Comm100

HIGHER EDUCATION CHEAT SHEET

The 4 Challenges Facing IT
& How to Overcome Them

It's an exciting but challenging time for IT departments in higher education.

The introduction of new technologies into education is rapidly improving the student experience and outcomes. **60% of students** agree that technologies introduced since Covid-19 have improved their learning and grades. However, on the other hand, IT departments must now juggle an ever-growing digital infrastructure and the security issues that come along with this.

If this wasn't enough, IT departments must also provide fast and convenient support to students and faculty who are learning how to use these new technologies, alongside the typically high general support

With many new challenges facing IT, this guide will explore the 4 most common ones and what IT departments can do to overcome each of them.

60% students who believe technologies have improved their learning and grades

36% student and faculty who don't use new learning tech because of a lack of capabilities to deploy

43% student and faculty who don't use new learning tech because of a lack of awareness

The 4 Key Challenges

There are four key factors that are universally affecting IT departments in universities and colleges today. Here are each of these factors and how it's impacting operations and outcomes:

1. **Managing growing digital infrastructure**

   Higher education is rapidly embracing new technologies as they look to better serve their students, fuelled further by the need for remote learning tools driven by the Covid-19 pandemic. While much of this technology is essential and widely embraced, supporting an ever-increasing number of systems and technologies is challenging.

2. **Managing high support volumes**

   Today's students have high customer service expectations, demanding fast, convenient, and even 24/7 support. However, even with proper documentation, it can be a challenge to convince students and faculty to self-serve and find the answers themselves. This leads to high IT support volumes and email overwhelm, while staff time could be better spent on other tasks.

3. **Data security**

   Higher education institutions are held at a high standard for data governance. **49% of students** trust their institution to use their personal data ethically and responsibly. To ensure student trust is maintained and communication channels are kept secure, IT departments must keep up with industry regulations and policies across all their technologies and systems.

4. **Staffing issues**

   With remote work options making the job market increasingly competitive, universities are struggling to find IT staff. **54% of recruiters surveyed** say that they've seen candidates turn down an interview or job offer for lack of flexibility and remote work. With limited staff, combined with a high turnover, keeping on top of support requests is becoming a key issue.

Unify communication with an omnichannel platform

As a higher education IT professional, you support a wide variety of devices, platforms, tools, and systems. Managing this ever-growing IT infrastructure is incredibly taxing. With an omnichannel student engagement platform in place, each channel is tied together in a unified console. This means that you can unify all your student communication campus-wide, simplifying your vendor relations and streamlining your IT infrastructure.

Channel growth is likely to continue across all organizations, as **48% of organizations in 2021** said they "diversified the types of digital channels to reach customers." By adopting an omnichannel platform like **Comm100 Omnichannel**, colleges and universities can trim down their IT infrastructure and simplify student communications.

SOLUTION 2-
Encourage self-serve with chatbots

Solutions to IT problems are often well-documented but driving students and faculty to the answers can be a challenge. By integrating a chatbot with your knowledge base, you can encourage students and faculty to find the answer to their query through a bot, without requiring any agent time. By automating these simple requests – and doing so 24/7 – email and call volumes will drop.

This allows agents to spend more time on other high value work rather than answering common queries. Chatbots also provide IT teams with increased flexibility so that they can easily handle volume peaks without the need to scale up through temporary hires.

<u>Find out</u> how Thompson Rivers University introduced Comm100 Chatbot to handle 83% of chats.
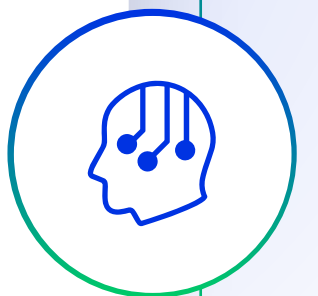
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Adopt systems with the tightest security and privacy

Dedicated IT security professionals need to feel confident in the software they approve for use. Comm100 is compliant with **SOC 2 Type II**, **ISO 27001**, **PCI DSS**, and a host of other international and industry-specific compliances so that you can trust your data is secure.

To meet the most stringent security guidelines, Comm100 also supports multiple deployment options. When data storage in the cloud is permitted, Comm100's cloud hosting can be deployed in minutes. When a self-hosted option is needed, Comm100 can be hosted on-premise to maintain in-house stewardship of your data.

Learn more about Comm100's security & compliance for higher education

Gen Z are <u>most open to chatbots</u> than any other demographic and are most likely to agree that bots make it quicker for their issues to be resolved.

Introduce automation to manage low staff levels & training issues

When hiring for IT staff is proving challenging, higher education IT teams can mitigate hiring challenges by automating the majority of responses with a chatbot. With a bot handling most requests, less staff are needed to manage the same support volume.

For complex questions that need the support of a human agent, agent-facing automation tools like **Agent Assist** can help support agents and train them. When a question is asked, this AI-powered tool understands the question and suggests relevant answers to the agent (pulled from your knowledge base and chatbot) who can then pick the appropriate response. Used in this way, Agent Assist increases the training rate for new agents, while ensuring accurate information is always provided to students.

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THE NEXT STEPS

Comm100 Omnichannel integrates every key digital channel into one unified agent console.
With this setup in place, you can unify your entire student communication strategy, simplify your vendor relations, and streamline your IT infrastructure.

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Join top institutions like Stanford University, McMaster University, The Open University, and Thompson Rivers University who are using Comm100 to deliver support that works for their IT department, and their students.

Book demo