

The Top Five Reasons for Choosing SMART

by Nancy Knowlton

For more than twenty years, SMART has been creating and offering products that provide an interactive and engaging experience for teachers and students. While we started with the SMART Board interactive whiteboard as our core product, we have dramatically expanded our product offering as well as the resources, services, support and community around the products.

Why should you take your technology budget and commit a substantial portion of it to the products, resources and services that are available from SMART? There are, after all, other companies offering a collection of products that could be put together to create a substitute for SMART's technology-enabled learning environment. What is so special about the SMART offering and experience to make it the preferred choice of educators everywhere?



5. Trust

Since we introduced the world's first interactive whiteboard almost twenty years ago, hundreds of thousands of teachers and millions of students have trusted SMART to create a highly interactive, engaging learning environment. That trust is a responsibility that we take seriously as we work to create the best classroom experience for our customers.

That trust drives us to continuously upgrade our software, and to make it easy for our customers to get the latest version. It motivates us to provide the tools and resources they need to get the most out of our products. We are fanatical about making products that are reliable because we know that teachers cannot tolerate having their tools unavailable to them.

4. Commitment to Innovation

The people at SMART have never been content to rest on their laurels, even though our products have been some of the most popular in the world. Whether we are inventing a new product category (as we did with the SMART Board interactive whiteboard) or adding complementary products, our team works to push the limits of new technologies.

Our team of hardware and software developers is large and growing. Their focus is clear – they are creating up-

grades to existing products, extensions to our current offerings, new product categories and new technologies that will form the basis of whole new products in the future.

3. Deep Customer Relationships

Thinking about what our customers want and need is one thing. Observing them in their environments and translating those observations into features and functions is quite another. We employ a large number of educators who know education well. We visit classrooms to see firsthand what teachers and students do. We understand and appreciate their challenges, and we anticipate how those challenges could evolve through time. We invite teachers to meet with us in our labs as we are creating new products so that we can test our concepts and user interfaces with them. We urge our customers to share their insights with us in ways that work for them.

2. Ease of Use

The magic in product development lies in creating products that are easy to use so teachers can get up the learning curve quickly and develop the confidence to make their use second nature. Whether it is starting up systems or invoking a function, use should be intuitive to minimize what needs to be learned. Putting the pieces and parts together into an integrated system is a particular SMART strength.

1. Service and Support

When our customers need us, they can call on us for the service and support that they need to be successful. We offer free online training, support and resources and for-a-fee training and content. Our software upgrades can be accessed online anytime. Thousands of teacher-created lesson activities are available free online, and an active, voluntary community exists to support a high level conversation about good practice around the use of our products.

Summing It Up

In the end, educators choose SMART for a number of reasons. Our products are full featured, leading edge and easy to use. Beyond the products, we offer the tools, resources, services and support to ensure a great in-use experience.

We put our customers' needs at the heart of everything that we do and it shows. It is the depth of our customer relationships that allows us to imagine, invent and experiment freely – all for the benefit of our customers.

Nancy Knowlton is the co-founder and CEO of SMART Technologies, the world's leading supplier of interactive whiteboards. Nancy's husband and SMART co-founder, David Martin, is the inventor of the interactive whiteboard product category. Together they have built a company that is focused on delivering easy-to-use, yet feature-rich collaboration tools, including the SMART Board interactive whiteboard. Nancy can be reached at CEO@smarttech.com.