



MANAGING MOBILE DEVICES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Executive Summary

Colleges and universities have seen a notable increase in the use of mobile devices in classroom learning. More and more higher education institutions are implementing device-loan programs/ bring-your-own-device (BYOD) programs as a smarter way for students and faculty to work, collaborate and access the school's technology resources easily.

For IT teams, this has translated into a wider IT environment which they need to manage, as the learning expands beyond labs/ classrooms. School IT administrators are faced with a new challenge of ensuring visibility over personal as well as school-owned devices that are accessing the school's IT network and resources. Another core challenge is to protect key network infrastructure and ensure controlled network access, while safeguarding academic research data from being compromised in any way.

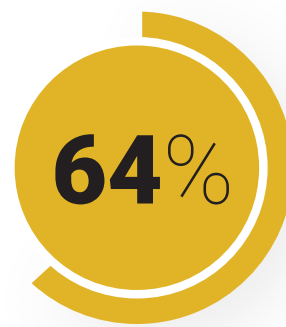
Higher educational institutions have turned to mobile device management (MDM) solutions in order to ensure productive mobile device usage, while ensuring minimal distractions and reducing disruptions. Taking all these aspects into consideration, let's delve deeper to explore current mobile device management trends, challenges, and solutions, that are prevalent in higher education learning environments.

Mobility is **Transforming Education**

It's important to understand how widespread mobile devices are in North American campuses. Smartphones are, of course, extremely popular among college/ university students. A recent survey by Pearson Research reported the following findings on mobile device use by students:



86% of college students were using at least one smartphone/ mobile device regularly.



64% of students used a smartphone twice a week or more to complete classroom work/ assignments.

The study further stated that students rely on multiple devices for their learning needs.



42% of college students regularly use two or more devices.



51% of respondents stated that they used one mobile device consistently.



2 in 5 students used mobile devices twice a week for school work.

The **Pearson Research** survey also found that...

About **83%** of students believed that tablets will change how university students learn in the years to come

79% of respondents said that tablets made learning more fun

68% of students said that technology helped them do better in class

The Mobile Device Landscape : **iOS or Android?**

The future of mobile devices in education definitely seems to be bright. IT administrators need to take it upon themselves to construct robust mobile device management solutions for school-owned and personal devices while acknowledging the disruptive impact that mobility brings into higher educational learning, both positive and negative.



Although most students rely on iPhones, there is a significant number of people bringing Android devices into the classroom. Despite an EDUCAUSE report finding that 66 percent of college students own an iPhone, around 30 percent of respondents stated that they use an Android device. This means that there is still a sizeable portion of the student population who are potentially only familiar with Android devices.

While familiarity with Apple products may be more widespread, Android devices still have a lot to offer to educational environments. Tech news portal Tom's Guide has stated that Android devices are built to allow for a wide range of customization options. Additionally, Android phones and tablets are cheaper and more cost-effective than their Apple counterparts, allowing IT administrators to mobilize funds towards other technology needs.

Android devices do have certain faults that IT teams need to recognize before integrating them into classroom learning. Research by tech marketing firm TechTarget shows that one of the biggest issues with Android devices is that Android apps are less regulated than their Apple equivalents, which means that there are more chances for users to download malicious apps onto their devices. While Google is working to address this issue, the fact of the matter is that administrators will have to find their own solution to multi-OS mobility environments. This means implementing a robust mobile device management solution that includes the ability to remotely push or remove apps onto any type of mobile device.

Learning environments have specific device management needs. IT administrators need to be able to ensure productive device and app usage with minimal distractions. IT teams basically need to give students and faculty every app they need to work productively and succeed, while eliminating the possibility of users installing unsafe apps. More importantly, schools need a dedicated and timely support framework as well. In such cases, enterprise mobility management suites can be too complex to address the needs of an educational environment.



A black and white photograph of four young men sitting on the floor against a plain wall. From left to right: the first man is wearing glasses and a denim jacket, looking at a smartphone; the second man is wearing a light-colored shirt and looking at a smartphone; the third man is wearing glasses and a button-down shirt, looking at a laptop; the fourth man is wearing a polo shirt and shorts, looking at a tablet. The image is semi-transparent, with the title text overlaid on it.

Device Management Has Uses **Outside The Classroom**

A university's major value to students is its academics, but college isn't all about studying. Sports are huge on campuses in North America, and for a good reason. They foster a sense of community and they're also big money-makers for the institutions themselves. In fact Duke University's total revenue from its intercollegiate athletics reached \$91.69 million during the 2016-2017 school year. That is a significant amount profits, and it makes sense that a lot of colleges want to introduce efficiency into their sports programs by incorporating mobile devices.

A fantastic example of this done right is Duke's decision to give tablets to players/ coaches. An article by online tech magazine EdTech discussed how both staff members and students, who were involved in sports, were given tablets filled with playbooks and sports videos. Although this saved the athletics department time and money by eliminating the reliance on hefty playbooks, the concern over data security in the event of a lost or stolen device was an issue that needed to be addressed.

Fortunately, the mobile device management solution used at this university included a remote wipe feature. This means that secret plays and other guarded team information could be erased from any tablet by an IT administrator before anyone could get their hands on the precious data. Whether you're in the classroom or on the field, IT administrators come across these types of situations on a daily basis, which they are now able to tackle with flexible device management options.

The Need for **Unified Endpoint Management** in **Higher Education**

While the need for mobile device management is a relatively recent necessity for many educational environments, it's also important for higher-ed IT teams to evaluate the need for a unified endpoint management (UEM) framework, which simplifies overall IT operations. This type of framework, which is able to streamline the entire deployment, monitoring, maintenance and management, can be highly beneficial for higher-ed IT teams. Enterprise suites have such capabilities, but they can be complex for educational environments.

Most universities have top notch academic research facilities with cutting-edge technology. As a result, different departments have varying hardware and software requirements. Maintaining custom system setups/configurations for shared environments, while ensuring high availability can be hectic. More importantly, safeguarding academic research data is crucial as a university's reputation stands to be affected.

With such varied challenges looming, tackling them with siloed solutions might not be the most efficient way. Higher-ed IT environments need a unified platform that allow IT administrators to secure and control a wide range of devices, from traditional desktops/ laptops to tablets/ smartphones, using a centralized console. A solution which can address the most pertinent needs of a higher-ed IT environment - including security, availability, visibility, control and maintenance automation.



With powerful mobile device management features, Deep Freeze MDM makes it easy for IT administrators to enroll any number of devices, deploy applications, and apply a variety of tailored policies, needed to ensure a productive, distraction-free learning environment. Deep Freeze MDM helps IT teams easily monitor the health and well-being of their mobile assets, and control how their network resources are utilized by these devices. With an intuitive, easy-to-use user interface, Deep Freeze MDM ensures a quick deployment and setup, enabling IT teams to get control over their mobile IT environment in no time.

Deep Freeze MDM is integrated within the Faronics' Deep Freeze Cloud platform to provide IT teams with a centralized management console. The cloud platform includes a cutting-edge layered security suite. This suite consists of a top-shelf antivirus, anti-malware and anti-ransomware protection, designed to secure Windows desktops/ laptops in the labs. Faronics' patented "Reboot to Restore" mechanism which is part of the cloud platform as well, basically helps IT admins easily maintain customized configurations of critical academic research computers - be it Windows/ Mac. Overall, the Deep Freeze Cloud platform has a host of curated features - including power management, kiosk mode management, software usage stats, software update automation and other services - designed to address the varied endpoint management needs of learning environments.

With the right set of tools, college/ university IT teams can ensure a consistent learning experience, even with a lean team setup and minimal resources. Contact us to learn how Faronics can simplify mobile device management, and optimize the overall IT operations in your learning environment.



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Faronics' solutions help organizations increase the productivity of existing IT investments and lower IT operating costs. Incorporated in 1996, Faronics has offices in the USA, Canada, and the UK, as well as a global network of channel partners. Our solutions are deployed in over 150 countries worldwide, and are helping more than 30,000 customers.

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