BYOT and Revised Responsibilities

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The early adopter schools across the developed world, well along the path to the normalised use of BYOT are recognising the imperative of educating all within the school's community – on an on-going basis - about the implications that flow from adoption of the new operational paradigm that places prime responsibility on the children and their parents for the use of their technology within the school.

They are appreciating the fundamentally different way of working - which is many respects the antithesis of the previous approach – will take time and some astute concerted effort before it is as readily accepted as was the old.

They appreciate they will have to educate a new cohort of parents and students each year and will need to so for several years before the new arrangements are naturally accepted.

That said the same schools are delighted how well the children and parents have accepted the new approach and how hassle free it has been.

The key is clearly to collaborate with the parents and students in deciding on the new responsibilities, to publish them on the school's website, to mention them regularly in communiqués with the home and during the everyday use of the student's kit have the teachers naturally affirm those responsibilities.

It is also wise to ensure relevant senior educational administrators and local politicians are also informed of the changed arrangements.

If you wish to vary them, such as having the students take prime responsibility for learning the workings of their particular suite of digital technology it pays to collaborate with both the parents and students beforehand, explain the educational reasoning for the move and allow some lead in time.

Having the students take responsibility for the choice, acquisition, care, use, maintenance and upgrade of their suite of technology they use in class in reality moves those responsibilities from the school and its teachers to the children and their guardian/s.

Experience would suggest it is important to stress one is not only talking about the hardware but also the software, and to underscore that most of the software/the apps the children have selected they will use in all manner of situations 24/7/365. Indeed it is likely that only a minor portion of their software will be education specific.

It appears some teachers are taking a little time to grasp that this is kit the students are using everyday and everywhere and is not a package designed solely for school use, with the school able to dictate what software can or should be used.

By all means proffer advice, make suggestions and arrange special deals the students can take up but remember this is the student's technology.

As Martin and I indicated in **Bring Your Own Technology** (2012) the owner of the kit, and the material thereon, is protected by the nation's natural law and its privacy laws.

Take another person's property and the natural law comes into play.

Much as many still might want teachers and even school principals have to abide by the privacy laws like any other citizen. Most nation's privacy laws specify only the child or his/her guardian can access that material.

A parent concerned about the material on their child's kit – assuming they are the guardian – has to address that concern, not try and pass it on to the school, a teacher or indeed even a superior officer in an education authority.

It is a marked change all associated with schooling need understand.

The reality is that with even the best of preparations there are bound to be some hassles. When it comes to the crunch, when a child or parent is upset about some aspect of the kit and is under pressure the natural default for some time will be to the old ways and to blame the school or teacher concerned.

Appreciate occasional blow-ups are part of the learning process and while all of us will initially grasp the general features of the new arrangements, sometimes under pressure we'll forget the finer nuances, such as the various implications that flow from the ownership of the gear.

In closing it bears reiterating the point made by all the schools studied, BYOT rapidly becomes such a natural part of everyday operations that even though it represents a quantum change it will be largely hassle free.

That said a little astute homework will keep it so.