

The Rewards and Pitfalls of Transitioning to a 21st Century Digital Assessment Office

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Agenda

- Learning outcomes
- Introduction
- Assessing needs of technology
- Strategies for faculty buy-in
- Sustainability of technology
- Conclusion



Learning outcomes

1. Participants will be able to better assess the needs for technology, create a process that will support their decision to choose a technology.
2. Participants will also be able to use provided strategies to improve faculty buy-in with technology.
3. Finally, participants will better understand concepts that are critical to determining sustainability for technological resources.

Introduction

- The use of technology is permeating assessment.
- The responsibility of monitoring a university's assessment is a big task.
- Technology such as assessment software can be of an immense help, but also poses many logistical problems.
 - Training
 - Faculty and administrative buy-in
 - Implementation
 - Sustainability

Introduction

(continued)

- Our story...
 - VMI is a small liberal arts Senior Military College (1700 students)
 - Limited budget
 - Limited personal resources
 - Class of 2017 for SACSCOC reaffirmation
 - A young assessment office
 - **Coming out of the assessment dark ages and into modern times**

Assessing needs of technology

- How are tasks performed and objectives met?
 - Surveys
 - Data collection
 - Report management
 - End of course evaluations
- What are solutions to make the tasks faster and easier?
 - By hand vs. software
- Where do you go to find solutions?
 - Neighboring institutions
 - Friends & colleagues
 - Conferences
 - Google

Strategies for faculty/staff buy-in

- Give faculty a voice
- Provide a spreadsheet with all the necessary information
- Invite faculty and administrators to demos
- Ask stakeholders what can help make their tasks easier
- Show fiscal responsibility (pinch your pennies)

Strategies for faculty/staff buy-in

(continued)

- Slow and steady wins the race. **Don't force things down people's throats.**
- Create a matrix of time, resources, and capital spent for various tasks comparing the old way and the new way.
- Look how solutions integrate with current educational interfaces
- Find answers for probable questions. **Be prepared.**
- Social capital risk vs. reward

Strategies for faculty/staff buy-in (continued)

Online Course Evaluation Program Comparison

	Product 1	Product 2	Product 3
Price	\$6,300	\$10,000-\$18,000	\$4,500
Data Storage	Product 1 servers	Product 2 servers	VM servers (Product 3 servers for additional cost)*
Ongoing Cost	\$6,300	\$10,000-\$18,000	\$4,500
Contract length	Annual	Annual	Annual
Canvas Integration	Yes	Yes	Yes
Training/Ease of Use	Online product training	Online product training	Online product training
Additional Features	Email and phone support	Create benchmarking standards for future evaluations Create custom reports and export data Compatible with any browser or input device Create reminders Email and phone support Import course data Mobile device compatible Present auto-generated reports Send reviews using SMS, Facebook, Twitter, or Google+	Adaptable to the Institute's requirements and needs Compatible with any browser or input device Create reminders Creates numeric reports and visuals Customizable Email and phone support Fully automated evaluations Integrates into IT infrastructure Supports team-teaching and cross-listed courses All inclusive
Add-Ons	Yes	Yes	
Type of Add-Ons	Customizations Historical data import Public reporting module Student report module	Customization Handwriting identification software Paper forms integration SIR 8 by 175	

Note: Product 1 server cost are \$3,900 for the first year and \$2,200 for each additional year.

Strategies for faculty/staff buy-in (continued)

Assessment software costs and capability

	Product 1	Product 2	Product 3	Product 4
Consultation & professional development	X	Fee		X
Assessment planning support	X	X	X	X
Ability to integrate data from multiple sources	X	X	X	X
Dedicated faculty portals	X			
Data ownership	X	X	X	X
Shared projects and community resources	X	X		
Faculty Credentials	X	X		X
Connection to strategic plan	X	X	X	X
Accreditation self-studies	X		X	X
Ease of use	10/10	6/10	5/10	4/10
Field customization	X	X	X	X
Preference	1	2	3	**
Comparative Costs	\$24,114 yr. 1 \$21,888 yr. 2 \$22,680 yr. 3	\$12,063 + Training fees (\$1,000)		Current company
Minimum Costs	\$8,375	\$6,768 with training	(\$200 for SACIS report)	\$10,000 for ineffective Beta product

Strategies for faculty/staff buy-in (continued)

Cost analysis for software 1

	Hours on task	Cost per hour	Cost of software	Total cost
Without software	10	\$30	0	\$300 each time
With software	2	\$30	\$1500	\$1560 initial and \$60 afterwards
Hours saved per task with software	8	\$30		\$240
Amount of tasks to pay for software	5 * 10	\$30		\$1,500
Hours saved for other projects	40	\$30		\$1,200
This software profits in 5 uses				

Note. You can use many factors to determine what your comparison score is, such as number of uses or money saved per task.

Sustainability of technology

- What is your current infrastructure (talk to IT)?
- How easy can you react to changes in technology (OS update or switch from PC to Mac)?
- What is your sustained budget?
- Do you host or pay for hosting?
 - Long-term vs. short-term prices
- Are you buying last year's model?
 - Cheaper, but outdated out of the box

Conclusion

- The big pay-off (success)
 - Upgrade from Survey Monkey to Qualtrics
 - New online course evaluations
 - New assessment management software (take two)
 - Tableau for creating dashboards
 - More free time with the same budget = more projects with no additional stress
 - Get **more** for less, but prepare to **\$pend** money.

Conclusion (continued)

- The hard fall (failures)
 - Assessment management software
 - Transition from in-house to secondary end of course evaluations

Lessons learned

- You get what you pay for
- Folks are pretty understanding and expect things to have hiccups
- If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is
- You will **never** make everyone happy (it is assessment after all)
- Talk to folks who use the product/method you are vetting

Questions

- Questions, comments, or personal experiences to share?
- Thank you!