

# Are smart learning environments future-proof?

**Excerpt:** Smart phones, smart TVs, smart homes. What's next? Smart-technology is not just confined to the domestic. It'll soon become a reality in education that would benefit our learners. Read on to find out more!

A special sleeve that transforms a whiteboard marker into sophisticated technology that can convert handwriting into digital text and a motion-censor camera that swivels and follows a trainer to record a lecture for online streaming, are these essential components of classrooms of the future? Projectors that negate the need for whiteboards and flipchart paper while still allowing for interaction and chairs designed for maximum versatility and collaboration while also allowing one to study alone, are these what makes a smart learning environment?

What exactly is smart anyway? The world has undergone a drastic change in the way we interact with one another and search for information in the last two decades, with the rise of disruptive technology like Facebook and Google that have irreversibly changed the way we gather information and interact with friends. Due to these changes, the concept of a mobile phone just made for calling and messaging has evolved to a smartphone, with a whole new level of connection, complexity and function. Since then, 'smart' things have emerged everywhere, such as smart homes, smart refrigerators, smart washing machines, and even smart watches. Things that were once banal and served a single, simple function have evolved to become more complex, to meet Man's needs better.

Likewise, classrooms are no longer a one-way street and physical space for teachers to lecture on and on to a big group of students. Whiteboards and markers are no longer just physical tools, they have become smart and interactive. Teachers no longer have to duplicate what they write on the board by typing it out again after the lesson if they wish to share it via email. Shy students no longer have to keep their brilliant opinions to themselves. They can simply write on an iPad and that knowledge can be shared to everyone's benefit. Missing a class no longer means you never know what you missed in that lesson, with the help of Lecture Capture Systems and motion-censor cameras that stream it online. Learning has become a lot more flexible, a lot easier and a lot more engaging. This is the future of classrooms and education. This is the smart learning environment.