

An Administrators' Guide to Implementing Interactive Whiteboards

How do you successfully implement interactive whiteboards? The answer has been proven by schools and districts around the world – buy easy-to-use products like SMART Board™ interactive whiteboards and have an effective implementation plan.

Choosing SMART's teacher-friendly interactive whiteboards is just the first step toward a successful implementation. To support you in developing an effective plan, we've spoken to thousands of educators and our own in-house experts and gathered their advice on effective implementation in this easy-to-follow guide. Use it to introduce SMART Board interactive whiteboards in a way that is not only effective and efficient, but also easy and exciting for your staff and students.

"We made sure to put a SMART Board in our computer lab and media center/library, since these two areas serve all students in the school. This process was very successful for us. [It] allowed every student and teacher in the school to see the boards in action, to feel the excitement among other teachers and students, and to allow all teachers to truly see how easy it is to integrate the boards into your lessons."

Jeri Kitner, Math Teacher and Campus Technologist, Walnut Hill Elementary School, Dallas, Texas, United States

Step one: Clearly define the logistics around your installation

It's important to install an interactive whiteboard in an area where students can easily see the information being presented and teachers can easily access the technology. Just as important is determining who will have access to these new tools. And while sharing classroom technology among teachers may seem cost-efficient, educators agree this isn't an effective way to facilitate technology adoption. Teachers need regular and ongoing access to technology to learn how to use it effectively and develop related skills.

Help ensure a successful installation with the following strategies:

- For a single interactive whiteboard installation, place the board in a dedicated room with two dedicated users so they can support each other
- If you're installing several interactive whiteboards, install them in clusters in one grade level or subject area. Educators have found this approach to be effective since it gives teachers a chance to learn from each other and share ideas, lessons and resources.
- Mount a SMART Board interactive whiteboard with an integrated projector on the wall at the front of the classroom so students can easily see the content being presented. A stand-alone interactive whiteboard can also be mounted on the wall and used with a ceiling mounted projector.
- If the school does not permit items to be mounted on walls or ceilings, mount the interactive whiteboard on a floor stand and use it with a projector placed on a desk or trolley. It's best to have locking wheels on the trolley or desk that holds the projector to avoid knocking it out of alignment.
- If you have questions or if the installation suggestions we've provided don't work for your school, contact your local education consultant or authorized SMART reseller for help and advice. (**NOTE:** Education consultants are not available in all geographies. Contact SMART to learn more about our consultants.)

“A SMART Board is only as great as the user. We provided our staff with SMART training, and each of our schools trained a SMART teacher. SMART teachers provide extra help and further training to teachers who want to expand their interactive whiteboard knowledge.”

Jason Romero, Principal,
Sunset Elementary School,
San Ysidro, California, United States

“SMART has been there to support us with each step. They have led us along a path that has excited every teacher and student.”

Anna Alfano, Technology Specialist,
Essrig Elementary,
Tampa, Florida, United States

Step two: Make teacher training a high priority

Training is absolutely essential to a successful technology implementation. With proper training, your teachers will quickly develop the skills they need to effectively use SMART products in their classrooms. An effective training program will also ensure that your products are used often and to their highest potential, resulting in a strong return on your technology investment.

Use the following strategies to implement an effective training program:

- Initiate your training program before your products are even installed. With this approach, you can take advantage of the excitement that generally surrounds the installation of new technology and give teachers the opportunity to use their interactive whiteboards immediately.
- Ask teachers to commit to the technology by incorporating it into each lesson. Hold brainstorming sessions with teachers to generate ideas about how best to do this.
- Tell your teachers about the variety of free training SMART offers, including 40 online training sessions and a multitude of Quick Reference Guides, Two-Minute Tutorials and Hands-on Practice exercises. To learn more, visit SMART’s training center at www.smarttech.com/trainingcenter.
- Take advantage of one of SMART’s many affordable, on-site training sessions delivered by professional trainers and designed to help teachers get the most out of their SMART products. Learn more by visiting SMART’s training center at www.smarttech.com/trainingcenter.
- Continue to train teachers on an ongoing basis to maintain the momentum of your implementation and encourage continued use of the products
- Contact your local education consultant for training tips and ideas. (**NOTE:** Education consultants are not available in all geographies. Contact SMART to learn more about our consultants.)

Step three: Ensure help is easily accessible

Combining intuitive technology with comprehensive support is the ideal way to ensure the success of your technology implementation. When support is free and easy to access, you and your staff can solve problems and answer questions quickly without wasting valuable time and spending additional technology dollars.

Use the following strategies to help teachers find support:

- Post the contact information for SMART’s technical support team in an easy-to-find place, such as your school’s website or intranet. During business days, more than 100 customer service representatives from SMART’s support team are available toll-free via telephone, e-mail and online forum, 13 hours a day.
- Introduce your staff to SMART’s online self-serve database of over 1,000 support documents, including how-to instructions, technical specifications and product information
- Provide your school’s IT staff with training so they can easily support teachers during and after the initial technology implementation. SMART offers affordable technical training sessions that equip staff members with the knowledge and resources needed to provide effective, on-site technical support for SMART Board interactive whiteboards. To learn more, visit the training center at www.smarttech.com/trainingcenter.

“The interactive whiteboard has helped me greatly in delivering my classes, since it gives the children a much broader perspective of the subject we are covering. It motivates them to participate in class and to interact in a more active way with the teachers. I am in love with the technology of this board, mainly because it allows me to create my own material, as well as to download software with complementary information for my lesson.”

Judith Olvera, English and Computer Teacher for preschool and elementary, Instituto Juventud, Mexico

“Twain has a highly motivated staff. We have found that providing ample support, staff recognition and positive feedback has created an atmosphere where the staff takes initiative and pursues instructional excellence.”

Mike Rood, former Principal, Mark Twain High School, San Diego Unified School District, San Diego, California, United States

Step four: Make it easy for teachers to access classroom content

The idea of creating or searching for content to use on an interactive whiteboard can be overwhelming to a busy teacher. But having relevant, interactive, ready-to-go content will give even the novice technology user a quick and convenient way to get started with the SMART Board interactive whiteboard. Once teachers are comfortable using the technology and have a supply of ready-made content, they'll be more likely to develop their own content to share with other educators.

Use the following strategies to help teachers access content:

- Introduce teachers to more than 5,000 SMART-created and teacher-created lesson activities available through the SMART Exchange at www.exchange.smarttech.com and on the education website at education.smarttech.com/lessonactivities. All lesson activity content is subject-specific and correlated to international curriculum standards.
- Tell teachers about the thousands of content resources available in SMART Notebook software's Gallery. This collection offers more than 6,600 learning objects, including images, video clips and animations.
- Introduce your teachers to SMART's Lesson Activity Toolkit. It offers customizable tools and templates to help teachers create engaging and professional lessons.
- Create an area on your school's website, intranet or network where teachers can easily share the content and lessons they create as they become more familiar with their interactive whiteboards
- Search the Web to find thousands of pieces of teacher-created content. SMART has a massive community of users who post their content on school websites, wikis, blogs and social networking sites. A quick Web search for additional teacher-created content using search terms such as *SMART Notebook files* or *SMART lesson activities* will direct your staff to a vast amount of content.
- Encourage your staff to subscribe to the free newsletters SMART offers specifically for teachers. These publications provide readers with best practices, tips and stories of how other educators are successfully using SMART products in the classroom. Learn more at education.smarttech.com/publications.

Step five: Encourage professional development and community building

Connecting with a community of peers and having access to continued professional development can energize teachers while encouraging continued growth and learning. With excited teachers who are consistently finding new and effective ways to help students achieve curricular success, your technology implementation is more likely to be successful.

Help foster professional development and community using the following strategies:

- Encourage teachers to share their technology experiences whether they are in the same or different schools. This can be accomplished through in-person meetings or by joining online user groups and communities.
- Encourage teachers to become members of SMART's online community, the SMART Exchange, at exchange.smarttech.com. Teachers can post questions, tips and success stories and can even share lesson activities or join a local user group.

- Introduce teachers to SMART’s professional development opportunities, including the SMART Exemplary Educator program and SMART Showcase Schools. Learn more at education.smarttech.com.
- Hold regular feedback sessions with teachers to discuss ideas and issues related to using interactive whiteboards and to recognize teachers’ accomplishments.

“Even though we have been using SMART products for the past 10 years, we have continued to maintain the momentum by providing regular support for our educators. Numerous SMART training and professional development sessions are held each year to accommodate teachers at their own comfort level. In many cases, SMART champions arise from each session, and those individuals go on to support and assist their colleagues.”

Joey Savoy, Technology Mentor,
School District 16,
Miramichi, New Brunswick, Canada

Step six: Keep the enthusiasm going

A successful technology implementation will never really be finished. In fact, implementations are most successful when the need for long-term growth and development is acknowledged. Ongoing staff training, professional development, and support will encourage constant innovation and ensure continued successful technology use in your classrooms for years to come.

Build ongoing momentum into your implementation using the following strategies:

- Remember that SMART is always developing new resources, programs and content designed to help your schools achieve continued learning success. See how our support for technology implementation is continuously growing by visiting education.smarttech.com.
- Connect with one of SMART’s education consultants for continued support with your technology implementation plans. These consultants can help ensure you have the right training, professional development and tools to incorporate technology into all subjects and grade levels.
- Read practical articles on technology integration in the classroom, written by SMART’s CEO and co-founder, Nancy Knowlton. These articles compile information from Nancy’s conversations with thousands of educators around the world and offer useful information that is sure to support your ongoing implementation efforts. Visit education.smarttech.com to learn more.