What Role Does Technology Play in Driving Institutional Resilience and Success?
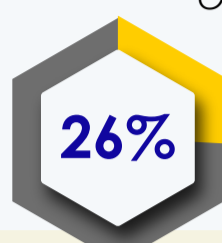
As the landscape of higher education rapidly changes, it is vital that college and university leaders are equipped with the tools, technology, and strategies they need to ensure their institutions can adapt to and overcome the challenges of the future.

To explore this topic, *University Business* and Jenzabar conducted a brief survey of more than 140 higher education leaders in early 2024, asking them how nimble and resilient they feel their institutions are, if their core IT systems are meeting their needs, and how prepared they feel for the future.
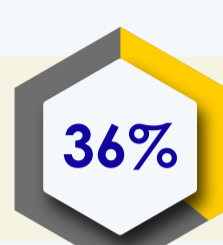
"This survey highlights what institutions feel they need to drive long-term success. At its core, a resilient institution is one that not only overcomes existing operational challenges, but one that continually innovates to open new opportunities for growth," says Sam Burgio, COO at Jenzabar.

The importance of core IT systems to institutions

Overall, which of these statements describes your institution's core IT systems, such as the SIS and ERP?
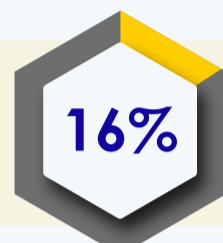
26% **Nearly all** of these systems are modern, cloud-based and up to date

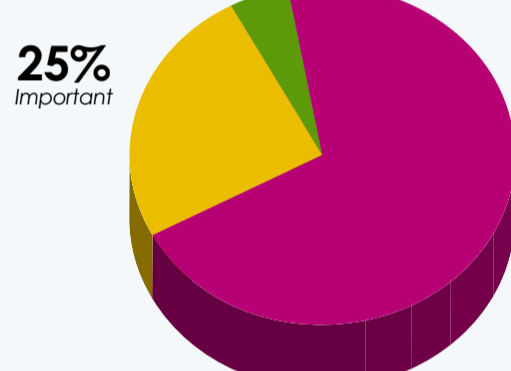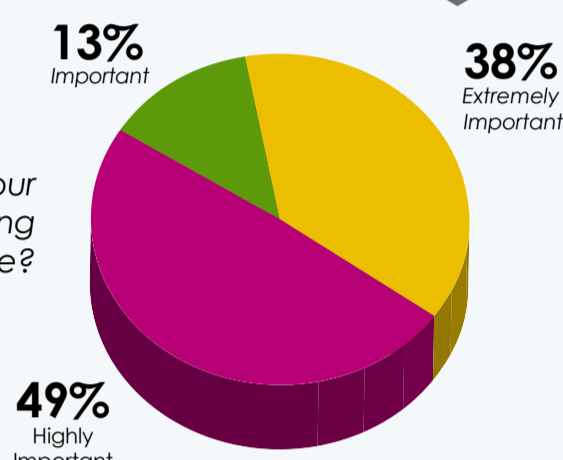**Most** of these systems are modern and cloud-based, but a few are not **36%**

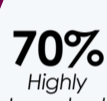**22%** **Some** of these systems are modern and cloud-based, but many are not

A few of these systems are modern and cloud-based, but most are not **16%**

*How important are core IT systems such as the SIS and ERP to your institution's **overall resilience** in overcoming challenges, adapting to a changing environment, and ensuring viability for the future?*

- 13% Important
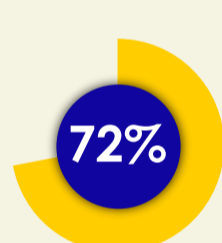- 38% Extremely Important
- 49% Highly Important

*How important do you think it is to your students that the core IT systems and platforms they need (such as the SIS) are **mobile-friendly, accessible 24/7,** and provide a **user-friendly, consumer-like experience**?*

- 5% Somewhat Important
- 25% Important
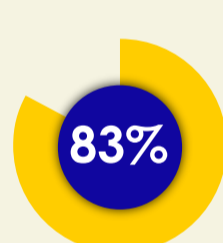- 70% Highly Important

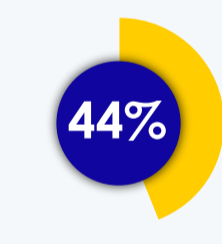## Concerns about current IT capabilities

All respondents were asked to rate the capabilities of their institution's technologies, systems and processes to support **emerging alternative learning models** (competency-based, accelerated, hybrid/online, etc.).
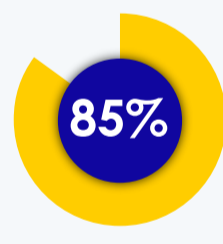
72% of those respondents who said **nearly all** of their systems were modern and cloud-based described their institutions' capabilities as being "Above average" or "Extensive."

At the same time, **83%** of those who said just **a few** systems were modern and cloud-based rated their capabilities as instead being "Average," "Poor," or "Very poor."
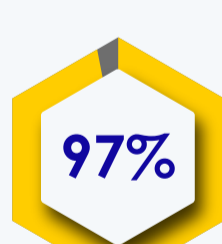
44% said the core IT systems used at their institution were "Probably not" flexible and nimble enough to quickly adapt to the challenges of the future.

85% of respondents said they **agreed** with the statement "Our institution uses **too many** disconnected systems and platforms, resulting in increased costs and complexity, data silos, and a lower-quality user experience."
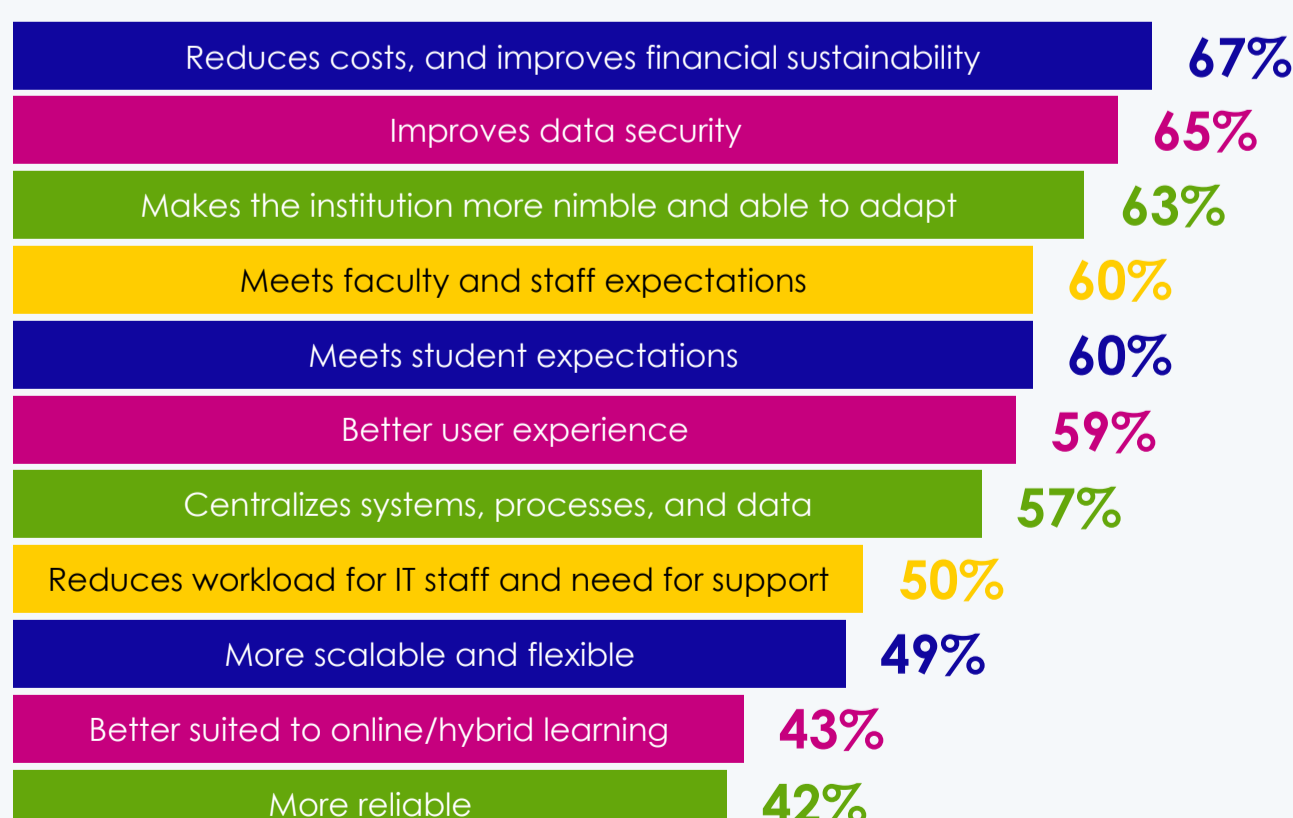
The benefits of modern, cloud-based IT platforms

"Modern cloud-based solutions can help institutions tackle some of their most pressing issues, especially ones associated with improving agility, reducing costs, and delivering the best possible student experience. But in addition to using the right technologies, institutions need to constantly evolve how they approach far-reaching problems --thinking outside the box, maximizing collaboration across campus, working with a trusted partner, and utilizing every available resource to drive positive change. A resilient institution is always transforming," says Burgio.

97% of all respondents said it would be helpful if they could **seamlessly integrate** all of their core IT systems and applications into a **single user-friendly platform**.

*Which of the following **benefits of cloud-based systems** would be most valuable to you or your institution?*

Benefit	Percentage
Reduces costs, and improves financial sustainability	67%
Improves data security	65%
Makes the institution more nimble and able to adapt	63%
Meets faculty and staff expectations	60%
Meets student expectations	60%
Better user experience	59%
Centralizes systems, processes, and data	57%
Reduces workload for IT staff and need for support	50%
More scalable and flexible	49%
Better suited to online/hybrid learning	43%
More reliable	42%

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