



# ECONOMICAL EDTECH

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The British Educational Suppliers Association have reported that the biggest challenge for secondary schools when it comes to edtech is budget constraints. Here are a few ways you can make your edtech budget stretch further.

Tighter budgets mean that school leaders are facing increasing pressure to ensure that they are getting the best value for money in everything they procure. Edtech is often viewed as an expensive area which can quickly swallow up the budget so it is unsurprising that SBMs can feel that it is a challenge to achieve value for money when it comes to purchasing edtech. However, there are a few ways you can make that budget stretch.

## Digital Strategy

Al Kingsley, MD of NetSupport, recently shared some **money-saving tips VIA edtechnology** which can help stretch your edtech budget and ensure that you are getting value for money. Al suggests that the starting point for saving money when it comes to edtech is to have a digital strategy.

Such a strategy, in its most basic form, should be a plan of what you want to achieve and how you're going to get there. It should establish the school's current needs, as well as its future requirements, to ensure that the money spent is going to have a sustainable impact.

The procurement of edtech should always be viewed as a long-term strategy, not a short-term solution. To help you develop a long-term digital strategy take a look at **A guide to creating a digital strategy in education.**

## Upcycling

Before splashing the cash on shiny new technology, it is a good idea to take a closer look at what you already have; this way, you might be able to save money by spotting edtech which could be upgraded or redeployed, rather than replaced with something new. Upcycling can lead to serious savings and, as well as being a lot more economical, it is also more environmentally-friendly. In addition

to upcycling, buying refurbished technology is also a great way to cut costs. Refurbished technology is used equipment that has been restored to like-new working condition and so provides a cheaper alternative to buying brand-new technology.

## Cutting software costs

It is important to keep track of your installed software licences so you know when they need to be renewed. Knowing exact dates can ensure you don't spend unnecessarily on renewing licences earlier than needed. AI suggests that there are tools available online that can help you manage this cycle which you could consider as part of your digital strategy.

## Using time wisely

Ensuring that IT technicians can work efficiently is essential, as time is money. If IT issues occur, the longer they continue the more money it costs. Therefore, it is important that a key part of your digital strategy includes how to ensure IT issues are fixed quickly.

There are tools that can be used by technicians which can proactively alert to any changes to devices or the network. This notification system allows smaller issues to be resolved before they turn into those major ones which often result in wasted time for teachers, students and support staff. The time freed up by not having to deal with complications reactively can be

used more productively - and economically.

## Saving money on energy

A standard PC left on continuously consumes more than 500kWh per year; for only 10 PCs this equates to over £700! This is money that could be saved by simply using energy monitoring tools which can inform you of how many PCs are left on out-of-hours and how much this costs. You can then use power management tools to automatically switch off PCs at the end of the day and then back on again when they need to be used. On top of this, you can also use tools which can ensure that systems sleep, log out or power down if they have been inactive for a specified period of time; this can help to create further savings.

## Print monitoring tools

It is estimated that, in an average-sized school, the cost of student printing is around £150,000 per year. Unnecessary printing can amount to a lot of money and so a key money-saving tip is to implement printer monitoring tools so you can see exactly where costs are being generated and make adjustments accordingly. These adjustments could consist of reducing the number of printers available for students, setting printing limits and preventing duplicates from being printed.

Using these tips should ensure you are able to squeeze every drop of value from your edtech budget. Devising a digital strategy, and incorporating each of these factors into it, is the key to being able to save and spend money wisely.

