The True Cost of the Modern Classroom

Total cost of ownership: how to get more with less by going wireless

The most useful definition for a modern classroom recognizes a combination of space, technology, and teaching methods. Many educational institutions have their own interpretation of a modern classroom through success plans or visions for instructional excellence that include: driving better learning outcomes, fostering twenty-first century learning skills, increasing graduation rates and employability, and encouraging collaboration and creativity.

Instructional technology tools are widely accepted as benefits to instruction, engagement, and even success in the classroom. Instructional and IT administrators have varying expectations for equipping a modern classroom but many include all of these at the top of their lists:

70" interactive flat-panel display	$ 3,500
Document camera	$ 200
Teacher laptop	$ 900
Teacher desktop connected to IFP	$ 600
Tablet type device or teacher integrating personal mobile device	$ 400
Controller to switch inputs between devices	$ 300
Total	**$ 5,900**

The Star Trek Model

Gene Roddenberry envisioned a single device that accomplished everything the Enterprise crew needed. When the doctor walked into the sick bay, he had one tricorder that scanned patients, gathered data, and then displayed results at the push of a button. A single device that served multiple purposes. Today we carry devices that have more computing power than it took to launch the first Space Shuttle, yet we still walk into a classroom equipped with multiple devices, all connected by cables and wires, and manned by a battle-station at the front of the room that prohibits teachers from reaching students where they are. How do we create a thoughtfully designed and modern classroom that includes pedagogy, technology, and space – without the expense?

Projected costs of alternate model

70" commercial-grade flat-panel display (non-interactive)	$ 1,350
Microsoft Surface or Surface type device (includes $100 Surface Pen)	$ 1,200
ScreenBeam 1000 EDU wireless display receiver (app-free, cross-platform, enterprise-grade)	$ 599
Total	**$ 3,149**

Hidden Costs

Initially, $5,900 doesn't seem that bad. However, that figure does not account for significant but necessary costs involved in cabling, wiring and infrastructure, programming for controllers, professional development for specialized software, dongles and power cords that inevitably get lost every year, and maintenance and support for all these devices year over year. Factor in those costs and the true cost can jump to double or even more of the cost of the equipment.

What Should a Modern Classroom Look Like?

A modern classroom should be designed around a single, powerful teacher device that utilizes enterprise-level wireless display to unchains the instructor from the front of room display. The wireless display capability should be simplistic, which is easily accomplished by utilizing native screen mirroring that does not require an app or dongle. By adding a touch display, wireless inking, a stylus, and powerful dual cameras, teachers are equipped to use 100% of their classroom and 100% of their mobile device.

Up to 40% Cost Savings

This alternative model slashes nearly 40% of the cost of a modern classroom while enhancing the teaching experience with additional functionality. Mobile device cameras morph into wireless document/video cameras, the active stylus creates a walking digital whiteboard by utilizing free tools like Microsoft Whiteboard and OneNote. By adding* a docking station, keyboard, mouse and monitor, the teacher gains a powerful desktop without requiring a media switcher because everything is accessed from one device.

*Surface type devices are already fully functioning PCs but the budget savings can easily accommodate the additional costs of a docking station and accessories, if required.

Wireless display can also eliminate cable, wiring and infrastructure costs. Lost dongles and cables do not need to be replaced after every summer break. No extra licenses or professional development for software on the IWB because the tools are included with your teacher's 2 in 1 device. Maintenance costs are slashed because you have narrowed each room down to three tools (two if you already have a projector or display).

Scale those cost savings across an entire school's classrooms and those savings can easily amount to six figures or even millions for a district wide implementation. Also consider some cost savings are fixed so even a minor shift in vision for a modern classroom (or school or district) can dramatically alter the entire budget landscape.

In Summary

In this discussion, student devices were excluded because most school districts aren't considering as a viable budget option for full implementation. However, it's easy to see how the savings could be shifted towards a student one-to-one device implementation. For example, within a 100-classroom high school, the anticipated $200,000 cost savings could be used to purchase student devices.
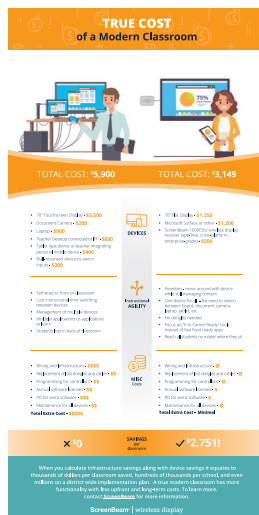
School leaders are guiding this vision, but the real work happens at the classroom level. This elegant model for a modern classroom setup lets teachers teach, reach students where they are, and be a guide on the side instead of a sage on the stage. If you want more functionality with fewer up-front and long-term costs, contact us for a free demo, webinar or consultation at www.screenbeam.com/contact-us.

Download our infographic from www.screenbeam.com/truecost.

Industry Leader

ScreenBeam Inc., a leading wireless display and collaboration provider, delivers an app-free screen sharing experience on any modern device to bring intuitive wireless collaboration into any meeting space or classroom. ScreenBeam is Microsoft's co-engineering partner for wireless display enabling wireless Office 365 experiences.

ScreenBeam solutions are used as the validation platform for wireless display functionality by companies like Microsoft and leading PC OEM and device companies. Headquartered in Santa Clara, CA, ScreenBeam has offices across the United States, Europe and Asia.

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