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4 traits of effective remote support tools

An IT buyer's evaluation guide for higher education

Within higher education, IT Help Desks serve a wide range of the university community with varying levels of technical knowledge. Support requests bombard technicians from everywhere—mobile apps and devices, phone calls, email, walk-ins, and the web. These end users are typically on the go, use one or more mobile devices, and have an expectation for fast, simple, and frictionless support, which puts more stress on overtaxed and understaffed support teams.

For too long, Help Desks have relied on low-tech meeting tools and outdated remote support tools—neither of which are designed to support today's complex higher ed environments.

As a result, students, faculty, and staff endure long resolution times and lose confidence in the ability of the Help Desk to support their needs. Some end users opt for insufficient workarounds, like articles found on Google, that may ultimately eat up more time and still not resolve their IT issues anyway. There's a better way to support this community—with the help of the right remote support tool.

While every Campus Help Desk is unique, they all share some common needs. We've identified the top four characteristics to look for when evaluating remote support tools for higher education.

1 Shows ROI in multiple ways

2 Stops fraudsters and hackers cold

3 Scores an "A" for ease of use

4 Brings seamless mobile support capabilities

5 Conclusion

Shows ROI in multiple ways

Low-cost support tools often match upfront savings with high long-term costs. Consider three important factors when weighing ROI:

- **Measure what matters.** The right tool will begin to reduce resolution times within the first month. Expect noticeable efficiencies within three months, if not sooner.
- **Get your head in the cloud.** On-premise tools rely on your hardware and infrastructure. They are cheaper initially, but long-term maintenance and upgrades can prove costly. A scalable cloud solution takes care of your back end and lets you focus on customizing the solution in line with your school's needs, drastically reducing future expenses.
- **Your data matters. Don't overlook it.** A remote tool should aggregate session data like recordings, session length, participant IP addresses, and more, in real time, to help monitor and manage support teams. This data should be used to ultimately improve efficiency.

Stops fraudsters and hackers cold

Before you can enjoy a remote support tool's benefits, you need peace of mind when it comes to security. Look for these features:

- **Expect two-factor authentication:** It combats weak or accessed passwords and allows administrators to easily and quickly disable the accounts and passwords of former or suspended employees.
- **End sessions your way:** The human element can compromise security. Ask vendors whether their remote support tool requires an end user to close an application to end a session. If it does, the end user is exposed to heightened risk for unauthorized access to their machine or device.

High-level support without security concerns for 4,000 staffers

Fordham University sought to provide support to 4,000 staff members and their university-issued computers. Faculty were extremely protective of privacy due to the confidential nature of their intellectual property. To balance support and privacy needs, a remote support solution was employed that automatically eliminated access rights and software from the remote machine immediately after each session.

The tool enabled Fordham to drastically reduce response times without raising privacy concerns for staff. **It improved same-day resolution rates from 40 percent to 75 percent**, and immediate tech support replaced what was previously a one-to-three day turnaround for help requests.

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Scores an “A” for ease of use

We expect speed and simplicity in our digital lives. Expect the same from your remote support tool, and demand that it gets top marks in the following areas:

- **Fast connection time:** Less than 30 seconds for end users. This is the starting point for improved resolution speed.
- **Technicians access device specs quickly:** This allows for enhanced speed-to-diagnosis, and ultimately solves the issue sooner, too.
- **You can’t improve what you don’t know:** Administrators benefit from robust reporting session histories, recordings, technician activity, and other critical analytics needed to implement changes that reduce resolution times, offer insight into training needs, and improve end-user satisfaction.

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Brings seamless mobile support capabilities

There are so many different mobile devices running various OS versions and customizations. Choose a remote tool that, when supporting mobile, allows you to:

- **Connect quickly:** This means across PC, Mac, iOS, Android, and more. Without the right support tool in place, your Help Desk will have a hard time addressing some of the support requests they receive, such as email set up, hardware issues, and configuring wi-fi settings.
- **Be accessible:** A student may multitask and contact the Help Desk during class. Communicate simply and transparently during a mobile support session through chat or notifications that appear as pop-ups for an overall better user experience.
- **See the problem through the eyes of the end user:** Transform any smartphone camera into an interactive video tool so your Help Desk can troubleshoot, and guide fixes and do-it-yourself installations.

Remotely guide customers through troubleshooting, problem resolution, product setup, and more.

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Conclusion

Let community response dictate much of the tool's success

Many students experience a significant life change when attending college. IT hassles only disrupt that "new" and changing higher education experience. Remote support should help technicians fix problems faster and get students back to class. Period.

With the right remote support tool, your university community will have more confidence in the Help Desk experience as it improves, and fewer users should seek workarounds like Google articles to avoid reaching out to the Help Desk. IT managers are chasing a very specific win-win when looking for a remote support solution: technicians who feel confident in their ability to help end users, and students who feel confident in the Help Desk as a whole. A flexible, responsive remote support solution makes this all happen.

Ready to learn more? Start your 14-day free trial today.