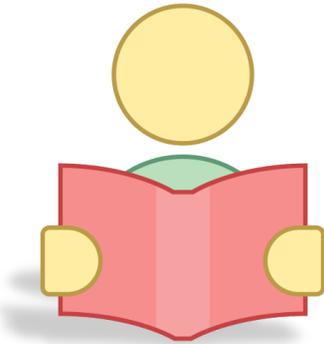# IT AND EDUCATION: THE COEVOLUTION

## How Institutions of Learning Are Keeping up With the IT Revolution in and out of the Classroom

VIZOR

Introduction

Education and Information Technology operate in conjunction as developmental tools used to shape the human experience. They are both instrumental to the evolution of knowledge; whether in the realm of information gathering, organization, or application. Most of these interactions with information occur heavily in educational institutions, where young people are exposed to several ideas and motivated to develop them.

Young people's familiarity with modern technology allows them access to a unique method of information absorption. By integrating technology in the realm of education, particularly within classrooms, students are able to gain access to dynamic and interesting methods of learning.

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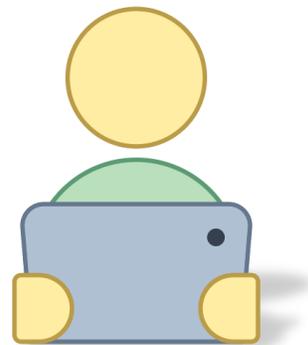
Expanding learning methods has the potential to create new teaching opportunities, and equip educators for the upcoming advancements in technology, while easing students into the rapidly developing technology sphere. Interactive activities can stimulate better understanding of subject matter, and centralizing resources in one space, such as on cloud storage, has the ability to mobilize learning, making it convenient for students. Additionally, the rapidly advancing technological landscape demands proficient digital reading skills, as accessing information through computers becomes critical to success in one's professional, personal and social spheres, as Brookings notes.
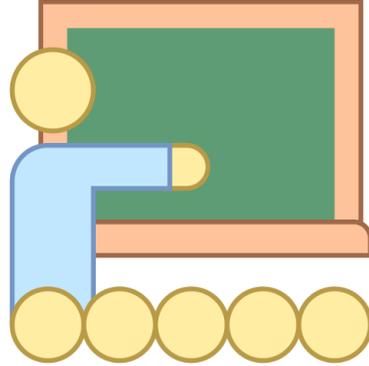
> "*The rapidly advancing technological landscape demands proficient digital reading skills, as accessing information through computers becomes critical to success in one's professional, personal and social spheres*"

EDUCATION PLUS DEVELOPMENT

Using data and technology to enhance classroom teaching

Dara Ramalingam

Coevolution: Adapting to the Evolving Landscape

The direction that IT and education are moving toward is the same if we consider them to be experiencing a coevolution that should enhance both as individual entities without hindering progress for either. Appropriately managing IT roles and services within the realm of education can serve to greatly enhance the experience of end users such as students and teachers.
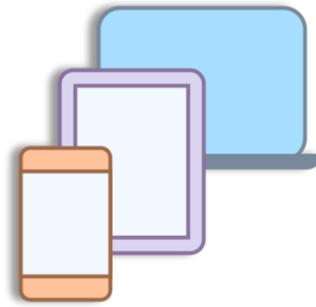
The implementation of tech-based teaching methods brings the matter of managing the purchase decisions and distribution of these tech-based learning aids. Staff may require personal laptops, or may need to loan out multiple laptops for students in a classroom. Educators may choose to use presentations as a form of teaching style, which would require either a classroom with a projector previously installed, or a projector loaned out from the audio-visual department.

Barriers

Some challenges within the education sector lie in the fluctuating numbers of students, transient staff and their movements between classrooms and buildings within the frame of academic years. The state of the assets would require regular monitoring to ensure they are properly accounted for at the end of the academic year. Collectively managing all of the assets in an educational institution can be a difficult task to carry out efficiently.

Understaffed and overwhelmed IT departments in schools tend to underwhelm the high expectations of educators looking to incorporate technology-aided learning in the classroom. Striking a balance between two equally important tools is the key to proper education management. Coordination between multiple departments within an educational organization may be necessary in order to properly manage asset deployment and circulation.

Using IT solutions to manage technology may provide a cohesive and streamlined solution that simplifies purchase, renewal, repair and maintenance decisions, allowing for cost saving. An IT solution that integrates and centralizes IT processes can provide greater automation and transparency in areas like project management, student services and classroom management. In this white paper, we take a look at ways a modern solution saves time and effort in schools. The question then lies in the features that would be best suited for educational institutions.
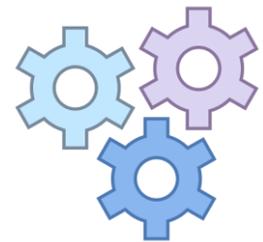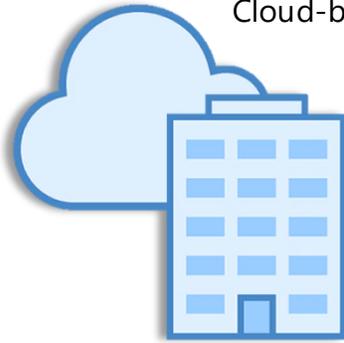
What should schools, universities and other places of learning look for in a comprehensive IT Management solution?

What should schools, universities and other places of learning look for in a comprehensive IT Management solution?

1. A CLOUD BASED SERVICE & SOLUTION

Cloud-based learning has been in use by educational institutions to improve communication and convenience for both students and educators. Resources can be accessed on web-based devices from virtually any location. In 2017, Google announced that its G Suite for Education, previously called Google Apps for Education, had 70 million users worldwide. This was an increase from 50 million users in October 2015, showing an increase of 20 million users in 2 years. Over half a million students in the UK also use Google Expeditions, a virtual reality teaching tool that allows users to explore regions all over the world with virtual trips. The potential to enrich the learning experience for students is virtually limitless as the technological landscape rapidly advances.

Implementing a modern cloud-based solution to handle IT processes in educational institutions allows for enhanced connectivity between departments on campus, and between the campus and its students. If the IT Asset Management system is installed on the cloud, there is largely reduced workload due to the infrastructure setup being taken care of by the solutions provider. Having asset information on a
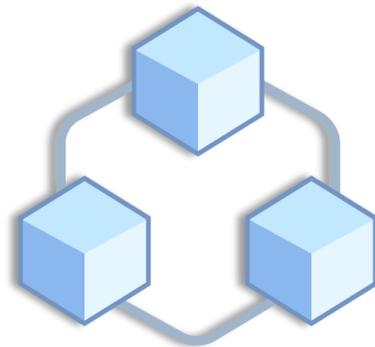
cloud-based solution also ensures that the IT Asset Manager will have convenient access to necessary details regarding the assets in cases of high priority situations. For instance, in the case of determining the location of a missing laptop or piece of expensive hardware loaned out to a student or staff member. Cloud-based solutions have increased in popularity due to the decreased maintenance and convenience of accessing information, low barrier to entry, reduced infrastructure requirements, and automatic updates.

2. MANAGE THE COMPLETE LOAN PROCESS

Whether an institution uses PC's or Chromebooks, managing the physical assets distributed to students can be a tedious and expensive process. One aspect of asset management to consider is the method of distribution; with barcode readers, checking-out of assets from storage to students and staff, and checking-in back to storage can be streamlined. This enhances the speed and accuracy of checking-in and checking-out processes while reducing the chances of human error. In addition, unique ID tags per asset make it easy to organize and monitor where assets are at any point in the academic year.

For instance, in the case of local high school, a staff member may require a piece of equipment, like a projector, for a 1 pm class. The process of procuring the projector or even finding out whether one is installed in the desired classroom can be efficiently carried out using a complete IT

management solution. The location of the asset (projector) can be determined, and if necessary, it may be checked-out.

Monitoring the circulation of assets can be simplified with an IT Asset Management solution. Network discovery tools or integrations with Chromebook G Suite, or Microsoft SCCM can populate such tools with devices in use on campus. With email integration, a complete IT Asset management solution can notify students and staff of unreturned assets and important asset lifecycle events such as warranty expiration.

3. SELF-SERVICE PORTAL

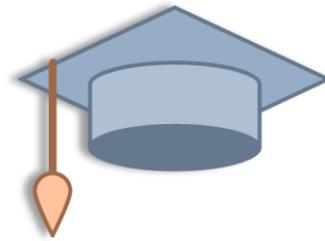Customers chose 'fast response time' as the most important attribute of the customer experience, according to Super Office. Additionally, studies found that 40% of customers prefer self-service when compared to talking to people. IT solutions that include a self-service portal allow staff and students to submit issues, such as reporting damages, and apply for replacement devices. Users are also able to check on the status of ongoing issues, and go through a Knowledge Base, eliminating the need for any additional support resources. Custom forms and approval processes help IT departments streamline the creation of custom provisioning processes. The self-service portal ensures that individuals have access to information regardless of the availability of additional support, allowing processes to be completed faster and

autonomously after the service staff has been trained to use a comprehensive solution that includes a self-service portal.

In conclusion

When education and IT function cooperatively, they enhance the experiences of learning and skill development. With an increasingly technology-aided future in the making, integrating technology-based learning aids will only help young minds keep up with the changing modern world. Ensuring that institutions and businesses can encourage the development of young minds while functioning efficiently, managing costs and purchase decisions may lead to moving toward comprehensive solutions that cover more needs than one simple software allows. While asset management may typically take place on spreadsheets or other basic inventory software, organizations may discover the benefits of a complete IT Asset Management solution far outweigh the time investment in switching to one.

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