



**It's about:**

Choosing authoring tools that enable multi-device delivery

**It's aimed at:**

In-house e-learning designers or developers - gets a little technical in places

**You might also like...**

Part 1 - [HTML5 Guide](#)

Full list of [authoring tools](#) and reviews

[Responsive e-learning design](#)

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## CHOOSING AUTHORING TOOLS FOR MULTI-DEVICE DELIVERY

By this time you probably have formulated a plan to deliver e-learning on mobile devices. Part one of this series focused on the theory and planning of delivering learning to mobile devices and part two is about the tools that can deliver on them. With Microsoft ending support for [Windows XP and Office 2003](#), now is an excellent time to revisit your old authoring tools, factor in an appropriate browser upgrade and adapt a new plan that allows you to deliver in the HTML world of tablets and smartphones.

### Things to Think About:

Does the authoring tool you are using support HTML5 output?

Do all the browsers you use support the features of HTML5 that you need?

Can your authoring tool publish to tablets and smartphones right now?

What's your budget?

What type of content will you be developing?

Does your e-learning need to be translated?

What's the tracking requirement?

Do you need SCORM 1.2 for your LMS?

Once you have your plan in place, you may find yourself deciding which authoring tool will fit your organization and the professional(s) creating and participating in the learning. With [Flash officially dead](#) on most mobile browsers, HTML5 and native apps are the new focuses for mobile platforms. More and more organizations are looking for tools they can publish to HTML5 so their training courses can be accessible on mobile devices.

Rather than being tethered to their desk, an employee can start, catch up, or finish their e-learning away from the office, letting them do real work when sitting at their desktops. Additionally, with the increasing number of [Gen-Y](#) entering the workplace, training, development, and viewing through an HTML5 platform is necessary since this generation is used to obtaining information from the palm of their hands.

The authoring tool you choose can allow such this to happen and most can be customized - just make sure to understand which features will work and which ones will not on mobile devices. For a detailed list of features supported on mobile devices [click here](#).

We created this short guide to share our insights and make it easier to choose an authoring tool that will run on multiple devices.

This guide will cover the different types of authoring tools, feature mini reviews of each authoring tool and an HTML5 authoring tool browser/OS compatibility matrix.

## WHAT IS AN AUTHORING TOOL?

To understand which authoring tool is best for your business it is essential to understand what an authoring tool actually is. Authoring tools enable trainers to integrate an array of media to create professional, engaging and interactive training content through software that allows users to create their own courseware, web page, or multimedia applications and the associated navigating tools. On top of that, there are different types of e-learning authoring tools you should be aware of.

### Keep in mind:

Any authoring tool and any output are only a good fit if they serve your design, which serves the learning/business need.

Flawless publishing to HTML5 doesn't do you any good if the tool isn't capable of creating – and publishing – the interactivity you've designed.

- **PowerPoint Plugin Authoring Tools:** They use PowerPoint as your authoring tool, but allow you to add interactivity and assessments, as well as publish your content packaged ready to track in a learning management system (LMS - more on those in the next series).
- **Desktop Authoring Tools:** More complex than PPT tools, these are installed on your desktop and give you more control over the style and interactions.
- **Server-Based Authoring Tools:** Hosted on a server and typically accessed via a web browser, they are predominantly good for large and dispersed teams; they are good at workflow processes and allow subject matter experts to review and comment on e-learning modules as they are developed.

To get the full experience of e-learning on a smartphone or tablet you need to develop HTML5 e-learning courses, especially if you don't want to use a native app. Native apps are significantly more expensive and time-consuming, since they are developed platform-by-platform. Keep in mind, iOS, Blackberry and Android OS 4.4 and later do not support Flash either. However, [here's a list](#) of older Android devices that use Flash. You still may encounter [problems](#) with these older Android devices and find certain ones do not support Flash on particular mobile browsers.

It is safe to say that mobile devices are moving far away from Flash. According to [Forbes](#), industry specialists forecast that by 2015, 80% of all mobile applications developed will be hybrid or mobile-web-oriented. This is evidence that having content available on mobile devices will be essential in the near future.

We've used authoring tools as part of our rapid e-learning approach from the beginning at Kineo. As you can see on our site, we've reviewed all of the key [authoring tools](#) and have shared our independent views through the years. We've built e-learning with pretty much all of them so we have a good sense of what works.

As the world shifts towards HTML5, it's time to take another look at the tools market to see how it's responding to this challenge. In part two of this series, we share a headline view of five tools that will output to HTML5 for mobile devices. We're happy to discuss them in more depth or feel free to join our LinkedIn discussion in our [eLearning Professionals](#) group to share your thoughts.

## KINEO AUTHORIZING TOOL REVIEWS:

We took it upon ourselves to give our input on each of the five authoring tools that were featured in our authoring tool browser compatibility matrix. Our developers independently looked at each product's strengths and weaknesses and also commented on what they believed to be the top features. We are very happy to provide more detailed overviews and demos of these tools if you want to explore them in more depth. In the meantime, here is what our developers in the U.S. had to say:

### 1. CLARO



#### Platform

- **Server based (OS independent)**

#### Strengths

- **HTML5 output (no Flash involved so your courses run without any issues on any mobile device)**
- **Works on iPad/iPhone iOS 3 and later as well as Android OS 2.0 and later**
- **Built-in templates for all popular devices to speed up content development**
- **Simply check a box to publish to HTML5 for mobile**
- **Friendly and informative staff**
- **Supports slide layers**

#### Weaknesses

- **Requires internet connection for development**
- **Has limited functions using Internet Explorer version 10 and below on mobile devices**
- **Small support network for tutorial and help**
- **Creation of software simulations**
- **Limited support for variables**

#### Top Features

Server-based tools seem to have their advantages and disadvantages. Using Claro gives developers peace of mind when it comes to what computer they are using, but can be worrisome depending on the speed and access of an internet connection. Because courses live on a server, it makes subject matter expert reviews a breeze and also allows multiple people to make edits to a course without having to transfer files. Claro includes a lot of assets including illustrated and photogenic characters and it supports slide layers and the creation of advanced interactions. Claro is fully HTML5 compliant, but the newer the version of your [browser](#) the better. It is a full tool that requires little time to get used to and it's not incredibly difficult to learn.

## 2. LECTORA



### Platform

- **Desktop (Windows only) & OS independent server based version**

### Strengths

- **Supports Actions and Variables**
- **Supports Tin Can along with SCORM**
- **Separate HTML5 output option (content resizes nicely on iPad, iPad mini & Android tablets in landscape mode)**
- **Works on any mobile browser that comes with the device: iPad/iPhone iOS 6 and later, Android OS 2.2 and later**
- **Text output to easy translation**
- **Social Media integration**
- **508 Compliance**
- **Excellent branching allows any structure or scenario dreamt up by designers to be implemented**
- **Simple HTML and JavaScript injection**
- **Active forum and support from Trivantis by e-mail**

### Weaknesses

- **Learning Curve**
- **The actions and variables are not as easy to understand and apply as other tools**
- **User interface**
- **Layering of objects on page is clunky**
- **Animation options limited**
- **Images with dissolve transition cannot be .png (gif or jpg seem to work) in IE8**

### Top Features

Lectora is a full-featured development tool that includes customizable screen and object templates as well as character packs that add flexibility with actions and variables. The integration of social media allows learners to share snippets of content on popular social media websites. If LMS is not available, output learner results to a Google Drive spreadsheet.

## 3. ARTICULATE STORYLINE

articulate®

### Platform

- **Desktop based (Windows only)**

### Strengths

- **Supports actions and variables**
- **HTML5 output option (only works with the Articulate app for the iPad iOS 5 and later)**
- **Text output for easy translation**
- **Timeline on the interface**
- **Intuitive branching (Storyline was designed for branching)**
- **Great support from the Articulate team and community**

### Weaknesses

- **Timeline functionality regarding animation is clunky**
- **iPad iOS 5 + requires a native app from iTunes with limited functionality & specific requirements**
- **Text formatting, bullets, ordered lists, kerning, etc can be frustrating**
- **LMS tracking options limited to number of screens overall or score can be limiting**
- **No global trigger support, page level only**
- **Limited HTML5 functions with Internet Explorer version 9 and below**
- **You still need to develop for HTML/iPad use**
- **There is no export feature. Each slide and interaction would need to be translated by re-entering or copying and pasting the text from a translation document**

### Top Features

Articulate Storyline has the ability to create custom quizzes, variables and interactions. It also supports software simulations (although limited), button states and multiple layers on one slide. On top of that it includes illustrated and photogenic character packs and interaction templates. It also features a timeline and it also supports basic animations.

## 4. CAPTIVATE 6



### Platform

- **Desktop based (Windows & Mac)**

### Strengths

- **Full featured**
- **Can change layout for courses depending on which device you are publishing for**
- **Supports variables**
- **Great for simulations**
- **Timeline on the interface**
- **HTML5 output to iPad/iPhone OS version 5 and later through web browsers only**
- **Active forums and several blogs**

### Weaknesses

- **Learning curve**
- **Object reflection is not displayed appropriately when HTML5 output is viewed on Google Chrome**
- **Doesn't always give users feedback on the iPad/iPhone in HTML5**
- **Currently does not work on Android devices**
- **Most mouse-click animations aren't supported in HTML5**
- **Cost (higher than others)**

### Top Features

Captivate is a full-featured powerful tool, with that comes a slight learning curve. It outputs to HTML5 but supported functionality right now is limited. It features an HTML5 tracker that highlights activities that are not supported on tablets. You can choose to either replace the activity with something your tablet supports or else you will need to drop it.



## 5. MLEARNING STUDIO



### Platform

- **Server based (OS independent)**

### Strengths

- **Collaborative since its server based: project manager, art direction & quality assurance all take place online**
- **Users can complete work from anywhere**
- **Published courses lift the load of detecting devices**
- **Mobile output to iOS 4 and later, Android 2.2 and later, and Blackberry touchscreen devices**
- **HTML5 outputs to any browser that comes with the mobile device**
- **Great quiz results page**
- **Built in interactivity**
- **Reviewers can add notes to each page online**
- **Able to take other Flash-based authoring tools and repackage them**

### Weaknesses

- **Out of date look and limited template choices**
- **Price of the monthly licensing plan can be expensive**
- **Flash development skills are needed for custom art direction through their software development kit**
- **Project assets/media are stored online in a media library**
- **Every online sample has poorly compressed images/videos**
- **Swipe feature on mobile device is known to be inconsistent**

### Top Features

There are project manager, art direction and quality assurance tools. Ease of use, publishes to mobile, offers templates. It is customizable (with Flash development).

#### Top Tip:

**A great way for you to make a final determination is to download free trials for each program and experiment to find the best HTML5 authoring tool. We are here to help if you need us to walk you through any of the demos as well.**

# HTML AUTHORIZING TOOLS BROWSER COMPATIBILITY MATRIX:

## Browser and Operating Systems for HTML5 Output

	MLEARNING STUDIO	ARTICULATE STORYLINE	CAPTIVATE 6	CLARCO: DOMINKNOW	LECTORA
<b>Desktop Browsers</b>					
Internet Explorer	IE 6+ w/Flash 8 or later IE10+ for HTML5	IE 6+ w/Flash 10 or later IE10+ for HTML5	IE9 or later IE10+ for HTML5	IE 8 onward IE10+ for HTML5	IE 6 or later
Google Chrome	Any version w/Flash 8+ GC11+ for HTML5	Any version w/Flash 10 or later GC11+ for HTML5	GC 17 or later	Any version (the newer, the better) GC11+ for HTML5	Year old or newer GC11+ for HTML5
Mozilla Firefox	Any version w/Flash 8+ MF4+ for HTML5	Any version w/Flash 10 or later MF4+ for HTML5	Has issues	Any version (the newer, the better) MF4+ for HTML5	Firefox 1.0 and later MF4+ for HTML5
Safari	Any version w/Flash 8+ 5.0+ for HTML5	Any version w/Flash 10 or later 5.0+ for HTML5	Safari 5.1 or later 5.0+ for HTML5	Any version (the newer, the better) 5.0+ for HTML5	Safari 1.2 or later 5.0+ for HTML5
*Notes:	*Publishes to HTML5 for mobile	*Publishes to Flash and/or HTML5	*Publishes to HTML5	*HTML5 only	*HTML output
<b>Mobile Browsers</b>					
Google Chrome	Any browser that comes with it	GC 14+	GC 17 +	Version 4-x	Any browser that comes with it
Firefox	Any browser that comes with it	N/A	N/A	N/A	Any browser that comes with it
Safari	Any browser that comes with it	Safari 5.1 and later *See notes below in matrix	Safari 5.1 or later	IOS 3/4/5/6	Any browser that comes with it
Internet Explorer	Any browser that comes with it	N/A	IE 9 or later	N/A	Any browser that comes with it
Android Stock Browser	N/A	N/A	IE 9 or later	IOS Version 2/3/4	IOS 2.2/3/4
<b>Mobile Operating System</b>					
iOS (phone)	IOS 4.0 and later	Version 5.0 and later	IOS 5 and later	IOS 3 and later	IOS 6
iOS (tablet)	IOS 4.0 and later	Recommend HTML5 output if you want to track with SCORM! iPact: Apps from iTunes w/ limited functionality & specific requirements. Articulate Mobile Player	IOS 5 and later	IOS 3 and later	IOS 6
Android (phone)	OS 2.2 and later	N/A	N/A	OS 2 and later	OS 2.2 and later
Android (tablet)	OS 2.2 and later	N/A	N/A	OS 3 and later	OS 2.2 and later

\* For the storyline player, we recommend using the Safari browser instead, that way you can track people's progress through the course. If you don't want to track and you can host the course on a server that doesn't require password authentication then the Storyline player is great.

## HTML5 Mobile Authoring Tool Browser Compatibility

Internet Explorer	Google Chrome	Mozilla Firefox	Opera	Safari
Version 10 onward	Version 11 onward	Version 4 onward	No current or planned support	Version 5.0 onward

## YOUR NEXT STEPS

Have something to add to the conversation? Join our [LinkedIn discussion on HTML authoring tools](#).

Want to take e-learning forward in your organization?

**Get in touch** – we'd love to help you make multi-device learning happen for your organization:

- Email [enquiries@kineo.com](mailto:enquiries@kineo.com) or
- Visit the [contact pages on our website](#) to find details of your local Kineo office

You can also follow Kineo on the following social media platforms:



Or join the discussion in our [eLearning Professionals Group](#)