BYOT Planning

23/4/12

BYOT – A Definition

We define BYOT as

> *Bring your own technology (BYOT) is an educational development and a supplementary school technology resourcing model where the home and the school collaborate in arranging for the young's 24/7/365 use of their own digital technology/ies to be extended into the classroom to assist their teaching and learning and the organisation of their schooling and where relevant the complementary education outside the classroom.*

Fundamental to BYOT is:

- Personal choice of the technology by the student or family. While schools might and probably should provide advice the final choice should rest with the home.
- The enhanced facility for the personalisation of teaching and learning in and outside the school walls.
- The recognition that the in-school use of the student's digital technology is an extension, a flow on development from the young's existing use of that technology to assist their self-teaching and learning
- The home and students having their ownership of the technology and the information stored thereon respected.

As indicated the research is already highlighting the importance of authentic home-school collaboration to the school's achievement of the normalised usage of the student's technology.

However one can opt for a model of BYOT as indicated in Chapter 5 where there is minimal collaboration, where the school or education authority largely unilaterally informs the parents what they are obliged to do with their personal technology but the signs are already suggesting the likelihood of schools realising many of the outcomes identified in Chapter 3 with this approach appear to be small.

There are a number of so-called BYOT initiatives that pay scant or no regard to student personal choice, don't recognise the young will want to work with the personal technology they are already using everyday, don't respect the parent's or student's ownership of the technology, basically don't trust the students and which are not seeking to personalise the teaching and learning.

We would apply some other title to those moves for many are no different than requiring parents to buy student's textbooks.

They are using under the banner of BYOT an imposed, compulsory buying scheme.

In doing your homework you'll also see the terms 'BYO', 'BYOC', 'BYOD' and 'personal digital devices' used to refer to the same development.

They are to all intents and purposes the same thing.

The simple reason we prefer BYOT is that the term 'technology' neatly covers both the hardware and the software and the fact that the students could and are increasingly likely to use multiple digital technologies.

The simple BYO (bring your own) isn't specific enough. We are not talking about beer. BYOC refers specifically to the use of computers and is thus limited while BYOD is also limited with the reference to devices but not the vital software.

That said we will not be manning the barricades to defend the term BYOT, but will most assuredly be supporting the key elements of the concept.

This section provides a brief insight into the planning information and advice included within the *BYOT* publication. It

- touches upon the topic most attention is currently focussed upon, the reasons for the move to BYOT
- summarises the plethora of potential educational, social, economic, technological, administrative and political opportunities opened by the adoption of BYOT
- flags the vital issue of school's readiness to move to a model of BYOT, and summarises the preconditions
- lists the BYOT model options available
- identifies the key principles to be borne in mind in the implementation
- provides an implementation and a management checklist.

All the checklists are available in PDF form for educational use.

Copies of the BYOT publication can be bought by clicking here.

Before considering each of the above mentioned there are several key issues that emerged from the research that bears noting.

- In time every school in the Western world will likely move to some form of BYOT. When you do your analysis you'll see it is a case of when you make the move, not if.

- Any move to BYOT should be considered in its wider educational context and the profound impact the development will have upon the nature of schooling, teaching, the relationship between the school and the homes, and between the teachers and students, the instructional technology used, the support model that facilitates that use and vitally the resourcing of schools.

- BYOT in the pathfinding schools is already beginning to fundamentally change the traditional model of school funding.

- Most assuredly don't make the mistake of a number of early adopters and see this as merely a technical development that can be left to the 'ICT experts'.

- BYOT is a major development that ought intimately involve all members of the school's community, and most assuredly all the staff, teaching and professional support, parents and students.

- Schools cannot achieve 100% student use of BYOT or the many opportunities opened until all the school's teachers have normalised the use of the digital in their everyday teaching. It is already apparent that if teachers don't use the digital in their everyday teaching and importantly use a teaching approach that is at odds with their student's perception of meaningful use of the student's digital technology they won't bother taking their gear to that teacher's classroom.

- The unique nature of each school dictates a school specific development of a BYOT model and implementation strategy. An imposed 'one size fits all' strategy is destined to fail.

- Schools that normalise the use of the digital across their teaching will move naturally to a form of BYOT.

- Those schools that have gone digital will also move naturally to a:

    - more collaborative model of teaching (Lee and Ward, in press)
    - model of school technology support that facilitates the students 24/7/365 use of their own suite of digital technology – a move that will see a change from the current 'control over' model (invariably one size fits all) maintained by a team of 'ICT experts'

- The successful whole school introduction, and in time normalisation of BYOT is dependent on genuine collaboration between the school and its community.

- Schools need to allow BYOT to evolve and grow, and vitally not over-plan.

- The key is the change in both the teacher's and the leadership's mindset when schools normalise the use of the digital – they will move

from the traditional insular paper based operational thinking that believes the only teaching and learning that matters is done by the professional educators within the school walls to a far more open and networked mindset that recognises that today the young learn and indeed increasingly teach themselves with the support of their peers 24/7/365. There is the appreciation that if all the teachers of the young – the professional and non-professional – pool their expertise and resources to collaborate the quality and the effectiveness of the teaching can be markedly improved.

- A seemingly obvious point, but one monumentally forgotten by one case study school: it is imperative the principal make it clear very early in the piece that in transitioning to a model of BYOT the school will simultaneously be phasing out its current model of student technology provision. You can't have, as found in the case study school a Balkanisation of staff resulting in competing groups.

- Early in 2012 we are seeing, in very general terms two main approaches amongst the early users of BYOT.

    i. Those schools and education authorities that are working within the networked operational mode, that have gone digital and are embracing the networked phase, are ready both attitudinally and competence wise to operate as networked school communities and are naturally moving to pool the school and home resources. (Lee and Finger, 2010, 2012).

    ii. Some schools and education authorities which are instructing the parents and students as to what technologies will be allowed in the school and placing restrictions on what the young need to work.

    Significantly there is scant or no collaboration with the parents or the students.

    In brief we have two general approaches, one naturally evolving, based on genuine collaboration and a controlling dictatorial other.

- Addressing student equity ought be a key facet of your planning. All the writing team place immense store on equity of student access to the technology, of ensuring every student in each school has ready 24/7 access to appropriate technology and vitally home 'Net access. Without it they are disadvantaged educationally, socially and economically. Our research – detailed in the book – points very strongly to all schools in the Western world being able and best placed operationally to ensure that equity of access – albeit supported by the local education authority and government.

- A major issue that we had to address before we could move far in the study of BYOT was what it, and what was it not?

There was no comprehensive definition of BYOT in the literature.

- **Rationale/Opportunities**

This PDF is very brief distillation of a 5,000 word examination of the reasons why schools will inevitably move to some model of BYOT, and the plethora of opportunities the move opens for schools and their community.

- **Readiness Preconditions**

Most of the existing literature assumes any school can move to a model of BYOT whenever they wish. They can but the chance of successfully securing 100% sustained student usage of their technology in every classroom is negligible unless they are ready to make the shift, and have met the preconditions identified in *BYOT* and summarised in the attached PDF.

- **BYOT Model Options**

In doing your homework you'll soon appreciate there are many options open when assembling the model of BYOT apposite for your school's current situation.

The attached PDF ought provide a quick insight into the possibilities.

Bear in mind the choices you make could impact significantly on the level and speed of student uptake, and that it might be necessary to start with a less than perfect model and make the refinements when all the key players are ready.

- **Key Implementation Principles**

In our research we have identified 22 key principles to bear in mind in shaping the BYOT implementation strategy for your school.

All presuppose the school has met the readiness preconditions.

This PDF is a summary of those principles.

- **Implementation and Management Checklist**

These two checklists are intended as a prompt to ensure you've addressed all the main variables in your efforts to shape the whole school move to BYOT.

They list of the factors to bear in mind during the transition period between the phase out of the school's provision of the personal technology to one where the student's provide that technology, and what the school needs to address to ensure it is successful and done in a reasonable period of time.