

SMART

The Consideration Checklist

Questions to ask to ensure intuitive technology

Selecting the right EdTech solution isn't easy. Investing in interactive displays is a significant decision, as the technology should be both long-lasting and impactful.

At SMART, we understand the challenges you face. From balancing tight budgets to selecting tools that truly enhance learning and support teaching and learning effectively. Our Consideration Checklist is designed to help guide you through this critical decision-making process. This comprehensive list of questions and criteria will help you identify the best technology solutions for your needs, empowering educators and engaging students.



What makes technology 'easy to use'?

Technology should support teachers and students without requiring them to read an entire manual – it simply allows a 'walk up and use' experience. 'Ease of use' in EdTech refers to how simple it is for teachers, students, administrators and IT to operate and integrate the technology into their classroom experiences.

When looking for intuitive technology, choose tools that:

- ✓ **Require minimal training to get started.**
- ✓ **Provide a user-friendly interface and intuitive navigation.**
- ✓ **Allow educators to focus on what matters – students.**

Choosing user-friendly technology is crucial for boosting engagement and teacher adoption. Complex tools cause frustration and disengagement, leading to poor utilization and wasted resources.

Prioritizing intuitive technology ensures educators can easily take advantage of your investment, leading to meaningful improvements in teaching and learning for years to come.





Touch and ink experience

The touch and annotation experiences are essential when determining the effectiveness of an interactive display. When touch and ink functions work as teachers and students expect, it invites collaborative, engaging learning experiences and fosters stronger product adoption.

Can all users write, erase, and interact instinctively?

	SMART Board	Competitor Board
1. Can multiple users select objects with a finger, write with a pen, and erase with their palm at the same time?		
2. Is writing on the display as easy as picking up a pen, or does it require the user to select a tool from a menu or take other steps?		
3. How different is the experience between Windows and macOS? Do teachers need to learn different workflows to use different connected devices?		
4. Can teachers connect their Windows or Mac device without compromising on points of touch? Will Apple users have the same touch ability with multiple users?		
5. Can teachers connect their Windows or Mac device without compromising the inking experience? Can users ink over files or apps without freezing the screen or needing to select an annotation tool?		
6. How does the display interface with Windows Ink and other programs and apps with native inking tools? Does the display switch tools automatically without requiring teachers to constantly make menu selections?		



How SMART helps:

SMART is the only interactive display vendor who provides true multi-user touch technology. Students and teachers can write, touch, and erase at the same time without interfering with each other.



Whiteboard

Whiteboarding tools are a teachers’ main resource, designed to do everything they need without requiring constant switching to other apps or third-party solutions.

The whiteboard should offer a flexible platform to present information visually, catering to various learning styles. Educators should be able to use templates, run activities, broadcast to student devices, and encourage collaboration on one platform.

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Does the whiteboard have everything needed to teach with?

	SMART Board	Competitor Board
1. Does the whiteboard offer integrated image and video search without ads? Does it use SafeSearch for trusted results?		
2. Are the whiteboard’s built-in templates and activities grounded in research and based on practical educational use-cases?		
3. Does the whiteboard app have interactive digital manipulatives such as geometric rulers, math tools, digital counters, or fraction tiles? How easy is it to add resources to a lesson on the fly?		
4. Can multi-page PDF files be opened via the whiteboard application?		
5. Does the software offer built-in digital manipulatives to bridge learning gaps for students who need help understanding abstract concepts without relying on verbal language?		
6. Can teachers easily spotlight or focus attention on key parts of the display to support students with visual impairments or to help students focus?		



How SMART helps:

As the creators of the original SMART Board over 30 years ago, whiteboarding is our specialty. SMART makes it easy for educators to walk-up-and-teach with robust and versatile tools that foster engagement, collaboration, student voice and fun.

Connectivity and interactivity

When selecting technology for your classroom, it is vital to choose displays that integrate with your other tools and hardware. You’ve already invested in resources and software; your hardware should support the tools that your educators are already using. Ensuring compatibility and interactivity among tools fosters a cohesive and effective learning environment that benefits everyone.

 Does the display integrate with other classroom technology?	SMART Board	Competitor Board
1. Does the display have an included screen share option?		
2. Does the screen share solution support large class sizes with unlimited connections and collaboration features for teachers?		
3. Does the display offer student device integration in the whiteboard app?		
4. How many devices can connect and contribute at once?		
5. Are additional tools such as text, touch, erase, and highlight available to connected devices?		
6. Do you have to switch to another app or web app for key features like student device contribution or interactive activities?		
7. During lesson delivery, can you switch between teacher-paced and student-paced modes?		
8. Do students have a variety of ways to connect and contribute to learning through the display?		
9. Can students view and contribute to the content on the display using any internet-enabled device?		
10. Are Wi-Fi 6E and Bluetooth available? Can the display use a Wi-Fi hotspot provide student devices with connectivity?		



How SMART helps:

Our displays integrate effortlessly with your existing classroom technology. Whether you’re running a Mac or a PC, a Google or Microsoft environment, our displays integrate to support large class sizes and multiple device connections without compromising performance.

Inclusive classroom tools

Every student should be able to see themselves in their learning. Inclusive EdTech plays a pivotal role in providing tailored learning experiences that cater to diverse needs. These technologies foster a supportive environment where all students can participate, engage, boost their confidence, and perform well academically.



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Does the display support ALL learners?

	SMART Board	Competitor Board
1. Can student devices connect to the display to view live content on their own devices? Do students have zoom and navigation controls to see content more clearly?		
2. Can teachers spotlight or focus attention on key parts of the display to support students with visual impairments or to help students focus?		
3. Does the software consider Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to promote student engagement, representation, and expression?		
4. Can educators personalize learning with easily accessible activities, games, and graphic organizers to create an engaging environment?		



How SMART helps:

SMART encourages the use of student devices with features such as two-way interaction and optional student pacing. This means that students can collaborate with learning activities from anywhere in the room and remain involved in the classroom discussion.

Accessibility for All Classrooms:

Selecting EdTech that meets the diverse needs of all learners is essential. EdTech offers personalized, adaptive learning experiences, enhancing engagement and understanding for students with varying learning styles and abilities, ensuring that every student, regardless of their learning preferences, can take part in learning.



Does the display support students’ varying unique learning needs?

	SMART Board	Competitor Board
1. Does the display offer physical tools beyond pens that provide alternate methods for interacting with the display?		
2. Can these tools be customized to allow any student to express themselves and collaborate with their peers?		
3. Does the display provide a simple interface that students with disabilities can interact with easily?		
4. Is the display compatible with a range of accessibility products using standard USB or HDMI connections? Does the display come with subscription-free software and pre-made, interactive education resources?		



How SMART helps:

We design technology that removes barriers and encourages all learners, including those in specialized classrooms, to engage in learning experiences. By providing adaptable, flexible and inclusive tools that support diverse learning needs, students can take part in learning in ways that suit them best.

Longevity and technical capabilities

Investing in technology built for longevity is crucial for schools that need to make their dollars count. Interactive displays should be seen as long-term investments that remain in the classroom and evolve with the changing education environment.



✓ Does the display support long-term usability and upgradability?

Android Lifespan:	SMART Board	Competitor Board
1. Will the display receive over-the-air updates and how long will the manufacturer support the current Android version?		
2. Does the vendor offer upgradable modules for the display? How old can the display be for it to be still eligible for upgrades?		
3. Does the display manufacturer have a proven track record of providing upgrades to displays' embedded Android past standard Android support timeframes?		

Hardware longevity:	SMART Board	Competitor Board
1. Has the display gone through accelerated life testing for extreme heat, pressure, voltage, and force?		
2. Is there an option to add a fully integrated computer that includes the latest Windows operating system?		



How SMART helps:

SMART displays undergo rigorous accelerated life testing so you can feel confident your investment will last. Our displays come with a ≥50,000 hour LED lifespan and receive continuous software updates so you don't have to keep replacing your tech.

Environment and sustainability

Selecting products that align with your district’s values, especially those conscious about energy usage and environmental sustainability, is essential. Sustainable technology not only minimizes your environmental impact, but also maximizes efficiency and reduces energy costs.



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Does the manufacturer prioritize sustainability?

	SMART Board	Competitor Board
1. Is the display ENERGY STAR® certified, EPEAT Climate+ registered and EU Ecodesign compliant?		
2. Does the vendor support environmental initiatives? (e.g Responsible material sourcing, energy-efficient manufacturing, slim-pack shipping, etc.)		
3. Does the display meet your energy efficiency standards?		
4. Are there room sensors built-in to the display that can monitor health and safety concerns such as air quality and temperature?		
5. Does the display include user-adjustable power saving settings?		



How SMART helps:

Exceptional energy efficiency helps to lower both your operating costs and your carbon footprint. With paths to upgradability, you can keep your tech in the classroom and out of the landfill.

IT costs, security and data privacy

A display designed for ease of use means less wasted time and money for administrators and support teams. IT teams are enabled to fix and update devices from anywhere, reducing the need for on-site support and offering strong security features to keep devices safe.

 How does the technology support reduced IT costs, security and data privacy?	SMART Board	Competitor Board
1. Does the display include full-featured remote management software? Does it allow you to manage groups of devices, or only manage displays individually?		
2. Does the embedded computing protect user's files, settings, and personal information by offering personalized user profiles?		
3. Does the display offer multiple sign-in methods?		
4. Do you need an admin to administer user profiles, set up individual user profiles, and recover passwords? Or can users self-serve?		
5. Do device profiles utilize your district's security settings for sign in, such as multi-factor authentication with Google and Microsoft?		
6. Is there a sign out or 'clean up' feature that securely logs users out from cloud storage and apps? Can administrators remotely clear content from the interactive display?		
7. Can users search, install and favorite verified apps from a native app store or the Google Play store?		
8. Can administrators lock down Android settings and limit access to Google Play?		



How SMART helps:

Privacy is our default at SMART. We offer secure, worry-free data protection using best-in-class Amazon Web Services and Google Cloud data centers with ISO 27001 and SOC 2/3 certifications. As a GDPR-compliant company, we prioritize the security of student and teacher information while enhancing IT efficiency.

Support and Professional Development

When investing in EdTech, you’re not just selecting a product – you’re choosing a partner to support your educational goals and initiatives. Comprehensive support and professional development are crucial throughout the life of your display.





What support and training does the vendor provide?

	SMART Board	Competitor Board
1. Do you gain access to a team of experienced, former educators dedicated to supporting customers during implementation?		
2. Does the vendor offer online resources and webinars that include both functional and pedagogical professional development?		
3. Does the vendor provide online technical training?		
4. Does the vendor offer live phone support, or just email, ticketing and chat?		
5. Does the vendor offer support in your time zone and language?		
6. What warranty options are available for the display? How long can the warranty be extended for?		



How SMART helps:

SMART brings decades of experience and expertise in educational technology, inspiring educators to use technology in innovative ways that maximize student engagement and success. Our professional learning is grounded in research and aligns with what works best for learning. We offer onboarding support, on-demand resources, professional learning and global communities to maximize your investment and empower teachers to achieve outstanding success.

Why SMART is the best choice for EdTech buyers

SMART displays check all the boxes, providing comprehensive solutions that address every aspect of modern classroom needs. SMART is the best decision for EdTech buyers because:

- **Ease of Use:** SMART displays are designed to be user-friendly, requiring minimal training and allowing educators to focus on teaching, not troubleshooting.
- **Seamless Touch and Ink Experience:** Our displays offer intuitive touch and ink capabilities, ensuring teachers and students can write, erase, and interact naturally and effortlessly.
- **Comprehensive Whiteboarding Tools:** SMART whiteboards are robust and versatile, integrating seamlessly with various educational activities and tools, minimizing the need for third-party solutions.
- **Connectivity and Interactivity:** SMART displays integrate effortlessly with existing classroom technology, supporting large class sizes and multiple device connections without compromising performance.
- **Inclusive and Accessible:** SMART displays cater to all learners, including those with diverse support needs, by providing adaptable and inclusive tools.
- **Longevity and Sustainability:** Built to last, SMART displays undergo rigorous testing and receive continuous updates, ensuring long-term usability and reducing environmental impact. Exceptional energy efficiency helps to lower both your operating costs and carbon footprint.
- **Security and Data Privacy:** SMART solutions prioritize security and data privacy, offering robust features that protect user information and support IT efficiency.
- **Dedicated Support and Professional Development:** With SMART, you gain a partner committed to your success, offering extensive support, training, and resources to maximize your investment.

By choosing SMART, you are investing in a future-proof, comprehensive solution that enhances the teaching and learning experience, supports diverse educational needs, and ensures your technology investments deliver lasting value.



More Resources:

Explore the **Ultimate Interactive Display Buyer's Guide** which includes how to get more from student devices, considerations around privacy and security and a detailed list of features and specifications that make a difference to the teaching and learning experience.

SMART

Authorized reseller:

**Book a demo
to discover for yourself
what makes SMART different.**

