

My School, My Tools: The Impact of Consumer Technology on Higher Education

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Abstracts

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Introduction

The proliferation of devices, online services, and applications gives consumers more access and options than ever before. Ovum believes that institutions must be vigilant about keeping up with consumer technology trends in order to meet student and staff requirements. In the long run, these trends should not lead to, rather than ignite, greater innovation in higher education.

Features and benefits

Offers insight into consumer behaviors and how these are driving the adoption and use of emerging technology.

Explains the implications of consumer technology trends on the higher education IT infrastructure.

Raises issues institutions should be aware of as technology blurs the lines between personal and academic life.

Highlights tools popular among consumers and how they can be integrated into the learning environment.

Highlights

Consumers are accessing maps on their phones, conducting comparison shopping, and reading books and magazines all on a handheld device that can connect to the internet virtually anywhere. Institutions must now consider the use of emerging technologies are likely to impact their own IT infrastructure. Given the rise of older, non-traditional students entering higher education, institutions will be doing themselves a disservice by neglecting the technology needs of this user base. Institutions must evaluate how and what students are using in order to provide the necessary IT support. In an effort to create a cost-effective and flexible IT infrastructure, and motivated in part by the increase in consumer preferences for online services, institutions are turning to SaaS solutions. Therefore, vendor role gains increased importance as institutions look to provide a well-integrated, secure environment.

Your key questions answered

Gain insight into the important consumer-centric trends impacting higher education's technology ecosystem.

Understand what factors influence consumer propensity to adopt technology and in turn, how institutions should provide tools and services.

Determine what devices, applications, and services will gain traction in the higher education market.

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Catalyst

Ovum view

Key messages

Shifts in consumer trends are driving changes in the institutional IT infrastructure

Why institutions need to look beyond Gen Y

Whatever changes may come, institutions must not forgo basic best practices

Consumer electronics are changing how knowledge is delivered

The vendor role gains increased importance as institutions look to provide a well-integrated secure environment

MARKET CONTEXT: THE DEMANDS OF THE DIGITAL CONSUMER IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Shifts in consumer trends are changing the institution-student relationship

Back-to-school spending may be declining but consumers will continue to use their own devices

Rapid evolution of consumer technology offerings puts pressure on higher education's ability to respond

Institutions need to look beyond Gen Y

Higher education's students are getting older and they too are demanding robust technology

Not only are older consumers interested in new technology, they also have more money to spend

Institutions need a strategy for adapting consumer technology preferences for higher education

Incorporating popular consumer devices is critical to attracting students and faculty

'Me-first' consumers are vocal and engaged, but they still need to be led

Proficiency with social media is key to long-term student success

Students may have grown up digital, but need training on usage in academic and professional settings

Social networking is at the heart of how students prefer to interact

Learning and teaching resources take lessons from social media

Alumni are connecting with each other and their institutions all the time

BUSINESS FOCUS: WHATEVER CHANGES MAY COME, INSTITUTIONS MUST

NOT FORGO BASIC BEST PRACTICES

IT trades its role as a solution provider to become more service and support-oriented
Adopting an inside-out perspective on IT development
If it doesn't pay, don't put it in play
Bring down the physical walls to break down the mental blocks
Designing spaces that promote collaboration
Social spaces in the virtual world must be treated responsibly

TECHNOLOGY FOCUS: MANAGE PROLIFERATIVE INNOVATION WITH AN EYE ON CONSUMER TECHNOLOGY TRENDS

Consumer electronics are changing how knowledge is delivered
Electronic textbooks will be the next game-changer in higher education
Institutions are still in the early days of rich “e-multimedia” devices
Network uptime is critical to supporting a technology-centric campus
The need for speed: institutions tackle breadth and depth of campus connectivity
As voice goes over the Internet, institutions feel greater strain on wireless networks
With the good comes the bad: greater security risks abound
IT must secure student data without locking down the IT infrastructure
Without concrete policies, regulating social media is a challenge
Reassured by consumer preferences for online services, institutions look toward SaaS
Institutions are embracing tools consumers are already using
Popular devices

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for institutions
Stay close to consumer trends as a source for innovative learning technologies
Avoid assumptions about student preferences based on outdated consumer stereotypes
Build a technology infrastructure that supports flexibility and responsiveness
Recommendations for vendors
Assist institutions in meeting the needs of a diverse technology landscape
Support institutions in the effort to provide anytime, anywhere learning solutions
Provide solutions that embrace the ease of use emblematic of consumer technologies

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Ovum Consulting
Disclaimer

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