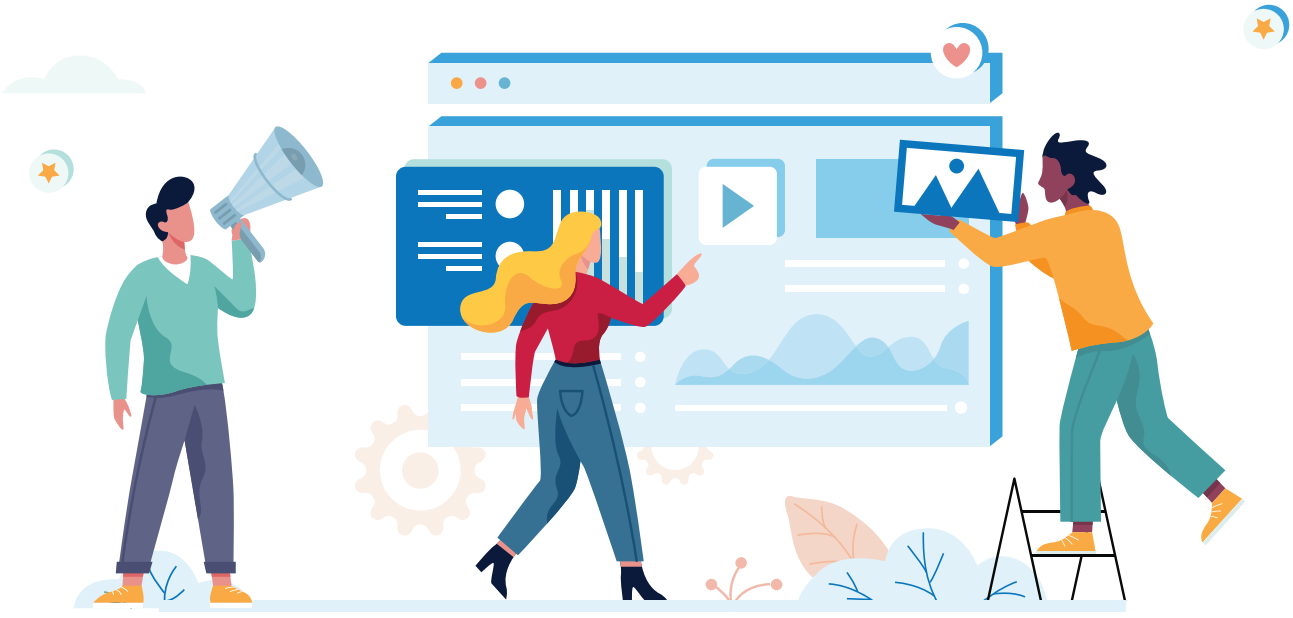
Amazon Web Services (AWS) is a comprehensive cloud platform that provides a wide range of services to build, deploy, and manage applications and infrastructure. Higher education institutions have begun to realize the benefits of AWS for their business and educational goals by leveraging services that are scalable, flexible, and cost-effective.

AWS plays a significant role in digital transformation in higher education as it provides the infrastructure and services needed to support the development and deployment of innovative, agile, and scalable digital applications and services. Of course, this all sounds great on paper, but administrators who have attempted a digital transformation in higher education know that the process is rife with challenges.

Below, we review the scope of these challenges, potential solutions, and how experienced AWS partners bring everything together:

- The benefits of cloud adoption for higher ed
- Challenges faced by higher education when they migrate to AWS
- The value of the right implementation partner
- ERPA's proprietary technology and processes for AWS in higher education



WHY PUSH FOR ADOPTION OF CLOUD IN HIGHER ED?

In recent years, cloud computing has become a common tactic to improve processes and reduce costs. Many universities have already transitioned to AWS: *Harvard University, The Massachusetts Institute of Technology, The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, The University of Washington, and more.*

When we examine the benefits of the cloud, it's easy to see why it has become a top point of competitive advantage:

Cost Savings

Cloud computing can provide cost savings for higher education institutions because it reduces the need for expensive on-premises infrastructure and provides pay-as-you-go pricing models.

Scalability

Cloud computing allows institutions to scale their resources up or down as needed, which helps them deal with spikes in demand during peak enrollment periods or research projects.

Flexibility

Cloud computing enables institutions to provide students and staff with access to resources and applications from anywhere, at any time, and from any device. This is important for online and distance education programs.

Collaboration

AWS cloud computing services support real-time collaboration between students and staff on documents, projects, and assignments, regardless of their location.

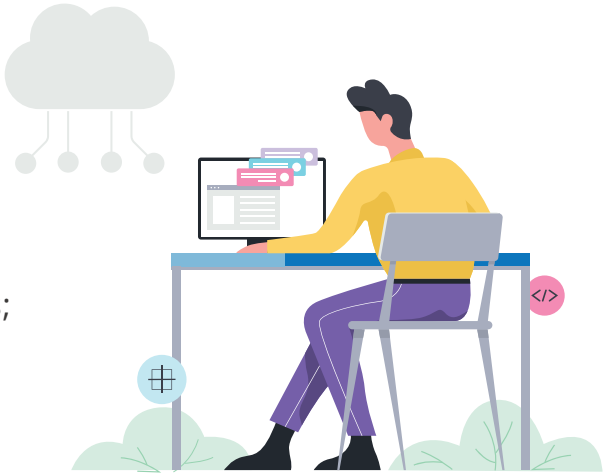
Innovation

Cloud computing allows institutions to experiment with new technologies, such as machine learning and artificial intelligence, without the need for large investments in hardware and infrastructure.

Cloud computing has become an important way to modernize campus environments while it improves the student experience, all in one move. The secret lies in the data. With a better understanding of how to manage data productively, institutions can go beyond mere data collection and transform those insights into wisdom to improve operations across the board and help each university become recognized as forward-thinking and innovative.

THE CHALLENGE OF TECH IMPLEMENTATION AND HOW INSTITUTIONS MAY STRUGGLE

The benefits of AWS and comparable cloud-based solutions are well-documented in higher education. The problem isn't awareness; it's putting the necessary steps into practice. Cloud implementations face specific challenges, particularly in the coming years.



SLOWED PACE OF CHANGE

Now that institutions have returned to a post-COVID-19 world, the pandemic-led push for innovation has started to recede. Institutions can now revert to their previous, slower-paced changes driven by committees and long-term planning rather than the immediate technical pivots we saw throughout 2020 and 2021. This may reduce an organization's willingness to embrace technical innovation at the same pace as its competitors.

LABORIOUS PROCUREMENT

As all decision-makers in tech know, securing new solutions can be a challenge, even if all stakeholders are on board. Universities will face challenges that surround tech procurement, cost management, maintaining a security and compliance posture, and managing the full range of other tech integrations required. Even smaller institutions will need to ensure that any solution chosen will integrate with existing student information systems (SIS) and learning management systems (LMS).

In a word, the procurement process is a top challenge, and most organizations aren't equipped to tackle the process alone.

LACK OF EARLY STAGE ROADMAPPING

Roadmapping refers to the process to plan and map out the future development and growth of an organization's use of the AWS platform. It is typically done at the earliest stage of an organization's adoption of AWS when it sets goals and objectives, identifies the resources and services needed to achieve those goals, and creates a plan to implement and manage those resources over time.

This is another area in which companies may struggle, and understandably so. If you've never managed an AWS project, how would you know what to do? Experienced AWS partners have experience with these processes and can help companies understand the best roadmapping strategy to move an institution forward.

POOR ABILITY TO SCALE

Scalability sounds like a critical feature for any cloud solution, but the management of a functional, scalable system is a challenge all its own. Issues like changes in pricing models, maintenance of security, and forecasting future resource needs can leave a company in a quagmire of post-migration decisions that prevent their ability to scale.

And to cap it off, the above challenges represent just a few of the technical questions that universities will need to address to improve downstream goals.

For example:

- How can AWS be structured to help better engage with student populations, and improve enrollment, retention, and success?
- Can the AWS implementation support the growing need for remote and hybrid learning environments?
- Will the AWS migration produce demonstrable cost savings that free up resources for other tasks?
- Overall, can the cloud-based system help educators do more with less and create better outcomes for both students and administration?

Higher education institutions may face several—or all—of these challenges when they migrate to AWS or another cloud platform. Even small hiccups in the process can disrupt project timelines, which is why it's so important for businesses to tackle the process with an experienced integration partner who can walk them through the steps.

ERPA'S PROCESS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION MIGRATIONS

ERPA has worked for over 23 years with colleges and universities. This gives us unique insight into the challenges and opportunities—that face the education sector. This experience ensures that all solutions maintain full reliability, accessibility, and security across the enterprise.

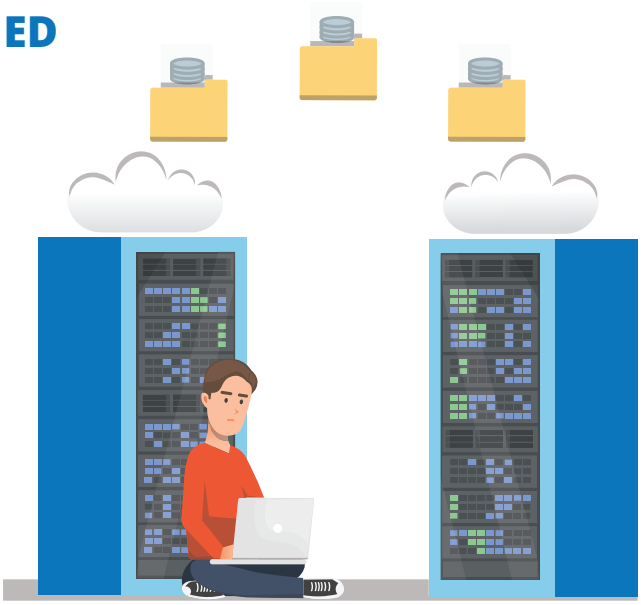
ERPA's approach to cloud modernization with AWS is built on a proven framework that incorporates each step in your cloud journey. The process begins with a tailored roadmapping process in which ERPA learns the nuances of each system and creates a strategy to move forward, which often involve these steps:

- Assess the current state to identify the organization's current use of AWS as well as any existing infrastructure, applications, and data that will need to be integrated with the platform.
- Identify goals and objectives to set specific goals for the organization's use of AWS, such as cost reduction, security improvement, or increased scalability.
- Identify resources and services to identify the specific AWS services and resources that will be needed to achieve the organization's goals and objectives, such as compute, storage, and data services.
- Create a detailed plan for how to implement and manage the identified resources and services, including timelines, milestones, and responsibilities.

From here, a data management strategy is designed to accommodate all information and workloads to be transferred to the AWS ecosystem. From seamless migration to application refactoring to full rebuild, ERPA modernizes and maximizes the value of enterprise applications to ensure that universities are set up for success. We ensure that all systems remain compliant with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and more.

THE ERPA ADVANTAGE FOR AWS IMPLEMENTATIONS IN HIGHER ED

Many service providers can offer AWS migration services, but not all managed service providers are created equal. ERPA has over 23 years of experience in education-specific AWS implementations and is a certified AWS Consulting Partner and certified AWS Education Partner—a rare designation reserved only for companies specializing in education solutions within the AWS ecosystem.



WHAT IS AN AWS CONSULTING PARTNER?

To become certified as an AWS Consultant, applicants must comply with certain requirements, such as a dedicated team of AWS professionals on staff, a quality track record of AWS projects, earning a certain revenue threshold for AWS services, and more. It's a lengthy process, but companies like ERPA achieve this designation to give clients full confidence in the value of their services.
As an AWS Advanced Consulting Partner, ERPA combines deep cross-functional knowledge of education institutions with enterprise technology expertise to deliver cloud solutions that drive modernization initiatives in support of your students, faculty, and staff.

To Become an AWS certified AWS Education Partner, organizations must complete a rigorous 3rd party audit demonstrating expertise and capabilities unique to the Education sector. Among other criteria, companies that earn this designation must demonstrate a track record of successfully delivering AWS training to customers and provide ongoing support to students and learners.

Upon completion, the company will be awarded the status of AWS Education Partner and will have access to a range of resources and benefits to support their AWS education and training initiatives.

ENTERPRISE EFFICIENCY WITH BOUTIQUE SERVICE

ERPA has developed time-tested AWS processes specifically for use in higher-ed environments. Our process combines the collective experience and efficiency of an enterprise-level partner with a specialized boutique approach to consulting services. This gives clients the best of both worlds: broad capabilities to suit a variety of different AWS projects alongside a personal touch that keeps stakeholders in the loop.

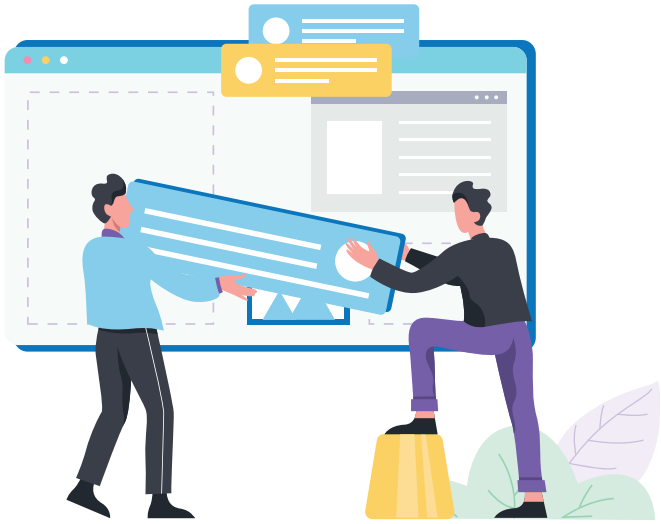
WE CREATE EDUCATION-SPECIFIC SOLUTIONS TO TOP CHALLENGES

With ERPA, clients get a powerful consulting solution that allows them to achieve mastery over AWS without the need to invest in full-time staff. They also receive valuable ongoing support and service to address any future roadblocks that may appear as the institution grows. This process ensures that every university, school district, or institution receives education-specific solutions to help them overcome their goals:

- To engage and nurture each student's experience through collaborative technology.
- To ensure student access to all learning tools and campus applications.
- To keep parents informed with access to portals for information review, financial aid, etc.
- To empower administrators, educators, and student life departments to make informed, data-driven decisions.
- To facilitate curriculum development and continuous improvement on all fronts.

PREPARE YOUR INSTITUTION FOR THE FUTURE WITH AN AWS CONSULTING PARTNER

Although there are many service providers capable of pulling off an AWS project, few will have the necessary expertise to drive results for higher-ed implementations. School districts should prioritize service providers who have demonstrated expertise in higher-ed ecosystems to make sure they achieve an AWS deployment that's fast, efficient, and supports the institution's long-term goals.



If you're considering an AWS project for your university or district, contact ERPA to discuss your options.

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