multiple payment gateways, and responsive design. Winner of “Best LMS” at CMS Expo.

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