Learn 5 Fast Wins to Modernize Higher Ed IT
Without Losing Stability

AN UNOSQUARE GUIDE

uno
square

Legacy Tech ≠ Long-Term Impact

In higher education, outdated systems don't just strain budgets — they slow delivery, reduce efficiency, and erode institutional trust. But replacing everything at once isn't realistic. This guide gives IT and digital learning leaders a smarter approach to modernization:

5 tactical wins you can apply today to start transforming your infrastructure — without disrupting operations or overloading your team.

Each strategy is purpose-built for the realities of higher ed: tight budgets, slow approval chains, and mission-driven goals.

5 Fast Wins to Modernize Without Losing Stability

1. Modular Modernization

Rebuilding your entire IT infrastructure can be overwhelming, expensive, and disruptive to academic operations. A smarter move is to isolate the system components causing the most friction whether that's approval routing, storage management, or reporting and upgrade those individually. This modular approach reduces risk while creating early wins that build momentum and confidence across departments.

> Modular upgrades reduce risk and create early wins — without disrupting your institution.

2. Automate Manual Bottlenecks

Manual tasks like form routing, user provisioning, or content tagging aren't just time-consuming; they're error-prone and unscalable. Implementing lightweight automation tools in these areas can free up critical staff time and improve consistency across teams. Even partial automation can significantly improve performance in review cycles, compliance, and reporting.

> Automating repetitive tasks frees up your team and improves accuracy — even small changes can drive big results.

3. Move Key Functions to the Cloud

Higher Ed IT teams don't need to move everything to the cloud but they should start where it counts. Digital asset management, content collaboration, and backup systems are high-impact areas for cloud migration. This not only improves flexibility and uptime but also reduces the burden on internal infrastructure and enables hybrid work environments.

> You don't need to move everything to the cloud — just the parts that boost flexibility, reduce strain, and support hybrid work.

4. Pilot, Don't Overhaul

Before rolling out major changes institution-wide, identify a specific use case like one academic department, a seasonal campaign, or a recurring workflow to serve as a testbed. Piloting new tools or integrations allows for controlled learning, clearer feedback loops, and better stakeholder buy-in before broader implementation.

Start small: piloting new tools in one department builds clarity, confidence, and campus-wide buy-in.

5. Surface the Data First

One of the biggest blockers to effective modernization is the lack of visibility into what's actually working and what isn't. Before re-architecting systems, add simple reporting or dashboard layers to your existing workflows. This data reveals inefficiencies, supports smarter prioritization, and enables a more intentional Legacy Tech vs Long-Term Impact modernization path.

Without visibility, you can't modernize with purpose. Start by adding data layers that reveal what's working — and what's not.

Legacy vs. Modern: What Changes and Why It Matters

Legacy	Modern IT in Higher Education
Monolithic platforms with complex dependencies	Modular, service-based architecture
Manual workflows managed through spreadsheets or email	Automated, trackable workflows
High maintenance, low flexibility	Scalable, cost-aware infrastructure
Limited visibility across departments	Dashboards and real-time analytics

Quick Check: Are You Ready to Modernize?

Take this short self-assessment to identify whether your current systems are holding you back.
 Answer YES or NO to a series of key questions — if you score 3 or more YES, it's time to rethink your tech roadmap.

1. Are you using more than 3 tools to complete a single publishing or learning workflow?
2. Are most updates to your system delayed due to lack of capacity or fear of breaking something?
3. Do you rely on spreadsheets or email threads to manage approval or review processes?
4. Do you struggle to get data across platforms or departments?
5. Do you avoid starting new projects because the systems aren't flexible enough?

Scored 3 or more YES?
It's time to rethink how you're delivering on your tech roadmap and we can help

Lets Build Your Next Chapter With Purpose

unosquare helps higher education institutions modernize systems with:

- Embedded nearshore tech talent
- Strategic engineering and integration
- A step-by-step modernization path tailored to your tech reality

Book a 30-minute call to see what purposeful modernization could look like for your institution.

You Aren't Alone

Reach out today and find out how **unosquare** has helped others like you scale.

Learn more at unosquare.com