PITT STATE

A PLANNING GUIDE FOR YOUR DEPARTMENT

IT UPGRADE PLAN

Table of Contents:

Why do you need an IT Upgrade Plan?

IT resources are critical to the work we do on campus. These tools make a difference in our daily tasks at PSU impacting **instruction**, **operations**, and **security**.

Technology should support the mission of PSU and that can be a challenge if we are using older, inefficient, un-secure technology. Keeping technology in your area up to date is important to meeting the mission that we live everyday. It is **recommended that technology in each dept be reviewed at least annually** to determine upgrades for the following year. This will allow your dept to plan, schedule, and budget well in advance of the purchase.

Technology is evolving faster than ever before! Computing power, ease of use, and security are all changing before our eyes. Therefore, an IT upgrade plan that is kept up to date and involves **diverse stakeholders** for each PSU area is recommended. An effective upgrade plan requires **coordination between people, calendars, vendors, and budgets.** (You can find an IT Upgrade check list in Appendix A.)

The benefits that come with updating your IT resources are not only important to the core mission of PSU, it can also help you **better prepare for emergencies**. Outdated technology is more likely to crash, leading to inconveniences for you and your employees. However, an IT upgrade will further secure your work and increase productivity.

How Often Should You Upgrade Hardware and Software?

Upgrades depend on your area's goals and needs. What changes do you plan to implement that technology could/should impact? What tools are no longer working effectively for your team? Where could you save funding? What could help with efficiencies? What resources are no longer supported by the vendor (EOL)?

End of Life (EOL) is a term used in information technology often to describe the manufacturers view of a product. An EOL product is a product that does not receive continuing support from the manufacturer because:

- support and other processes are terminated
- it is at the end of its useful life

It is critical to understand that when an IT product is EOL'd that most often means that there are no longer security patches or bug fixes for the product. That product then poses an IT security risk to the University leading to breaches, ransomware threats, and more. Per the PSU IT Lifecycle Policy, EOL'd IT resources cannot reside on the PSU network.

1 Involve the right people:

When creating an IT Upgrade Plan it is important to **involve the right stakeholders**. It's important that the group be **led by a functional expert** in the dept. ITS team members can help with the technology but the leadership must come from the subject matter experts in the dept. Ask yourself: Who will use the technology? Who will fund the technology? Who will support the technology?

Audit & assess: 2

Look at the technology you already have. Make sure you have all the information you need to **evaluate whether this equipment/software is working to its full potential**.

If you identify any hardware that's becoming outdated, rank it at the top of your **priority list**. Note: Please feel free to call on ITS for what we can share from the inventory that we have access to.

If there's any current technology that's still relatively new and performing well, you can list it as a low priority. (You can find a sample audit that can be used with current-section 2, or proposed-section 3, tech in Appendix B.)

3 Determine what you need:

Consider the **big picture** now and in the future:
How does this impact the PSU Strategic plan?
What are your area/dept goals?
What technology can help you reach them?
How can you improve efficiencies with new resources?
What changes in processes, position descriptions, human resources, and funding will be required?

4 Budget:

Budget for what you need now **and what you expect to come** with support needs, human resource needs, maintenance fees, etc. In addition, be thinking about the next round of upgrade costs and the timeline of those costs...**can you afford this resource long term**?

Coordinate the upgrade: 5

Upgrades impact instruction and operations. It is critical to carefully plan and **schedule** these for the best time possible, with plenty of **testing and reaction time** to correct issues before the upgrades are open to the masses.

6 Purchase the resources:

Work with ITS and the Purchasing Office to get the best possible pricing. **Be creative.** Who may also use these tools on campus and can share in the costs? Work with ITS and the Purchasing Office to bundle large purchases with other areas to save by purchasing in bulk. Does leasing make sense? Can the vendor deliver on time? Consider all the options before making the final commitment.

7 Implement & test:

Implement the upgrades working closely with ITS . **Testing should follow soon behind** with stakeholders and ITS working together viewing the upgrades from their respective lenses looking for issues and correcting them together to get to the final desired configuration.

Plan for regular maintenance: 8

Once things are in place be sure to work closely with ITS on regular maintenance and software update planning. These should be **carefully planned** during agreed upon times. Performing regular updates on existing resources is important but time should be scheduled to **test** them as well. Again, partnering with ITS will result in the most efficient and positive outcome.

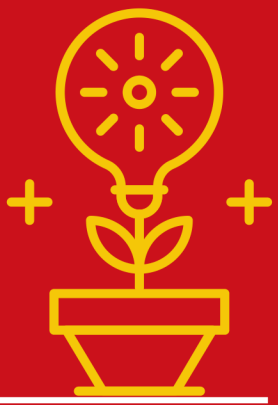
9 Dispose of older hardware:

If any hardware that has been replaced needs to be disposed of, work with ITS to **properly wipe the data** from the hardware and **properly dispose** of the goods through the recycling center. There is a small fee that the recycling center will charge.

Reach out if we can help.

To facilitate effective IT upgrades please work closely with ITS.

Simply submit a ticket to support@pittstate.edu with a brief IT upgrade meeting request and we'll be more than happy to help!



Developed by:
Information Technology Services

PITT STATE

Appendix

The below are suggestions for your to consider. Be sure to develop what fits your needs best!

Appendix A:

IT Upgrade Check List:

IT Upgrade Check List

For the ___ -___ fiscal year

Task	Complete?	Target Date:	Comments
A diverse group of stakeholders has committed to take part in the IT Upgrade Plan.	Y___ N___ In Progress___		
An audit and assessment of technology has taken place.	Y___ N___ In Progress___		
The group has outlined needs for our area based on the PSU strategic plan, dept'l goals, etc.	Y___ N___ In Progress___		
The budget for this technology and its ongoing costs has been identified.	Y___ N___ In Progress___		
Replacement/upgrade funding has been considered and will be identified as EOL of the product nears.	Y___ N___ In Progress___		
The timeline and schedule of the upgrade has been carefully coordinated with both functional and technology experts involved.	Y___ N___ In Progress___		
The product(s) have been purchased after carefully working with both the Purchasing Office and ITS to get the best possible price and ensure technical compatibility.	Y___ N___ In Progress___		
The product(s) have been implemented after careful coordination with both the functional and technology experts involved.	Y___ N___ In Progress___		
The product(s) have been tested after careful coordination with both the functional and technology experts directly involved in testing.	Y___ N___ In Progress___		
Coordination of regular maintenance and updates has been discussed and scheduled with ITS.	Y___ N___ In Progress___		
Disposal of disabled technology has been coordinated with ITS.	Y___ N___ In Progress___		

Appendix A

Appendix B:

IT Audit & Assessment Template

Resource: bootcamp.uxdesign.cc

IT Audit & Assessment Template

Technology Resource:_____

Universal Questions	Answer	Description & Comments
Do we know the problem that we want to solve with and/or application use for this resource?		
Are there any fundamental deficiencies that can't be addressed by existing technology updates/stack/etc?		
In which stage of the adoption cycle is the technology now?		
Is the technology public or proprietary?		
Is the technology documented?		
Does the technology require extensive training or the learning curve steep?		
Do we have enough in house competencies to adopt and maintain the technology?		

Appendix B

IT Audit & Assessment Template

Technology Resource:_____

Monetary Questions	Answer	Description & Comments
Does the technology require high up front investment(s)?		
Does the technology have high maintenance costs?		
Will the technology allow us to meet instructional goals? (possibly resulting in enrollment increases?)		
Will the technology allow us to meet operational goals? (possibly resulting in efficiencies?)		
Will the technology generate revenue/enrollment? (increase of revenue will exceed the cost of technology?)		
Does replacing the technology result in the need to replace peripheral technology associated with this resource?		

Appendix B

IT Audit & Assessment Template

Technology Resource:_____

IT Specific Questions	Answer	Description & Comments
Does the technology have an extensive support community? User groups? Others to work with when issues or new releases arise?		
Is the technology applicable to be used by one, several, or the majority of development languages/tools on campus?		
Is there a functional expert for the area that the technology is applicable to that understands the application from a front and/or back end perspective?		
Is there technologist on staff that understands the application from a front and/or back end perspective?		
What is the best time to implement this technology? Are resources to perform the implementation available at that time?		
What issues may this technology introduce?		
What is the expected life of this technology?		

Appendix B

IT Audit & Assessment Template

Technology Resource:_____

Other Questions to Consider:	Answer	Description & Comments

Appendix B

IT Audit & Assessment Template

Technology Resources Considered for Purchase	Rank For Purchase	Comments

Appendix B

IT Audit & Assessment Template

Technology Resources Considered for Disposal	Rank For Disposal	Comments

Appendix B