Your introductory guide to BYOD

Funding Technology

Your guide to BYOD

With BYOD the user is providing the device, so each student brings their own choice of equipment to school with them. This means teachers and students can be working from a variety of devices so there is no uniform asset or operating system. Here's what you need to consider:

Infrastructure and network

Your school will first need to invest in infrastructure, which can be leased through Equico. It's vital not to underestimate the importance of your network foundation. "Once a school gets fast fibre it is then possible to have 1,000 devices connected to the internet without crashing the school's network or reducing teachers and students to a frustrated heap." (Crowne Fibre Holdings, Getting Excited about BYOD).

> More than **80%** of staff and students are **not very satisfied** with their schools internet connection.
>
> *(School ICT Infrastructure Survey 2013)*

Cost

Your school will need to support an increased number of devices connecting to its Wi-Fi network and draining bandwidth, but it would not have to purchase any devices. The cost savings of implementing BYOD make this strategy very popular.

Ease of Use

With BYOD, users are already used to the devices and are comfortable with how they work, so little to no training is needed for most. BYOD may appear like the easier choice for both student and teacher when it comes to adapting to the devices and ease of use. However for teachers all those different devices can pose a challenge, because if the student isn't an expert on their own device they'll look to the teacher for help.

Device management and IT support

In a BYOD environment, teachers and IT administrators have to juggle multiple operating systems because there are a number of different types of devices with a variety of operating systems accessing the network. Any number of issues could occur with the apps, OS and programs meaning high quality, available IT support is essential during lesson times.

Equality

With BYOD, technology may become a status symbol for students causing the divide between the haves and have not's to be even greater. One solution for students that don't have acceptable devices is starting a device loaner program for them. Ask Equico for more information and help in setting this up.

Maintenance

With BYOD the students would be responsible for their own maintenance on their mobile devices and well as upgrades and replacing them themselves.

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Applications

Apps may not be universal across all platforms causing possible issues for BYOD users. Teachers may also be called upon to provide basic troubleshooting for devices they are not familiar with.

Tablets are the most likely devices to be **mandated or recommended** in BYOD schools

(School ICT Infrastructure Survey 2013)

Your mobile learning approach

Teachers need to create digital lessons that are device agnostic, meaning they will work regardless of the device a student is using and whether it operates on an iOS, Android, Windows platform etc. This will involve increased preparation time and testing on the teacher's part. There is also much concern around the need for teachers to have skills in operating multiple devices and operating systems.

Engage with the right stakeholders before making your decision

Principals, IT administrators, representatives from each teaching department, school administrators and even business managers will all have a part to play in mobile learning. It's worth getting their input before committing to your decision – they might put forward an alternative view for consideration that will influence your choice of device. Plus the device needs to be something that works for their needs as well.

Research your decision

Before you give the go ahead you should consult other schools that have made the same choice. Understand where any issues occurred and how you can prevent them. One way of doing this could be to form a cluster, if you haven't already. Equico can provide leasing to clusters, enabling cost benefits as the equipment would be supplied in bulk, and it will also let you share ideas and insights with the other schools who are using the same or alternative equipment.

"…with **BYOD**, there are all sorts of **brands and devices** coming in that we have **no real ability to sort out**."

(Joseph Sweeney - Nine Conversations for Successful BYOD Decision Making)

Don't rush into roll out. Only proceed when you feel ready.

Some schools have chosen to implement a combination of the BYOD and 1:1, providing some classrooms with devices and allowing others to BYOD. So there's really no right or wrong answer when it comes to which one is best. The choice depends on which solution fits your school's needs.

SOURCES

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