



## **Budgets, competition for students, rising IT costs top worries for higher-ed administrators in 2010-2011 outlook survey**

**St. Louis — October 4, 2010 —** Reduced budgets, competition for students and the high cost of technology replacement are top-of-mind concerns of higher-education administrators according the results released today from the Three Rivers Systems 2010-2011 Academic Outlook Survey.

The e-mail survey randomly distributed to college and university administrators worldwide confirms that the persistent global recession of the last few years continues to have a major impact on higher education.

Most feel outcome expectations will remain high this year while the resources to meet them will decline. In response to the question, “In thinking about our mission in the 2010-2011 academic year, we will be asked to do more with fewer resources,” “strongly agree” outnumbered “agree” by a two-to-one margin. Overall, 84 percent strongly agreed or agreed.

Survey respondents ranked budget reductions as their number one challenge, followed by competition for students and replacing aging campus infrastructure.

When it comes to information technology, most cited the rising cost of replacement as the single, most-important issue in the next year, followed closely by integrating academic and administrative IT services.

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Most administrators ranked budget as their biggest headache, followed by communicating effectively with faculty or staff and workload.

The survey included a question about heeding the advice in a July 2010 report published by EDUCAUSE, a nonprofit association with a mission to advance higher education by promoting intelligent use of information technology.

Report author Phillip J. Goldstein concluded that IT leaders in education must do four things to persuade their institutions that technology is a good investment and not just a place to cut costs:

- Secure new revenue streams through online learning.
- Improve utilization of assets through more administrative operations.
- Improve student retention and reduce time to graduation through better systems to track academic progress and improve advising.
- Leverage data and analytics to support improved decision making.

In ranking their institutions' likelihood of implementing these items, a smattering of respondents thought it was hard to say or unlikely, while a large majority thought each was most likely or likely to be done.

Strategies for implementing iPads, other electronic tablets and eBook readers, however, seem to be on the backburner. Nearly 80 percent said they have no plans for integrating electronic tablets on campus, while 66 percent responded in the negative about eBooks.

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Despite some pessimism, responders were generally upbeat about the upcoming year. When asked about student outcomes for 2010-2011, the vast majority thought they would be much better or better than recent years.

Amir Tajkarimi, company president and founder of Three Rivers Systems Inc., the provider of the CAMS Enterprise, a leading academic ERP, considers the survey a source of optimism.

“While higher-education administrators continue to grapple with budget and workload challenges, they are also looking to technology to help them do more with fewer resources,” he said. “When selecting an ERP, they should demand a safe solution with a predictable total cost of ownership and proven ROI.”

### **About [CAMS Enterprise](#)**

Developed from the ground up with Microsoft Internet technologies, [CAMS Enterprise](#), is a highly scalable, comprehensive academic management system that is quick to implement and easy to use. CAMS Enterprise consolidates multiple stand-alone systems including admissions, student information, financial aid, student services, fiscal management with HR and payroll, fund-raising, alumni relations, document management, course management a full suite of portals, and more, into one solution that ensures administrators, staff, faculty and students all work with the most recent and most accurate information. By uniting administrative and academic management systems, CAMS Enterprise is the only totally Web-native, completely integrated solution for managing the entire student life-cycle.

### **About [Three Rivers Systems Inc.](#)**

Three Rivers Systems Inc. is a leading provider of comprehensive administrative software solutions for higher education. Headquartered in St. Louis, the company has been delivering innovative technology-driven solutions to the educational community since 1985. Three Rivers Systems has a large worldwide client base using CAMS, its Comprehensive Academic Management System. A full-service solution provider, the company delivers software and all implementation, training, project management and support services for its clients.

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**Contact:** Ron Kalb, Three Rivers Systems Inc., Director of Communications, 636-779-1518 (office), 702-498-8916 (cell), [ronk@threerivers-cams.com](mailto:ronk@threerivers-cams.com)