Digital Identity
Platform Guide

What is a
Digital Identity Platform?

A **digital identity platform** orients your educational technology ecosystem around the students, educators, and staff in your community. The platform houses a representation of each user in your community. We call that representation a "digital identity."

The digital identity grants people access to the applications they need and connects data from those applications back to the correct digital identity. Ultimately, a digital identity platform provides security and simplifies workflows, so that educational communities can focus on accelerating learning.

Who is this guide for?

This guide is written to help professionals in **K-12 and higher education** understand how a digital identity platform can help you safeguard your learning environment, maximize instructional time, and minimize the load on technology teams. It is especially relevant for:

- **K-12 Superintendents, Curriculum & Instruction, and IT & EdTech**
  Together, you make important decisions about how technology fits into your learning environment. You are concerned about depending on digital tools that are vulnerable to cyberattacks. Students and teachers often have trouble accessing the applications they need in class and at home. Your IT team feels overburdened with help requests related to digital tools.

- **University IT and EdTech teams**
  You are tasked with providing a secure, reliable, and flexible learning environment for a complex, constantly changing user base. You manage user access to a mix of internally developed and externally purchased systems. The institution depends on you to protect against cyberthreats and simplify access to digital resources. It may feel like help desk requests from students and staff take up too much of your time, preventing your team from innovating.

Digital Identity in Education

A digital identity is an inventory of attributes that represent a person. Digital identities are used throughout the Internet to ensure that systems can recognize, protect, and serve users.

For example, when you log into Amazon.com, it recognizes your unique identity, which includes a history of your purchases and your payment information. Based on that record, Amazon can recommend books for you, process a purchase with one click, or initiate a return without requiring you to call a helpdesk.

On many other websites, you can login with your Amazon identity to complete purchases. That way, you don't have to create a new profile and re-enter your name, address, and credit card into each system.

Most learning environments don't offer an Amazon-like experience. Rather, they have dozens of systems that don't "talk" to each other and don't realize that they support the same students, educators, and staff.

Instead of having one identity that provides access to every system, each user might have a separate identity for each system. That can become a lot of usernames and passwords to remember and leads to numerous problems:

- Waiting hours or days to be granted access to the online resources a student or educator needs.
- Vulnerability to cyberattacks, like ransomware, that spoof identities to get into your system.
- A slow, error-prone manual process of assigning curriculum resources to students.
- Excessive helpdesk calls for login assistance.
- Siloed data that cannot be aggregated and analyzed in any meaningful way.

A digital identity platform that's built for education orients your learning environment around the digital identities of students and staff. Users log into one portal and access everything they need. On the back end, the digital identity platform handles the complexities of:

- Identity Lifecycle Management
- Authentication & Single Sign-On
- Rostering
- Governance
- Insights & Analytics

If you want to learn more about those capabilities, click the links above.

Benefits of a Digital Identity Platform

A digital identity platform is designed to safeguard learning environments, maximize instructional time, and minimize the load on IT and EdTech teams. Let's unpack each concept.

Safeguard you digital learning environment

A digital identity platform enables your students and staff to login to your systems, through one portal, using their one unique username and password. With one point of access instead of dozens, you can protect against cyberthreats much more effectively. The techniques that cybercriminals use to break into EdTech systems are less likely to succeed when you have centralized control over all your applications and the digital identities that access them.

Maximize instructional time

Often, class and homework time is spent trying to login to the digital tools where learning happens. A digital identity platform also offers single sign-on, which enables users to login to every system they need using just one username and password. If they forget their credentials, they can immediately recover passwords and unlock accounts, on their own, without waiting for IT to come to the rescue.

Minimize the load on IT and EdTech teams

With a digital identity platform, IT teams can automate repetitive tasks like rostering, account on/off-boarding, provisioning, and deprovisioning. That means that IT can control who is on the edtech systems and make sure they have access to the tools they are supposed to access. By automating these tasks, IT can focus on more innovative projects and add new digital tools to your learning environment without the usual hassles or risks they can bring.

Today, a digital identity platform addresses the common IT issues that get in the way of learning. In the near term, a digital identity can catalyze new, innovative capabilities. These include:

- Responsive and predictive learning: Student digital identities aggregate information from all the disparate learning systems where academic, behavioral, demogrgraphic, relational, and lifestyle data is siloed. Using this data, educators can individualize learning to what students need at a given moment. They can also predict setbacks and intervene before they happen.

- Educational big data: With digital identities that contain rich, multifaceted data, educators can compare individuals and cohorts of students to understandthe broader patterns and outcomes in their community. In K-12 education, for example, district leadership will be able to see when achievement gaps occur and why, without waiting on standardized test results.

- Data-driven innovation: Educators can measure how changes in policy, staffing, digital learning tools, and teaching techniques affect students. The digital identity platform can accelerate innovations that might otherwise take many years to test.

Is it Time for a
Digital Identity Platform?

If you have read this far, there's a good chance that your digital learning tools have caused concerns and frustration for members of your community. Most likely, you have excellent tools, but they just aren't easy to access and use. They cause too many headaches for students, educators, and especially IT. It doesn't feel like you're getting the best possible return on your investments. A digital identity platform might be the foundation you need to upgrade your learning environment and future-proof it for exciting new possibilities.

To sum up

- A digital identity platform safeguards learing environments, maximizes instructional time, and minimizes the load on IT and EdTech teams by orienting your learning environment around real people and their unique digital identities.

- A digital identity platform connects your digital resources to one portal that IT can protect and control. Users access everything they need through a single username and password, which can be reset on their own. Spared from routine helpdesk requests, IT can work on more innovative projects.

- By connecting data and experiences from your systems to digital identities, a digital identity platform can enable responsive and personalized learning at scale, insight to performance analytics, as well as quicker testing and innovation cycles.

Let's continue the conversation

Ready to take the next steps? Contact us today to discuss your digital identity challenges and learn how our digital identity platform can safeguard your learning environment, maximize instructional time, and minimize the load on technology teams.

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