

Technology As an Asset

How to Move Past Maintenance Mode to IT
Investments that Generate A Return

COLLEGIS SUMMIT 2025
DISRUPTED
BREAKTHROUGH THINKING. BOLD RESULTS.

Topics

Session Objective

Reframe IT as a strategic investment tied to growth, resilience, and institutional priorities.

- 1) Current Environment**
- 2) Strategic Role of IT**
- 3) Driving ROI- Real Life Examples**
- 4) Framework for Leaders**
- 5) Questions**

Current Environment

The Market Situation

Enrollment Pressures and Demographic Shifts

Technology critical to reaching non-traditional students

Advanced analytics to predict yield

Student Expectations Increasing

Personalized consumer-grade, digital, mobile first experience

24 x 7 technology support

Cybersecurity Threats and Expense Exploding

Higher Ed continues to be a target due to sensitive data and historically poor security posture

Financial Pressures Mounting

Flat or declining enrollments coupled with operational inefficiencies

Student/Market ROI demands putting pressure on tuition fees

AI and Data-Driven Decision Making

Personalized learning, enrollment optimization, advising, operations

Dependency on data is greater than ever

Acceleration of Online & Hybrid Learning

Flexible learning platforms

Robust content creation, LMS, video and collaboration tools need to stay relevant

The Higher Ed Technology Reality



Technology Debt

Outdated systems that are costly to maintain (or upgrade), less secure, and harder to integrate with modern solutions. “Good enough” mentality is compounding the issue.



Data Silos

Data that is not integrated does not allow for accurate insights and reporting; lack of a strategic plan creates misguided investments; users are not properly following processes.



Staffing Challenges

Problems attracting and retaining qualified, certified, experienced professionals. Understaffed IT departments trying to fulfill all critical roles that are ever changing.



Ineffective Governance & Change Management

Duplicative, disconnected, poorly deployed technology ecosystems wastes resources, increases compliance risks, erodes faculty and student trust in technology.

80% of IT Budgets

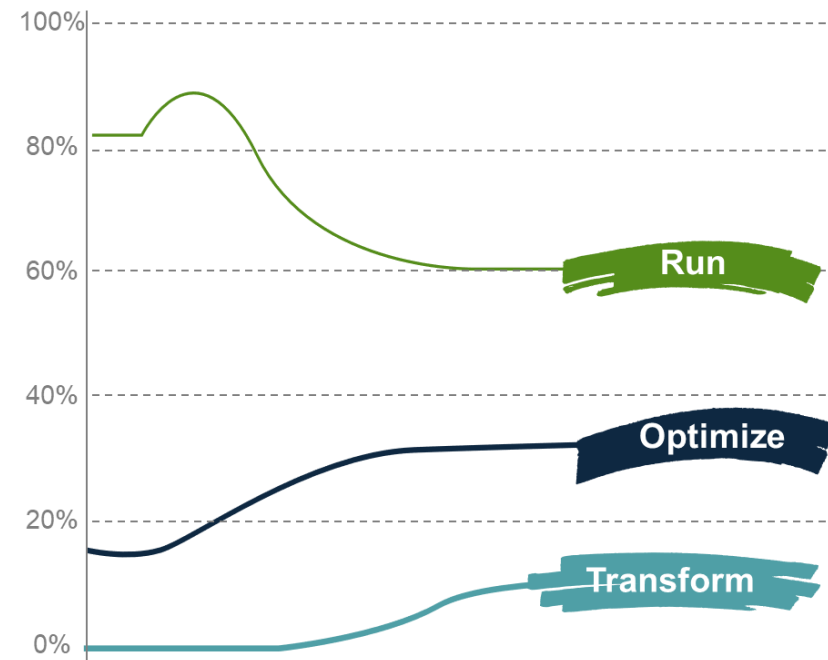
The amount institutions spend on day-to-day operations

The Opportunity

Shifting just 5-10% of “Run” spend unlocks real dollars for student and institutional impact

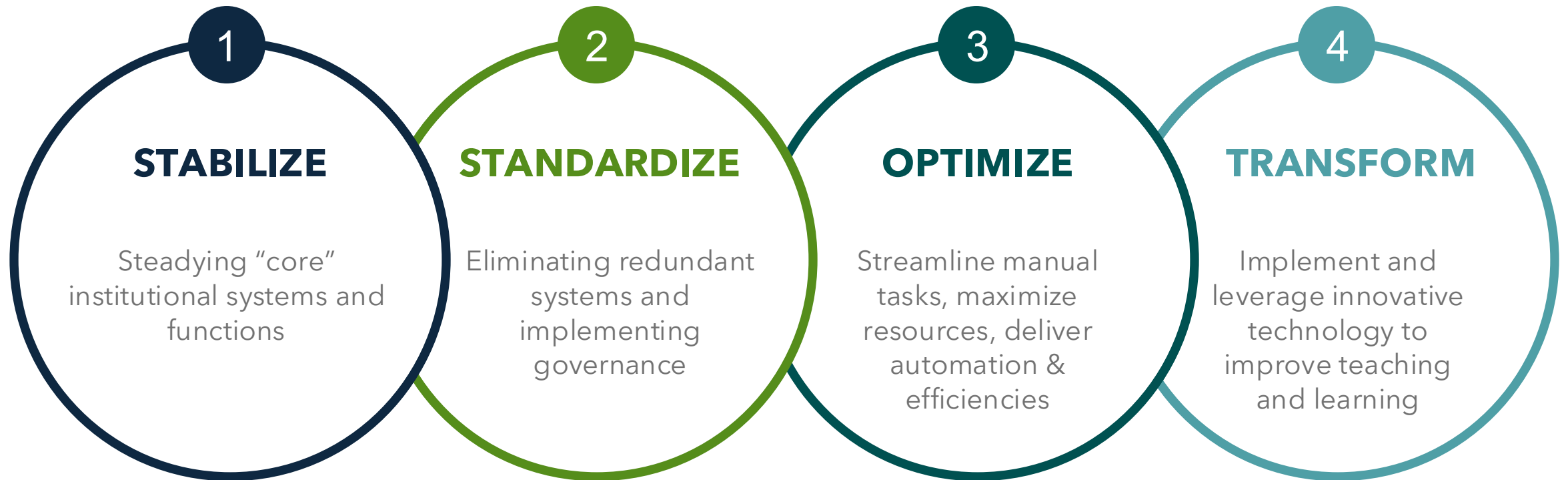
Why it matters:

- Cost of inaction isn't neutral, it's compounding
- Competitive disadvantage
- Increased risk exposure
- Operational strain on staff
- Financial inefficiency



Strategic Role of IT

Roadmap to IT as a Strategic Asset



Technology As The Foundation- ROI

Growth



Boost Enrollment with analytics that identify prospects, predict yield, and personalize outreach.

Strengthen Retention through early alerts, data-informed advising, and tailored student support.

Accelerate New Programs by using market insights and agile platforms to rapidly test and launch offerings.

Agility



Harness Data & AI as leadership tools for smarter decisions.

Enable Institutional Agility with flexible, scalable technology that adapts to changing student and market needs.

Operational Efficiency through automation, cloud adoption, AI-assisted workflows

Risk



Minimize Risk with a secure, resilient technology ecosystem that ensures business continuity and reduces costs

Driving ROI

Real life examples, across our partner base.

Risk Mitigation

- Investments in **modern cybersecurity** ecosystem (people, process, technology) are foundational
- **Regulatory** alignment avoids fines and costly remediation efforts
- **Business continuity** of mission-critical systems (SIS, LMS, CRM, website, finance, etc.) is required

Student Experience

- **Personalized** recruitment & enrollment journeys: Use CRM + data analytics to identify, target, and **convert** best-fit students
- AI-driven chatbots & self-service portals: Provide 24/7 engagement to **reduce melt** and **improve yield**
- Digital campus experiences: Mobile-first services (registration, advising, payments) **improve satisfaction** and **retention**

Operational Efficiencies

- Cloud migration & automation: **Reduces** infrastructure **costs** while **increasing agility**
- **Elimination** of redundant technologies/**waste**
- Integrating systems drive **business process automation** and workflows
- Training to expand use of technology capabilities and drive **user satisfaction** and **efficiencies**

Framework for Leaders

Assess First! You can't change what you don't understand.

Flip the Script

- Investment vs. Expense mindset
- Measure IT against growth, risk, and mission impact
- Agile vs. Bureaucratic
- No gatekeeping - give users direct access to data

Challenge Status Quo

- Does it align with long-term institutional strategy?
- Will this investment drive enrollment or retention?
- How does it impact student experience?
- Does it reduce risk?
- Is AI adoption happening responsibly?

Move Fast

- IT Must Be Capable of Moving at the Velocity of the Business
- Implement Governance & Change Management
- Build an adaptive IT roadmap that is regularly reviewed to ensure strategic alignment

Q&A

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ROI- Diving Deeper (1)

1. Enrollment Growth & Student Success

- Personalized recruitment & enrollment journeys: Use CRM + data analytics to identify, target, and convert best-fit students.
- AI-driven chatbots & self-service tools: Provide 24/7 engagement to reduce melt and improve yield.
- Student success analytics: Predictive tools flag at-risk students, enabling proactive advising and retention interventions—directly impacting tuition revenue.

2. New Program Development & Market Expansion

- Labor market analytics: IT-supported tools (e.g., Burning Glass, EMSI) identify in-demand skills and careers, helping institutions launch revenue-generating programs faster.
- Flexible learning platforms: Support online, hybrid, and micro-credential offerings that reach new student populations (adult learners, corporate partners, global markets).

3. Data-Informed Decision-Making

- Unified data strategy: Integrate SIS, LMS, CRM, and financial systems into dashboards for enrollment management, academic planning, and financial forecasting.
- Data monetization opportunities: Partnerships with industry for anonymized insights on learner trends.

ROI- Diving Deeper (2)

4. Operational Efficiency & Cost Avoidance

- Cloud migration & automation: Reduces infrastructure costs while increasing agility.
- Robotic Process Automation (RPA): Streamlines back-office processes (admissions, HR, finance), freeing staff to focus on higher-value work.
- Shared services models: Consolidating IT functions across campuses or with partners reduces duplication.

5. External Partnerships & Revenue Streams

- Corporate learning partnerships: Provide IT-enabled training, upskilling, and certification platforms for employers.
- EdTech partnerships/incubators: Leverage IT to support entrepreneurial ecosystems and attract grant funding.

6. Enhanced Student & Alumni Engagement

- Digital campus experiences: Mobile-first services (registration, advising, payments) improve satisfaction and retention.
- Alumni networks & advancement: IT-enabled engagement platforms help track alumni, improve giving campaigns, and boost endowment growth.

ROI- Diving Deeper (3)

7. Brand & Differentiation

- Smart campus technologies (IoT, AR/VR labs, makerspaces) attract prospective students and faculty.
- Research computing infrastructure can help win grants, elevate institutional prestige, and support faculty productivity.

8. Cybersecurity as Risk Reduction & ROI

- Investments in modern cybersecurity (threat detection, MFA, zero-trust frameworks) protect against breaches that could lead to massive financial, reputational, and compliance costs.
- Regulatory alignment (FERPA, HIPAA, GDPR, state privacy laws) avoids fines and costly remediation efforts.
- Insurance savings: Stronger cyber posture can directly reduce cyber insurance premiums and limit exclusions.
- Business continuity & resilience: Ensures uptime for mission-critical systems (SIS, LMS, finance), reducing the risk of enrollment disruption or research grant loss.