

How will BYOD in Schools Affect the Next Generation in the Workforce

BYOD in schools—i.e., students bringing smartphones, tablets, and other connected technologies into educational settings—can affect their performance in both classrooms and future boardrooms. [We've already discussed the pros and cons of generation Z growing up device-in-hand](#). Love it or hate it, it's happening—and it can ensure these digital natives stay competitive technologically with other classrooms globally while also preparing them to enter the workforce. Here's how—and why it matters for their generation and ours.

The State of BYOD in Schools Today

A [recent study](#) shows that seven out of ten children under the age of 12 have used a mobile device or tablet. Many parents are on board with the trend, as 77 percent agree that these devices are conducive to creativity and learning. While some parents still feel these devices can be a distraction, 90 percent of school-aged students said they felt tablets were better study aids than traditional textbooks.

That's where BYOD in schools comes in—an approach by educational facilities from elementary schools to universities that allow students to use personal connected devices in classrooms. These arrangements aren't limited to the US alone. In fact, [a recent study shows that 29 percent of UK secondary schools have implemented some level of BYOD](#) into their classrooms. Whether the types of acceptable devices are specified by administration or students are able to choose their own, there's no doubt the trend mirrors [the rise in mobile adoption both here and abroad](#).

How are these BYOD programs better preparing the up-and-coming workforce generation? Let's explore that.

Connected Students Grow up to Be Connected Workers

Students who learn in BYOD-friendly classrooms—or even BYOD-friendly home school situations—become members of a better-prepared, more technological savvy workforce. Here are a few reasons why:

- **BYOD arrangements give students a sense of ownership over their educational experience.** After all, it's hard to find an excuse not to study when the notes are quite literally in your pocket at all times. The same goes for connected workers: More connectivity means more productivity, less downtime, and higher overall efficiency.
- **Some higher-level students are learning technologies we use in the workplace now instead of having to wait to learn on the job, reducing the learning curve and need for training.**
- **Students are able to use BYOD technologies to better prepare for the workforce by envisioning themselves in different scenarios.** For example, [a home schooled high school student recently made headlines](#) for utilizing a technology that allowed him to experience different career paths and ultimately engage in like activities, earning the title of Student of the Year thanks to that high level of early tech exposure.

It's important to note that BYOD in schools is not a tool solely benefitting students. Teachers and administration, too, can find value in the communicative and interactive properties these technologies bring to the table. Think, for example, of a school-hosted app that updates students for cancellations or in emergency situations. This same principle applies to organizations of the future and their digital native employees. If the workforce has been taught from a young age how to *not only use but also master* collaborative tools, transitioning to tools like Slack and Basecamp won't be too far a stretch.

What's Next?

In the future, look for today's connected students to be tomorrow's connected thought leaders, decision makers, and growth instigators—thanks, in large part, to their familiarity with technologies afforded by BYOD in schools.