

# TODAY'S KEY CHALLENGES FACING HIGHER ED FACILITIES MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONALS

(...AND HOW TO OVERCOME THEM)

**KEY CHALLENGE #5:**

*Increased Classroom Technology*

In June 2012, facilities professionals serving colleges and universities across North America were invited to take part in an extensive facilities management survey. From the results, six key challenges that facilities and maintenance personnel are facing today have been identified. In this series of reports, SchoolDude focuses on these six challenges and how to overcome them.

## KEY CHALLENGE #5: Increased Classroom Technology

It's a common theme: too much stuff, not enough staff. Your IT department has been saying it for a while now, but it affects the facilities and maintenance staff as well.

In recent years, the deployment and use of technology in higher education has increased at an astronomical rate. In addition to heavier workloads for your campus IT department, this increased density of technology on campus has also impacted the facilities and maintenance department. The amount of electricity needed to power all of this technology has significantly increased power bills. Older buildings have to be retrofitted to provide the power required to meet these needs.

Colleges and universities tout the positive impact these increased technology capabilities have on student learning, resulting in higher enrollment for technology-heavy institutions and increased demands on your buildings. However, additional faculty and staff are necessary to serve students and maintain the campus technology investment, resulting in even more facility demands. All of these factors, combined with tight budgets, have made it critical to find ways of minimizing the costs incurred to support increased technology density.

A web-based Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS) can help you manage the impact of this increased technology use. Survey respondents indicated that certain CMMS products provide the tools you need, but there are often significant differences in the extent of their capabilities.

## SIX KEY CHALLENGES:

- #1: Do More with Less
- #2: Embracing Energy Management
- #3: Expanding Cloud-Based Tools
- #4: Evidence-Based Maintenance
- #5: Increased Classroom Technology
- #6: Maintenance Going Mobile

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### Attributes to look for in a computerized maintenance solution:

- ✓ *Integrates with your Building Automation System (BAS)*
  - ✓ *Utilize SaaS model*
  - ✓ *Increase overall productivity*
  - ✓ *Provide ease of use*
  - ✓ *Offer anywhere access (including mobile support)*
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To determine whether a vendor can help you meet the demands created by increased technology density, consider their ability to:

- integrate with your Building Automation System (BAS) and IT management systems
- utilize the Software as a Service (SaaS) infrastructure model
- increase overall productivity
- provide ease of use
- offer system access from anywhere (including mobile support)

When your CMMS provides these capabilities, it can be a tremendous asset for dealing with the challenges posed by the increased use of technology in your campus buildings and support offices.

## Integration with Building Automation and IT Management Systems

Many campuses use Building Automation Systems to monitor and measure energy, lighting and HVAC usage in their buildings. Combining the control features of a BAS with the management capabilities of a CMMS multiplies the benefits of both, providing significant amounts of useful data. Look for a CMMS with the ability to integrate with BAS modules in the areas of alarm system management, preventive maintenance, and real-time metering.

A CMMS-based energy management system allows you to build a usage database, which can be shared with energy monitoring programs, such as the US Environmental Protection Agency's ENERGY STAR and Portfolio Manager tool. Your energy management system should integrate directly with Portfolio Manager to enhance the benefits provided by both products. A CMMS which can also integrate and share data with your campus IT help desk system provides synergy and improved efficiency.

The overall level of BAS integration offered by SchoolDude was ranked highest among vendors offering all of the key module integrations noted above. SchoolDude, as a top-ranked ENERGY STAR partner for education, also provides direct integration with ENERGY STAR's Portfolio Manager. In addition, SchoolDude provides thorough integration between its CMMS and ITDirect, its help desk management solution.

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TOP PERFORMING  
ENERGY STAR SCHOOLS

**COST**  
**.50¢**  
LESS PER SQ FT

**SAVE**  
**35%**  
ON ENERGY

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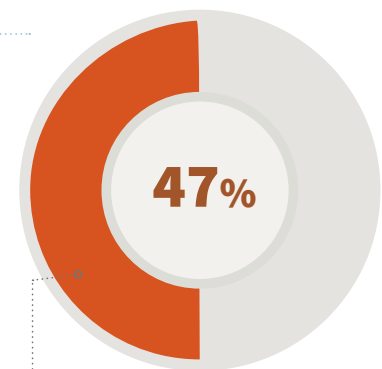


## Software as a Service (SaaS) Model

In light of the ever-increasing amount of technology which your campus has to support, your CMMS should not add to that burden. A CMMS which uses the Software as a Service (SaaS) model, also sometimes referred to as cloud computing, offers access to powerful tools and functionality without the need to buy, install, and support costly hardware and software on-site. Survey respondents indicated that the level of service provided by a SaaS solution is often indistinguishable from that offered by expensive on-site solutions.

Ideally, a SaaS-based system requires very little in the way of support. 47 percent of SchoolDude users indicated that they were not at all dependent on technical support for their system, the highest level among all vendors and over 40 percent greater than the next closest vendor. An additional 40 percent of SchoolDude users indicated they required very little technical support.

SAAS REQUIRES LITTLE  
OR NO IT SUPPORT



SCHOOLDUDE USERS  
CLAIM NO DEPENDENCE ON IT

## Improved Productivity

With the heightened demands on your staff created by increased technology use, it is essential that your CMMS can verifiably improve the productivity of your technicians. Over 65 percent of the survey participants believe they have generated at least a 50 percent productivity improvement from their investment in a CMMS, including over 35 percent sharing that they believe they have generated at least a 75 percent productivity improvement. These gains allow facilities departments to devote more time to performing preventive maintenance, analyzing successes and areas where improvement is needed, and determining the most effective courses of corrective action.

## Ease of Use

Your staff needs a system to help manage their workload without adding to it. To obtain significant productivity gains from a CMMS, ease of use is an important consideration. However, being easy to use may result in lack of needed capabilities and features. Typically, college and university facilities departments can't afford to take staff members off their jobs for extensive training on the use of complicated software. The best CMMS offerings provide a powerful set of tools for users, while being sufficiently intuitive to provide users with maximum functionality and a minimal investment of training time.

Among all of the CMMS vendors featured in the survey, 89 percent of SchoolDude users rated their system favorably for its balance of strong functionality and ease of use. No other vendor in the survey attained a favorable rating higher than 67 percent.

## Mobile Access

Just as with society at large, use of mobile devices among facilities professionals is booming. Almost 30 percent of higher education survey participants indicated that they have implemented mobile devices to access, approve, and close out work orders in their CMMS. An additional 23 percent of campuses represented in the survey plan to begin deploying mobile devices within the next three years.

A full-featured CMMS allows end-users to submit work requests online, provide and receive feedback through e-mail and other online channels, review the status of their requests, and take part in user satisfaction surveys. The proliferation of mobile devices over the past few years has also created the expectation that data will be available whenever and wherever it is desired. This makes it essential for your CMMS to support access from any web-enabled device, including mobile access via notebook computers, smartphones, tablets, and Netbooks.

When your staff has the ability to update and close out work orders using mobile devices, their productivity increases significantly. By offering greater transparency of work orders and the processes that your staff uses to fulfill them, your end-users will be able to monitor their requests in real-time, providing improved service and higher overall satisfaction. Your staff can focus on completing work orders and other tasks rather than responding to user questions and status updates. Although mobile access on individual campuses is largely dependent on institutional policies, survey respondents using SchoolDude were successfully using mobile technologies to a greater degree.

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## Survey Conclusions

The continually increasing integration of technology on college and university campuses isn't just straining the folks in IT. Facilities departments are under pressure both to absorb the impact of increased technology density and find efficient and economical ways of dealing with that impact. Higher energy bills, greater demand for maintenance and repairs, and tight budgets aren't going away. A web-based CMMS can be a valuable tool as you work to deal with the effects of increased technology use, but only if it integrates with your other systems, increases productivity while reducing costs, and is easy to use from wherever you and your staff may be.

Survey respondents made it clear that facilities and maintenance departments which use SchoolDude have more of those capabilities. As a result, they are better equipped to meet the challenges posed by the ever-growing amount of technology on today's campuses.

## About the Survey

**In June 2012, over 300 facilities and maintenance personnel supporting institutions of Higher Education took part in a survey conducted by STS Research Advisors, an independent research firm. The complete 2012 Higher Education Facilities Management Survey Results Report is available as a download from SchoolDude. All percentages and statistics cited in this report are from the survey findings unless otherwise indicated.**

**Download:** [2012 Higher Ed Schools Facilities Management Survey Results Report](http://explore.schooldude.com/STS2012Higher-EdSurveyResults.html)  
<http://explore.schooldude.com/STS2012Higher-EdSurveyResults.html>

### ABOUT SCHOOLDUDE

*Founded in 1999, SchoolDude has served as the market leader in education enterprise asset management for the past 13 years with over 1 million education professionals using our solutions. We deliver cloud-based solutions to help both small and large institutions better manage their facilities, IT and business operations. We help clients save time and money by managing support services effectively and efficiently, allowing institutions to provide a safe teaching and learning environment. Today, we're the #1 platform of cloud solutions for public and private schools, colleges and universities. Visit us at [schooldude.com](http://schooldude.com) or give us a call at 877-868-3833 to learn more.*