5 Steps to **IT Modernization** in Education
WHY MODERNIZE?

IT modernization is intimidating, but it’s necessary. What are the advantages of modernization?

Enhance the student, faculty, and staff experience and service delivery

Lower costs and increase efficiency

Future-proof your school, college, or university by planning for technology advances

Reduce demands on your own IT shop by moving systems to the cloud

Improve security and eliminate vulnerabilities inherent in legacy systems

Take advantage of the opportunity to leverage the latest technologies
STEP 1: PRELIMINARIES

WHY MODERNIZE? | STEP 1 | STEP 2 | STEP 3 | STEP 4 | STEP 5

Develop a plan

Using an architectural approach, plot out the systems, processes and job categories that you need to modernize. Prioritize them so that you can tackle them in manageable increments.

1. Assess and inventory your IT systems; identify those that need to be replaced.
2. Remember to consider licensing expenses and whether a product is still inside a support window when deciding which to update.
3. Now is the perfect time to consider your processes. Modernization is not just swapping out a legacy system for a new one, but rethinking what systems you actually need. If there are changes that can streamline and accelerate the processes that your IT systems support, now is the time to plan them.
4. Further, if your mission has evolved recently, you might find that a different technology approach will serve the new priorities better.
5. Take advantage of change-management strategies and strive for full transparency so that your stakeholders understand what you are doing.

Get leadership buy-in

Your key stakeholders and leaders, all the way to the top, must be fully behind your plan. They control funding and set internal priorities.

Put cybersecurity first at every step

Build cybersecurity into systems and keep it at the forefront of planning. Nothing is more important than protecting privacy and securing valuable intellectual property and sensitive student and faculty data.
What does a digital ready network entail?

The network is the backbone of everything you do in IT. It should usually be the first thing you modernize.

Replacing older switches and routers with new, smart, intuitive versions immediately multiplies security, speed and efficiency to make other steps in modernization easier.
**The benefits of a Software Defined Network**

Many things that used to be hardware based are controlled by software now.

A Software Defined Network (SDN), for example, reduces costs through policy-enabled workflow automation.

Switches based on a Digital Network Architecture with Software Defined Access turn a network from simple connectivity to a platform for delivering services.
The cloud enables modernization without the need to “rip and replace” on-premise systems. In many cases, you can *replicate and even enhance the functionality of a legacy system by subscribing to it as a service via the cloud.*

Integrate the cloud into your migration plans. Hybrid cloud systems can blend the best of both worlds.

The cloud offers a secure environment. You can secure endpoints, applications, data, and workloads across on-premise and cloud environments. At the same time, you can increase compliance in the cloud – including with FERPA and CIPA – by controlling access to the Internet and securing mobile devices, workloads, and SaaS applications.
Together, these technologies empower the advanced and agile security features needed to protect against today’s threats. By increasing visibility across your entire network and using a network-as-sensor approach, you can block malware before it enters your network, detect malicious code hiding in encrypted data and even analyze data to better understand threats and improve future defenses.
For more information, please visit: cisco.com/go/education