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Unleashing the power of AI PCs on campus



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Unleashing the power of AI PCs on campus

AI isn't coming — it's already here. In 2025, universities that embrace AI PCs will surge ahead of other institutions. Those that hesitate? They'll struggle to keep up. With AI spending set to skyrocket 2.8x,¹ now is the moment to rethink how your university supports its educational mission, secures data, and boosts productivity.

Much of that growth will be driven by institutions making stronger investments in generative AI (GenAI). While predictive and interpretive AI implementations were focus areas for universities in 2024, GenAI rollouts will see more than 3x growth in the next 12 months at the expense of these other AI categories.¹

2.8x the amount AI spending is set to skyrocket¹

This explosive growth in AI use reflects a growing desire among higher education leaders to apply this technology to enable key business outcomes including improvements to tech stack sustainability, regulatory compliance, and employee productivity. One of the easiest ways to start reaping the benefits of AI is to provide staff with AI-enabled PCs. Many institutions are now moving in this direction, with 93% of education institutions already considering or piloting this approach.²

This eBook provides insights into the many ways that AI PCs can deliver productivity gains, an enhanced user experience, and security improvements to your educational institution. In particular, it highlights how Lenovo Aura Edition devices, imagined with Intel®, can meet today's higher education needs, especially when paired with service offerings like Lenovo's Device as a Service (DaaS), Asset Recovery Services (ARS), and Premier Support Plus. A step-by-step guide at the end provides guidance on how to unleash innovation and empower your university with AI PCs.

Education business functions adopting AI use cases³



Marketing



Software Development



IT Operations



Customer Service



Finance



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Unlocking potential with AI PCs

The initial introduction of AI technologies into universities was greeted with a mixture of both anxiety about its impact on academic integrity and learning practices and optimism about the possibilities it might bring to life in improving learning outcomes. Despite mixed feelings, education leaders are familiarizing themselves with the value that AI can deliver while seeking ways to address the potential downsides.

In fact, according to “Educause 2025 AI Landscape Study: Into the Digital Divide,” university teaching and learning initiatives are focused on incorporating AI into efforts around a variety of use cases:⁴

74%

Academic integrity

65%

Coursework

54%

Assessment practices

54%

Curriculum design



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What is an AI PC?

AI PCs are specially designed and equipped to manage and accelerate the execution of AI tasks. In addition to the traditional CPUs and GPUs, AI PCs include discrete neural processing units (NPUs) that are designed specifically to handle AI computations faster and more efficiently. The primary benefits that AI PCs deliver include:

- ✓ **Quicker results:** With no need to push tasks out to and back from a cloud-based AI platform, users receive their prompt results faster, boosting their overall productivity and delivering an enhanced user experience. NPUs support trillions of operations per second (TOPS).
- ✓ **Personalized experiences:** Locally run AI applications are flexible, able to adapt to each user's preferences and work habits. This enables customized interactions and on-device support when needed, providing a better overall user experience.
- ✓ **Enhanced security:** With the entire AI task taking place on the device, the data is never in transit nor visible on another piece of hardware. Sensitive or confidential data is never made vulnerable to potential security threats nor is it used in external LLM training.

How AI PCs meet device refresh needs

When it comes to making decisions around device refreshes, IT leaders are faced with the very difficult challenge of balancing numerous institutional needs. Very often, device features needed by one department or team are different from with the needs of others. The stakes are now raised when considering AI PCs, which have the potential to greatly enhance staff productivity and unlock wider business value within the institution. In particular, AI PCs offer opportunities to put more power into the hands of researchers looking to accelerate research through access to on-device Small Language Models (SMLs).



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How instructors are using AI

The top 3 ways that instructors are using AI in their teaching:⁵



Designing course materials (22%)



Assisting in administrative tasks (16%)



Creating images or visualizations (15%)



Improving productivity is a prominent business priority for higher education organizations investing in AI.⁶



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Pumping up productivity

IT leaders charged with refreshing devices also have an eye toward positively impacting staff productivity. Improving productivity is a prominent business priority for higher education organizations investing in AI.⁶ This widely held goal positions AI PCs as a great resource to deliver the tools that staff need to drive improved productivity. In addition, on-device AI means there's less compute traffic clogging university data centers, allowing for more efficient and strategic use of these costly on-campus resources.

The productivity improvements tied to AI PCs extend to IT support teams as well. Many AI PCs are packaged with automated diagnostics and updates that streamline device maintenance and keep them up and running more consistently. These additional device support resources reduce the burden on the institution's IT team and allow them to focus on more mission-critical projects.

Enhancing the user experience

AI PCs are also able to deliver a more personalized user experience. The devices gather data on the user's behavior and work habits. Over time, they are able to optimize power settings and even suggest relevant applications for the user to open. This is true for the collaboration experience on AI PCs as well. When users are video conferencing on the device, the AI can automatically adjust the video and audio features to deliver an optimal experience to the user.

Device security considerations

A top concern for institutions considering device refreshes is maintaining security and protecting sensitive data. The availability of rich research information and extensive personal student and staff data make attractive targets for cybercriminals. This is especially true when considering AI-enabled PCs due to their access to and use of high volumes of data. In fact, among higher education privacy and security professionals, 82% reported data security as their top concern with AI initiatives.

Maintaining security with AI-powered devices can be particularly challenging for institutions that have hybrid workforces with staff working on-site and sometimes remotely. Accommodating remote workers greatly expands the organization's attack surface because of the variety of user devices and poorly secured home networks.

Universities with mixed-OS environments rather than a single dominant platform also present unique security challenges. Devices running on different OSes make for a complex security environment requiring the management of differing security protocols and patch management routines.



88% of all PCs shipped in 2027 will be AI-enabled, according to IDC.⁸



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The refresh answer: The Lenovo Aura Edition experience

IT decision-makers looking to thread the device refresh needle now have a clear choice: Lenovo Aura Edition AI PCs, imagined with Intel®. Aura Edition devices offer incredible AI performance with Intel® Core™ Ultra processors for unprecedented experiences, delivering a more personalized, protected, and productive user experience.

Cool, quiet, thin, and powerful, Aura Edition AI PCs boast best-in-class battery life and astonishing graphics. Users are equipped to master the most intensive workloads and complex AI prompts thanks to the latest Intel® Core™ Ultra processors that deliver up to 120 TOPS. In addition, Lenovo Aura Edition AI PCs offer exclusive AI-powered experiences with Smart Modes, which users can activate to automate common tasks and group settings, as well as optimize system performance.

Delivering on the productivity promise

Improving staff productivity is a business priority for university leaders. Toward that goal, IT leaders are looking to AI PCs to deliver on helping staff function more effectively. Enabling greater productivity has to start with supporting easy access to AI. Lenovo Aura Edition devices are equipped with Intel® Core™ Ultra processors that deliver 45 TOPS and enable the speedy processing of AI workloads on the device.

Universities gain assistance with maintaining the health of their fleet devices through **Smart Care**, an on-device app that delivers a unified support services experience to users. Smart Care automates systems diagnostics and updates, which decreases the amount of time the IT support team needs to allocate toward basic device upkeep. Lenovo Aura Edition AI PCs are designed to outlast traditional PCs. With automated diagnostics and Smart Care predictive maintenance, some universities have extended refresh cycles to four years and beyond, significantly reducing costs. All of this keeps devices operational and supporting busy staff as they work.

If a problem does come up that the user cannot resolve with the available self-help resources, Smart Care offers real-time troubleshooting and support from technicians. Whether through chat, phone call, or video call, Lenovo technicians can greatly speed up resolution times.



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Lenovo services sustaining productivity

Lenovo offers services that help support your staff productivity and device health. The first is **Lenovo Premier Support Plus**. This comprehensive IT support program keeps users and their devices up and running with break/fix support for broken machines, 24/7/365 advanced technical support, comprehensive hardware and OEM software support, next business day response, and onsite labor for repairs.

Another way to gain productivity value with Aura Edition devices is to subscribe to **Lenovo Device as a Service (DaaS)**. This service bundles fully provisioned devices and managed services including procurement, deployment, configuration, maintenance, and decommissioning. In addition to providing predictable budgeting and access to the latest technology, Lenovo DaaS supports productivity initiatives through ongoing device maintenance that maximizes the device lifecycle and responsible recycling when the device reaches end of life.



Amplifying the user experience

AI technology also delivers a more robust user experience. Faculty and staff gain access to a modern, updated work experience with all the perks that it entails, including a more robust battery life. AI helps them work the way they want to work, providing them with tools to organize and manage their own workflows so they are arranged for maximum personal productivity.



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The Lenovo ThinkPad® X9 14 Aura Edition, imagined with Intel®, and other Aura Edition devices are packaged with a variety of automated Smart Modes that uniquely support faculty and staff productivity in different ways:



Shield Mode

This mode delivers a variety of automated security features that protect users so they can focus on the task at hand without worry.



Power Mode

This mode automatically reduces device power consumption and improves battery performance, ensuring that staff get as much productive use out of their devices as they can until they are able to recharge them.



Collaboration Mode

This mode automatically makes device adjustments to improve and maintain a productive virtual meeting experience while ensuring effective communication with video effect features.



Wellness Mode

With this mode, the digital health (and overall productivity) of staff is supported through automated alerts to take eye breaks from the computer screen and to make posture adjustments to help maintain good ergonomics.



Attention Mode

When engaged, this mode blocks access to pre-set domains and notifications, providing a focused and productive user experience.

In addition to these Smart Modes, Lenovo Aura Edition devices support productive collaboration through **Smart Share**. This feature allows iOS and Android smartphones to automatically transfer photos and files to an Aura Edition device, reducing staff-to-staff collaboration to a simple tap. Transfers are only possible between devices that have downloaded the secure Intel® Unison™ app.

Shields up with Aura Edition security features

Lenovo Aura Edition devices offer some unique security features thanks to AI technology. To start with, the device's localized AI technology reduces exposure to security risks. Rather than transport your institution's data to the public cloud for processing, which opens it up to the possibility of manipulation and theft while in transit and during processing on the exterior AI platform, Aura Edition devices process sensitive data on the device itself. This greatly reduces the potential for institutional data to be exposed to malicious actors.

Being able to use AI to process data on local devices is especially beneficial for institutions needing to align to higher education data privacy regulations. Localized AI delivers additional computing efficiencies by allowing universities to make use of domain-specific SLMs.



Like all Aura Edition devices, the Lenovo ThinkPad® X1 Carbon Gen 13 Aura Edition, imagined with Intel®, gives users access to **Shield Mode**, one of the Smart Modes the device offers that focuses on increasing security. Shield Mode makes use of computer vision to warn users if someone is looking over their shoulder as they work and automatically blurs the computer screen. If the device is on a public Wi-Fi network, Shield Mode automatically prompts the VPN to secure the device's traffic.



Aura Edition devices include additional layers of security through **Lenovo ThinkShield® and Intel vPro®**, which safeguard devices with fully customizable hardware, software, and services solutions that secure your organization from a wide spectrum of threats, starting below the operating system and protecting you all the way into the cloud.



End-to-end protection starts with **Firmware Resiliency 2.0**, which expands self-healing capabilities beyond the core BIOS and provides autonomous, non-bypassable, and immutable functionality that becomes the additional hardware root of trust measure, verifying the signatures of multiple parts of the platform hardware, firmware, and configuration.



SecureWipe 2.0 allows IT teams to delete sensitive data on a drive without using external tools or removing the drive and running log reports to confirm the SSD or HDD has been wiped.



Lenovo's commitment to security extends beyond the usable life of our devices. **Lenovo Asset Recovery Services (ARS)** help mitigate the environmental and data security risks associated with end-of-life asset disposal. As part of ARS, we provide all legal documentation and certificates associated with proper data destruction and environmental processing. ARS can even offset some of the costs of your organization's refresh and help simplify the transition from old to new.



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Transforming your university with the power of AI PCs

With spending on AI initiatives set to grow nearly 3x over the coming 12 months, institutions of higher education are at an inflection point. Those that are not ready to pivot into the benefits to be gained through AI will be left behind.

Lenovo Aura Edition PCs powered by the latest Intel® Core™ Ultra processors offer a way to quickly put the transformative power of AI into the hands of your faculty and staff, especially when paired with service offerings like Lenovo's Device as a Service (DaaS), Asset Recovery Services (ARS), and Premier Support Plus. AI is reshaping work — and your institution needs to be ahead of the curve. AI PCs are no longer an experiment. They are the future of work, security, and efficiency. The question isn't if you'll adopt AI PCs — it's how soon.

Ready to transform your education institution?
Contact your Lenovo team for a free consultation
with an AI solutions specialist or visit
Lenovo Aura Edition Education to learn more.



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Sources

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AI PC deployment and transformation roadmap

Integrating AI PCs into your institution is no small feat. Yes, you've rolled out PCs before, but adding AI into the mix impacts everything. To make the most of your device deployment, follow this step-by-step plan to maximize your institution's sustainability, productivity, security, and ROI with Lenovo Aura Edition AI PCs, imagined with Intel®.



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01

Deploy and build IT readiness

- ✓ **Infrastructure review:** Assess the current IT infrastructure for AI PC compatibility.
- ✓ **Security policy assessment:** Review and update security policies that might be impacted by AI PC data processing. Accommodate hybrid AI processing, both in the cloud and locally.
- ✓ **IT team preparation:** Train the IT team on AI PC capabilities and AI-powered security features.
- ✓ **Pilot program:** Launch an AI PC pilot focused on high-impact users — for example: faculty, administrators, or operations teams.
- ✓ **Gather data:** Monitor early AI-attributed productivity and security gains.

02

Expand the rollout and optimize security

- ✓ **Expand rollout:** Scale AI PC deployment to additional business functions (HR, finance, security).
- ✓ **Implement AI security:** Implement threat detection (Shield Mode on devices, as well as ThinkShield).
- ✓ **Reduce AI services:** Where possible, start reducing dependencies on external cloud services to cut costs.
- ✓ **Implement Smart Care:** Guide users toward Smart Care to automate troubleshooting and reduce IT support burden.
- ✓ **Track ROI:** Continue gathering data on how and where AI PCs are driving measurable productivity gains.

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Integrate AI into workflows

- ✓ **Assess AI workloads:** Work to optimize AI workloads across your hybrid infrastructure: in the cloud and local AI processing.
- ✓ **Automate workflows:** Apply AI-driven business intelligence and analytics to guide the automation of workflows.
- ✓ **Update collaboration tools:** Deploy collaboration technology across the organization.
- ✓ **Update power management:** Deploy power management to improve overall energy efficiency across the organization.
- ✓ **Review ROI:** Measure the impact of AI-driven automation to determine how it is freeing up staff time and driving strategic work gains.

04

Scale AI gains for ongoing business transformation

- ✓ **Scale AI PC Use:** Make AI PCs the foundation for organization-wide AI transformation initiatives.
- ✓ **Continue enhancements:** Seek additional AI-driven automation opportunities for greater efficiency and ongoing innovation.
- ✓ **Extend device longevity:** Grow the sustainability impact of AI PCs by emphasizing follow-through on predictive maintenance.
- ✓ **Grow AI literacy:** Continue updating IT team and leadership understanding on the latest AI innovations.
- ✓ **Evaluate results:** Review how AI PC adoption has impacted business goals and seek insights for continued improvements.

Ready to take the next step? Contact Lenovo today to develop your customized AI PC adoption roadmap.

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