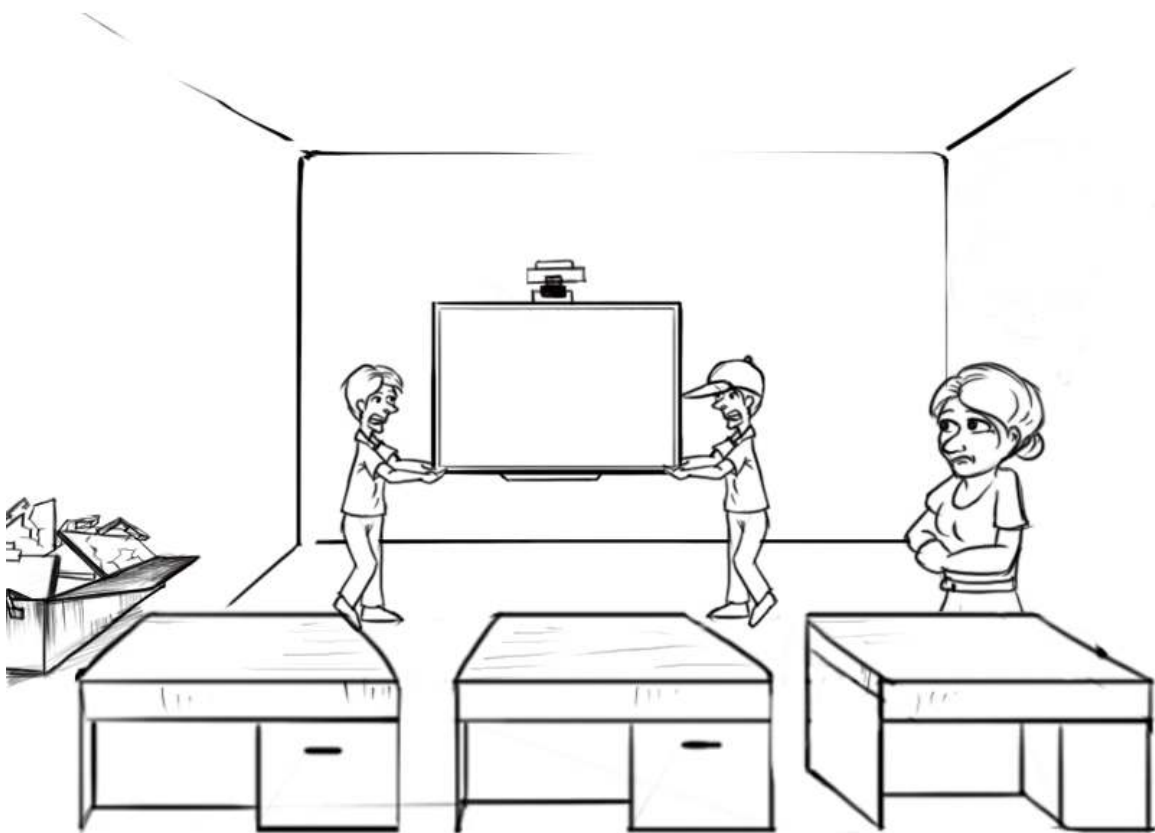

Bring Back My Whiteboard!

The Definitive Guide for
Choosing & Deploying Interactive Flat Panels
in your School or District



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Introduction

Over the last 10 years I've seen thousands of chalkboards and whiteboards replaced in classrooms all over the world. At first, they were replaced with Interactive Whiteboards. Now, even those are being replaced with a new technology called Interactive Flat Panels.

As roll outs in School Districts are becoming more common, I wanted to share some of my experience with Educators and their IT Departments to help give you an understanding of the process. These roll outs can be quite daunting and indeed challenging, not to mention expensive if things don't go as planned.

In this eBook, I highlight some of the things you need to consider when contemplating and planning your purchase of Interactive Flat Panels. I also highlight some of the potential issues you might face and how these can be solved or avoided. Of course, I try and keep an unbiased view point but will be drawing from examples and case studies from our company, TouchIT Technologies.

I hope you enjoy the read and find the information useful. I'd love to hear about any issues you think I have left out or sections that could be improved.

I'd like to think this is a continuous work in progress.

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Why do I need these Interactive Flat Panels?

The Beginnings of Interactive Whiteboards

Smart Technologies¹ invented the Interactive Whiteboard in the late 1990s, but it wasn't until 2008 when they became popular. Boosted by government funding in the UK, sales of Interactive Whiteboards jumped from 3,000 to 60,000 units a year. Other countries around the World, including the United States, quickly followed suit. The Interactive Whiteboard became the norm in the Classroom.

Not ideal technology

Interactive Whiteboards, although a great teaching tool and a step up from regular white boards and chalk boards, do **have their challenges**. While I may come across as being somewhat negative about Interactive Whiteboards, I'm not at all. My business partner and I started TouchIT Technologies by designing, manufacturing and selling Interactive Whiteboards! That said, there are some problems.

First, **the projector**. Even with newer high-tech projectors, there is still a shadow on the screen. With the standard projector that a school can afford, the image is not that bright, resolution is low, and over time the image becomes duller and duller. The lamps burn out periodically and filters need changing regularly. Overall, the actual cost to run and service the projector is high.

Next there are the dreaded **drivers**. Pretty much all of the Interactive Whiteboards on the market need a driver installed so that they can be used. This presents a challenge to the school's IT department—they need to make sure the technology is on all of the teacher's computers. It is a regular occurrence to hear “*well I wanted to use the SMART Board®² but I didn't have the right drivers on my laptop.*”

¹ www.smarttech.com

² SMART Board and SMART Notebook are registered trademarks of Smart Technologies Inc in the United States and other countries around the world. www.smarttech.com.