Survey identifies challenges and opportunities related to managing and distributing digital resources

Technology is integral to education. Today's students are digital natives, training for careers that will almost all require some use of tech or software. To meet modern education standards, schools have to provide access to a wide variety of software, eTextbooks, cloud services, and other digital resources.

Kivuto wanted a better understanding of the challenges this involves for academic IT teams. How are digital licenses and entitlements being managed on campuses today? What are the frustrations involved, and what would it take to overcome them? How prepared do school IT teams feel to meet rising challenges related to security, compliance, and the transition to the cloud?

To answer these questions, Kivuto partnered with *University Business* to conduct a survey of nearly 200 technology leaders from universities and colleges. These leaders were asked about everything from their current frustrations to their cloud readiness to what might take some of the headache out of managing digital resources on campus. Read on for a summary of the results!
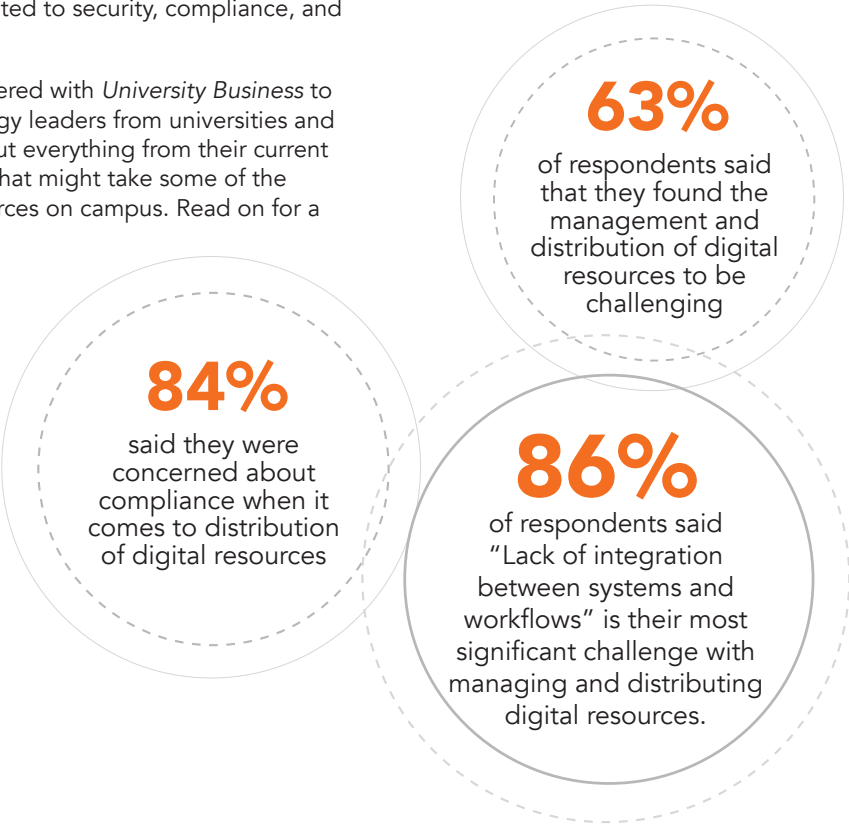
Management and distribution

When asked how they managed and distributed digital resources at their institutions today, the highest number of respondents by far (59%) indicated that "The process varies by department," while almost equal numbers said that they manage and distribute resources either "Via a third-party solution" (29%), "Via a solution developed in-house" (28%) or "Manually" (26%).

Some 63% of respondents said that they found the management and distribution of digital resources to be challenging. When asked to identify those challenges, the leading answer by far was "Lack of integration between systems and workflows," chosen by 86%. Another 57% said "Security issues," 55% said "Time management" and 48% said "Compliance issues."

All respondents were asked if they were concerned about compliance with applicable regulations when it comes to how their institution distributes digital resources. A significant percentage (32%) selected "Very concerned," while 52% selected "Somewhat concerned," for a total of 84% saying they were concerned about compliance. Just 16% selected "Not concerned at all."

"When you have a decentralized model, you don't have visibility into digital resource adoption, student success, cost optimization, or compliance with regulations and policies," says Ryan Peatt, Chief Product Officer for Kivuto Solutions. "It is likely that these departments are not distributing these resources in a compliant way. This often leads to unnecessary spending on digital resources and additional costs for the institution and its stakeholders."

Managing cloud-based tools

49% of respondents said that they managed digital resources that required a cloud-based administrative tool. When asked how many of these resources they were managing, the vast majority (62%) said "3 or more," while 23% said "2" and 14% said they managed just one digital resource with a cloud-based administrative tool.

Those managing cloud resources were asked what challenges they experienced. **The top answer by a wide margin was "Multiple processes to manage different licenses," selected by 60%.** This was followed by "Security issues" (38%), "Compliance issues" (32%) and "Managing entitlements" (22%).
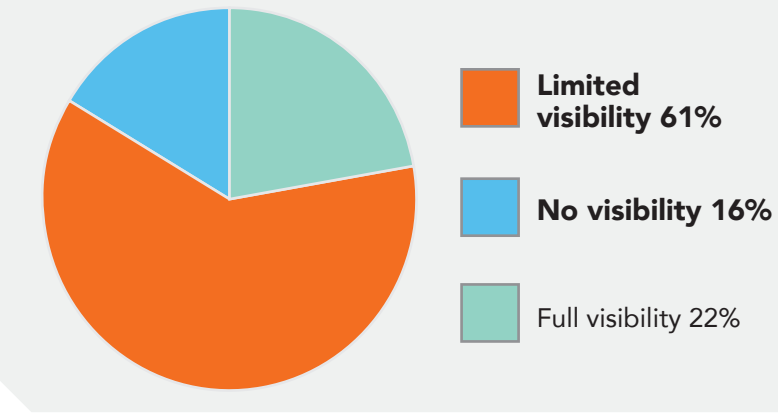
"Having multiple processes to manage different licenses can impede cost optimization and limit insights into resource adoption, which can impact an institution's overall budget tremendously," says Peatt. "By centralizing this process as much as possible, institutions will gain the insights needed to make more informed fiscal decisions."

Visibility and insights into usage

Respondents were also asked to describe how much visibility they had into the rate at which their digital resources were being adopted and used by students, faculty and staff. **Just 22% said they had "Full visibility," while the vast majority (61%) said they had "Limited visibility" and another 16% said they had "No visibility" at all.**

The 22% of respondents saying they had full visibility into their digital resources were then asked if there were any data insights they don't have today that would help to make more informed purchasing decisions. The leading answer by far was "Student and faculty satisfaction with resources,"

63%
of respondents said that they found the management and distribution of digital resources to be challenging

84%
said they were concerned about compliance when it comes to distribution of digital resources

86%
of respondents said "Lack of integration between systems and workflows" is their most significant challenge with managing and distributing digital resources.

How much visibility do you have into the rate at which the digital resources procured by your institution are being adopted and used by students, faculty, and staff?

- **Limited visibility 61%**
- **No visibility 16%**
- Full visibility 22%

selected by 50%. Another 25% said they wished they had insight into "Resource usage rates," and 16% said "Resource adoption rates."

The 77% of respondents who said they had either limited or no visibility into their digital resources were then asked if they were concerned by this lack of insight. 51% said "Yes, somewhat concerned," while 17% said "Yes, very concerned."

"Institutions need to be sure they are purchasing the right number of licenses and that students and faculty are using them as part of the pedagogy," says Peatt. "Buying too much of an expensive digital resource, or the wrong resource, can have a huge impact on an institution's bottom line. But these unnecessary costs can be avoided."

"Kivuto Cloud brings the licensing and distribution of these resources into a centralized environment where either departmental or central IT can define the roles and policies of each user, while gaining insight into the adoption and usage of these vital resources."

These results provide interesting insights into the challenge of managing digital resources in higher education. Procedures vary by department, or even by product. Unintegrated systems and limited visibility into end-user activity add to the burden of management – a burden that's likely to grow as more software moves to the cloud.

But there are options for institutions looking to streamline resource management. Though many still rely on home-grown distribution solutions, which can be labor-intensive to maintain, 29% of respondents have found a third-party solution to take at least some of the work out of managing and distributing digital resources.

Kivuto is proud to offer such a solution. Visit kivuto.com/cloud to find out how Kivuto Cloud can simplify the management of digital resources at your school.

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