

How higher education is creating smarter, more connected campuses

A new survey developed in partnership between CommScope and University Business (UB) asked higher education leaders about how they are using Smart Campus technologies, including ubiquitous wi-fi internet access, smart facilities, mobile technologies and more. The survey was deployed to the UB audience in October 2020 and some 253 higher education leaders participated.

Importance of reliable wi-fi

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of reliable, ubiquitous internet connectivity to their campus communities, on a scale of 1-5 stars with 5 being "Extremely important." When asked how important this was to their students, the average was 4.9 stars, while the importance to faculty was rated an average of 4.7 stars.

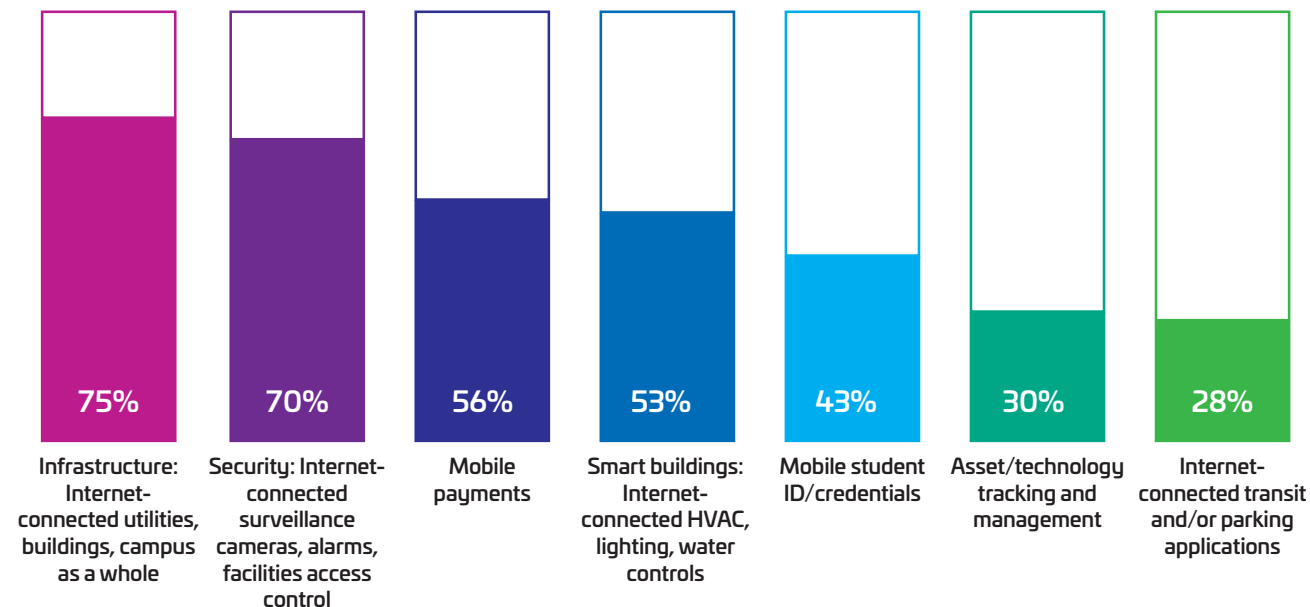
When asked how easy it was to connect to reliable wi-fi inside campus buildings at their institution, 60% of respondents selected the answer "Easy most of the time; occasional problems," acknowledging

that there are some challenges with meeting these expectations from students and faculty.

The Smart Campus

Respondents were asked to identify which Smart Campus technologies their institution is currently using, selecting all that apply from a list. The three leading answers were "Infrastructure: Internet-connected utilities, buildings, campus as a whole" at 75%, "Security: Internet-connected surveillance cameras, alarms, facilities access control" at 70%, and "Mobile payments" at 56%.

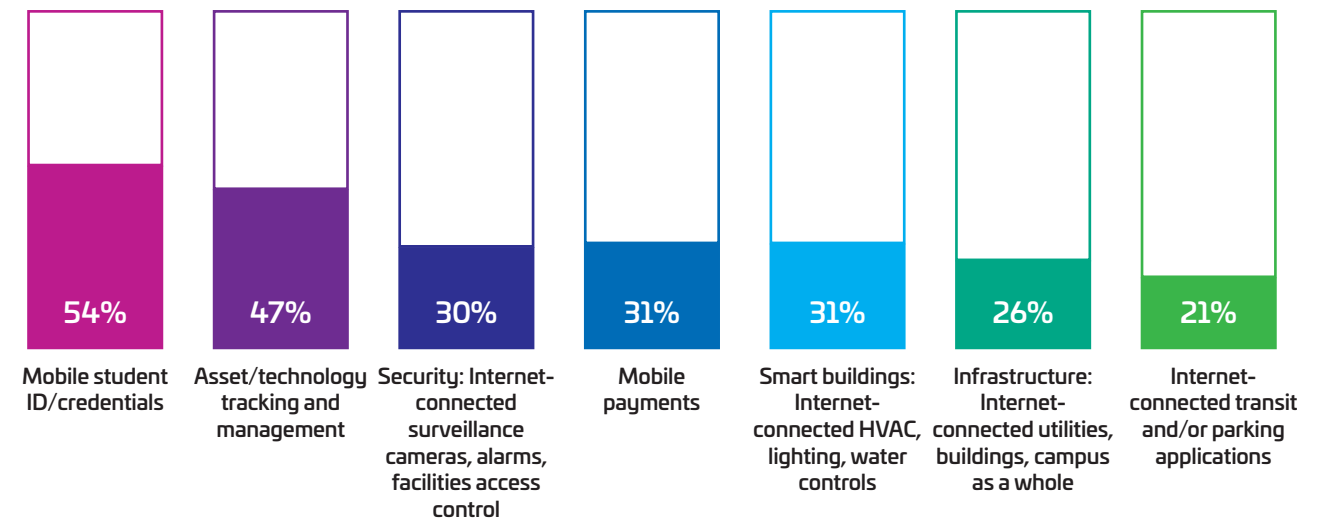
Which of these Smart Campus technologies is your institution currently using?



The next question presented respondents with the same list of technologies and asked which would most benefit their institutions, if they weren't already using them. The leading answers were "Mobile student ID/credentials" at 54%, "Asset/technology tracking and management" at 47% and "Security: Internet-connected surveillance cameras, alarms, facilities access control" at 30%.

Respondents were then asked specifically if their institution would benefit from having campus utilities (lighting, power, water, climate control) and other infrastructure connected to the internet as part of a Smart Campus, providing real-time monitoring and automation, and improving efficiency. 66% of respondents said Yes, with 28% saying "Definitely." Another 23% said "We already have this capability," while just 11% said No.

Which of these Smart Campus technologies (that you don't already use) do you think would most benefit your institution?



Campus asset management

When asked to describe how their institution monitors, manages and tracks the use of campus buildings, rooms and assets, by far, the top two answers were "Mostly manual processes, with some recently-added digital tools" at 44% and "Mostly digital processes, but still requiring some manual processes and tasks" at 43%.

Another 9% selected "Entirely manual processes and tasks that haven't changed in many years," while just 3% said "Entirely digital process, with sophisticated automation and remote management capabilities."

"It's no surprise that students and faculty expect and depend on ubiquitous wi-fi internet access on campus," says Rich Nedwich, Global Director of Education at CommScope. "But always meeting these expectations can be a challenge. As the survey found, an increasing number of institutions are creating more connected campuses through a variety of technologies. By using a powerful, reliable network infrastructure to create a Smart Campus, colleges and universities can improve learning, productivity, efficiency, convenience and safety."

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