

Opportunities for IT and Telecom Companies in Education

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The education sector represents a vast and growing opportunity for IT and telecom companies seeking new markets for their products and services. From cloud infrastructure to broadband provision, cybersecurity to device management, schools are increasingly dependent on digital solutions to deliver learning, manage operations, and communicate effectively with students, staff, and parents.

Yet, despite this high demand for digital transformation, a surprising number of schools say they are not being approached by enough suppliers—especially those offering innovative or cost-effective alternatives. In many cases, schools are actively inviting new vendors to get in touch, citing a lack of competition and limited awareness of what’s available in the market.

Digital Dependency Creates Demand

The shift to digital learning, accelerated by the pandemic, has made robust IT and telecom infrastructure essential to modern education. Schools now rely on everything from cloud-based learning management systems to video conferencing, interactive whiteboards, high-speed internet, and mobile device management. Behind the scenes, data protection, cyber safety, and network reliability are equally critical.

This reliance means that schools need dependable partners to help manage and

maintain this infrastructure—not just once, but over the long term. Many education leaders are now actively seeking suppliers who can offer support contracts, remote monitoring, and scalable systems that evolve with their needs.

Gaps in the Market

Despite the high level of need, there remains a surprisingly small pool of suppliers actively engaging with schools—especially in certain regions or among smaller academies and maintained schools. In many cases, schools are left with little choice but to work with legacy providers, even if those providers are no longer offering the best value or most up-to-date technology.

Several headteachers and school business managers have openly stated that they want to hear from new suppliers, particularly those who can:

- Offer more competitive pricing
- Bring innovative or future-proofed solutions
- Provide better customer service or local support
- Help with compliance around data protection and cybersecurity

The reality is that some schools are operating with outdated systems simply because they don't know what alternatives exist—or because no one has taken the time to contact them.

A Missed Opportunity for Suppliers

For IT and telecom companies, this presents a significant and largely untapped opportunity. Schools are long-term customers, often with stable funding and clear procurement cycles. Many are part of multi-academy trusts (MATs), which allows suppliers to win multi-school deals if they can demonstrate value and reliability.

Companies that make the effort to understand the needs of the education sector—and approach schools with tailored offers—can build strong, ongoing relationships. Importantly, it's not just about selling hardware or broadband connections; schools also need:

- Helpdesk support and managed services
- Training for staff on digital tools and cybersecurity
- Strategic advice on long-term digital planning
- Cost-effective device leasing or cloud solutions

By positioning themselves as trusted partners rather than just vendors, IT and telecom companies can secure recurring business and contribute meaningfully to educational improvement.

Understanding the Procurement Landscape

Some suppliers hesitate to approach schools, assuming that procurement rules are overly complex or that budgets are always tight. While it's true that schools must follow certain procurement protocols, especially for larger contracts, many smaller purchases are within the discretion of school leaders or business managers.

Moreover, budget pressures mean that schools are constantly seeking better value—and are willing to switch providers if the service, price, and support are right. Being on a procurement framework (such as those provided by Crown Commercial Service or ESPO) can help build credibility, but it's not always a prerequisite for engagement.

A Sector Looking for Solutions

The bottom line is this: schools need digital solutions, and they're open to working with new suppliers. The current lack of competition in many areas isn't due to a lack of demand—it's due to a lack of awareness and outreach from the supplier side.

For IT and telecom companies willing to invest in building relationships and offering education-specific solutions, the opportunity is clear: a large, stable, and underserved market that is asking—sometimes even pleading—for more choice.

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