



## Ed-tech officials: Video will make schools more 'efficient'

### Most school and college decision makers agree that video technology can help boost learning

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Fifty-three percent of school officials said they would buy video technology in the next year.

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More than half of education technology officials in K-12 schools and higher-education institutions said they would buy video technology in the next year to make their schools “more effective and efficient” and better prepare students for the workforce, according to a new survey from technology giant Cisco Systems.

The survey results, compiled by Washington, D.C.-based research and polling firm [Clarus Research Group](#), come seven months after [Cisco bought Tandberg](#), a leading video conferencing company. Observers expect Cisco’s purchase—[which initially was snubbed](#) by Tandberg stockholders, who balked at the \$3 billion bid—to make the company one of the leading video providers in schools and colleges.

While 53 percent of administrators and school technology officials said their institutions “are likely” to buy video equipment sometime in the next year, more than eight in 10 survey respondents said technology plays a role in “improving how students learn,” with 82 percent agreeing that education technology will play a “large role” in “helping prepare students for the workforce of the future.”

The survey asked school and college IT officials to name their top technology issues. “Equipping classrooms with advanced technological equipment” and “using new technologies to help students and faculty work better together”—such as collaborative tools that facilitate online communication, for example—were the two most prominent school technology priorities.

“These results mirror what we have been hearing from education leaders and customers,” said Michael Stevenson, vice president of Cisco’s Global Education group. “They want to invest in new technology, but it must deliver good value and drive cost efficiencies. ... Integrating video into the classroom environment can play a key role in improving collaboration, security, and interactive learning.”

“Retaining good students” was the most important “administrative and strategic issue” facing schools, according to the [Cisco](#) survey. Other top priorities were improving communication with students’ parents, helping educators use the newest classroom technology, and providing network security.

Cisco polled 600 people from six educational backgrounds, including K-12 administrators and technology decision makers, community college IT officials, and four-year university IT officials and administrators.

Ray Schroeder, director of the [University of Illinois Springfield’s Center for Online Learning, Research, and Service](#), said the video conferencing service at his university costs about half of what it did five years ago, thanks to the expansion of the online video conferencing market.

“You have a lot of competition out there, which has driven the cost down,” he said. “Now, when you take Cisco and Tandberg ... they almost have to be more expensive, because of the quality they bring to the marketplace.”

[Last October’s Cisco-Tandberg combination](#) attracted campus technology officials looking for a secure online meeting place that provides high-quality close-up shots, document cameras that show details on a page, and multiple camera angles for large-scale, web-based meetings.

Cisco, the world’s largest maker of computer networking equipment, had a cash balance of more than \$35 billion at the end of July 2009, most of that overseas. By buying an international company, Cisco avoided the U.S. taxes it would have had to pay to bring the money home.

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