LapCabby

New thinking in IT storage

7 steps to effectively manage devices in the digital classroom

The conversation surrounding the 'digital classroom' of the future is consistently evolving as technological advances perpetually occur – seemingly at a faster rate than ever before.

However, the way in which these technological developments are integrated into learning environments has wide-reaching consequences.

Here are some of our top tips for successful device integration to benefit everyone.

1. Planning, planning, planning

An integral part of any technology planning stage is the implementation of an Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).

An AUP is a set of defined 'expectations and goals' and as discussed by Graphite this is a key step in successful device management. Making your AUP as clear as possible should be an outright objective of the document, ensuring educators, students and their families understand acceptable device use.

2. The Importance of Implementation

The technology itself is only half of the debate: for it to be fully successful and for you to justify your budget spend, your chosen technologies need to make a positive and measurable impact on learning.

It isn't enough that people are now taking science lessons in virtual reality – this approach should have a concrete impact on retention, comprehension and the transfer of the knowledge into skills in employment.

Moreover, it is evident that not all education-focused technology will work for everyone, and some elements of the digital classroom will be subject to a longer adoption process than other. However, when technology is implemented carefully and strictly monitored, digitalization can greatly enhance the education system and student learning experience.

3. Deploy future proofed services to support IT facilities meeting user demands

Getting the right devices is just one step in the journey towards an engaging mobile learning environment. But it is when the devices are effectively integrated into the digital classrooms you will see real results.

Successful device integration is underpinned by and dependent upon multiple systems and processes including network security, connectivity and charging facilities. Introducing new devices or even software can present new challenges and issues. Some of which will introduce the need to review existing support systems and implement additional IT support or services. It is important to review services and support before, during and after any new device deployment – in essence perform continuous evaluation and ensure you can support new technologies, software, users and or other networks and infrastructure.

4. Look ahead and provide scope for change

A recent education sector survey conducted by LapCabby highlighted that 85% of respondents (of whom included educators and IT staff) stated they expect the student-to-device ratio to increase during the course of 2018/19. Ensure you future proof your mobile device initiative, whatever that may be, to allow and plan for inevitable growth and change.

For example you may be working with Laptops now but are considering Chromebooks and iPads to further support your digital curriculum. So, there would be little benefit in choosing the perfect charging cart for just a single device type if you are then to increase device numbers and type over the coming years. We hear all too often that the charging and storage solution is an afterthought to the devices, so think ahead, chose wisely and maximize your budget.

5. Get everyone on-board

Helping students, staff and parents and their involvement in deciphering the conditions and expectations of new technology and classroom digitalization, is essential. We stanchly believe that knowledge sharing is caring! Getting everyone's input will not only deliver a more cohesive and logical approach to education technology, but will ensure the application into the curriculum will be targeted and aligned with both teaching and learning objectives.

6. Embrace the latest education technology trends…

A recent talking point and included at the top of Gartner's Top 10 Strategic Technology Trends for 2018/19, is the 'device mesh'.

The device mesh refers to an expanding set of endpoints people use to access applications and information or interact with people or social communities and the government etc, this accessibility is found more and more in education. The device mesh includes (but is not limited to) mobile devices, wearables, consumer and home electronic devices. Or in a simpler term the mix of devices you are using on your network.

7. Ensure your Security policies support your new technology

If your students are using devices (their own, supplied by the school or a mix of both) to access the web, it is critical to ensure you have the adequate security measures in place, including appropriate and comprehensive filtering software.

While students, staff and users must sign an AUP, as per point 1, the establishment itself has an obligation and responsibility to deliver appropriate and more importantly legal, content to the user groups. While taking steps to mitigate any over-blocking of educational content.

It is imperative to guarantee your online security policies and solutions encompass your new devices, users, platforms, apps and software, with scope to accommodate changes to technology and any resultant threats and online risks.

Sources: www.graphite.org www.gartner.com