Educational Institutions: Got Technology?

By Eric Sinrod,

A recent study makes plain that for educational institutions to stay competitive, they need to be equipped with the latest technology for the use of their students.

CDW Government, Inc. has released the results of its new report titled "The 21st-Century Campus: Are We There Yet?" The findings, based on survey responses from over 1,000 college students, faculty and IT staff members, are loud and clear - technology is mission critical.

Indeed, regardless of their majors, students across the board report that technology was a key factor in terms of their school selection and ultimately to their choice of professions. This is not surprising, given that independent research shows that employers increasingly perceive that technology skills are important and that colleges and universities need to nurture these skills in students.

Nevertheless, only a third of teachers report that technology is completely integrated at their schools. Moreover, most students are not given access to routine workplace technologies like Web and video conferencing and podcasts.

When considering 20 campus technology factors, such as classroom technology integration, laptop programs and remote network access, an index included within the report indicates that educational institutions within the United States are only halfway toward achieving the 21st-century technology campus.

As far as specific findings, the report shows that while an excess of 80% of faculty teach some of their courses in "smart classrooms," only 42% use technology during each class session.

The numero uno item on students' technology wish list is the ability to chat online with their teachers. But only 23% of campuses offer this feature.

The report indicates that the biggest technology barrier at schools is lack of technology knowledge among teachers. Well, it sounds like it is time to educate the educators in this realm.

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