



# Modernizing Higher Education Workflows for Improved Experiences and Business Resiliency

Institutions need digital tools to support a hybrid workforce and improve hybrid learning and the student experience.

## Higher Education Must Accelerate Digital Transformation (DX)

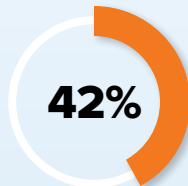
According to IDC's ongoing COVID-19 global surveys of educational institutions:



indicate that student engagement and remote work will be permanently changed due to COVID-19.



report accelerating their DX efforts, focusing on cloud, conferencing applications, software development, and connectivity.



have shifted or added new budget to address COVID-19 and other short-term business issues.

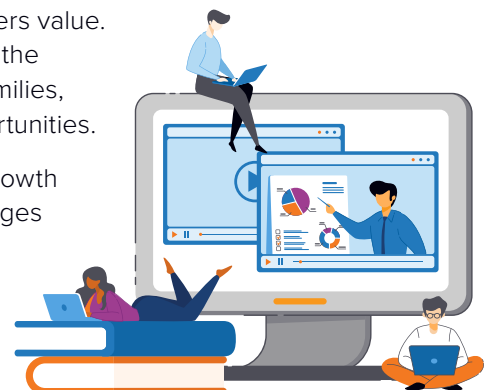


expect an increase in demand for videoconferencing and virtual workplaces.

## Higher Education Institutions Are Fighting for Survival

Market forces have shifted the expectations and needs of learners today. Digital-native students expect a personalized and connected learning experience that delivers value. They want their higher education experience to give them the skills needed in the workplace. Nontraditional students, who are also working and/or managing families, need flexible learning options to help them keep pace with employment opportunities.

With government funding in decline, the costs of education rising, and rapid growth in competitive online offerings, IDC predicts that over the next five years, colleges and universities without digital learning and online accreditation will see their annual student enrollment fall 5% due to online learning platforms. While colleges and universities already faced pressure to update services delivery, this trend accelerated as COVID-19 forced a shift to remote and contactless operations and hybrid learning.



COVID-19 was a wake-up call. The crisis exposed existing business model and services delivery challenges at many institutions, highlighting both a lack of flexibility in offering remote or online services and a lack of agility in responding quickly to a major crisis. Flexibility and agility are essential for solvency; according to IDC's *COVID-19 Impact on IT Spending Survey*, over one-fifth of education respondents indicated that their 2020 revenue would decrease by 20%–50%.

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

### What Higher Education Buyers Need to Know

Higher education focuses on recruitment, yield, and retention as important metrics. Recruitment is centered on identifying the right students for the school and encouraging them to apply for admission, yield is the percent of admitted students that enroll, and retention is the percentage of students that graduate. These metrics are important to tie back to solutions being offered; institutions should be shown how Unified Communications as a Service (UCaaS) impacts these key metrics.

### Transformation Is Critical to Learner and Institutional Success

Higher education institutions have very siloed functions. There are often multiple networks, databases, and applications in use by various departments (or schools), and no “single version of the student.” Many schools are trying to centralize and consolidate systems in order to improve services, creating a “digital front door” for students. As part of that process, institutions must understand that:

▶ **Digital learning is here to stay.**

Students, faculty, and administration want to continue the convenience of online and digital communications using multiple mediums such as chat/messaging, video, and content sharing that can be managed from anywhere and at any time. Over 25% of institutions report difficulty with collaboration and sharing content, resulting in slower and less efficient processes due to lack of content access or siloed steps in workflow, resulting in a sub-optimal student experience.

▶ **Student experience is key to success.**

As the cost of higher education rises, students need to value an on-campus or hybrid experience. For institutions, this means providing more seamless administrative support using mobile apps, self-service, and messaging to help students with online admissions, course registration, financial aid, and other activities.

▶ **Online and hybrid learning will continue.**

Upgrading classrooms with hardware and connectivity is needed to enable faculty to provide hybrid learning and reach remote learners. However, staff and faculty may lack the digital skills to use and troubleshoot IT, and institutions want to focus on teaching, not on smart classroom technologies. Seamless access to technology and integrations with platforms such as learning management systems, student information systems, and customer relationship management (CRM) platforms are essential to help institutions provide updates services and maintain solvency in the future.

#### Message from the Sponsor

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