

Modernizing Software Distribution at a Large US University

The Goal

In 2014, the CIO of a large university in the United States recognized a need to modernize the way the institution distributed software to students, staff, faculty, and researchers. At that point, the university was still distributing software on physical media, such as flash drives and burned discs.

“Software distribution was at archaic levels,” explains the school’s Manager for Client Experiences. “We were really kind of stuck back in 2005.”

The university wanted to correct this as quickly as possible and bring their software-distribution practices into the modern era by transitioning to digital distribution. The university’s Software License Manager was assigned the challenge of finding a solution that would accomplish this.

The Challenge

The university realized that their current means of distributing software was no longer acceptable for an institution of their size and standing. However, the need for a better system was driven by more than matters of prestige.

Distributing software manually was creating major headaches for both staff and students. The main issues are listed below.

- **Back-End Work**

Distributing software on physical media was a huge burden on school staff. Burning enough discs to equip students with software was extremely time-consuming, even discounting related tasks like printing and applying labels to discs. And additional copies had to be burned as new versions of software were released. These tasks took up at least a week of the Software License Manager’s time in the lead-up to each semester. Eliminating this back-end work was a significant incentive for finding a new solution.

- **Poor Student Experience**

The university's method of distributing software was a problem for students as well as for staff. They could only obtain software in person, within limited hours. And installing software from physical media could be extremely time-consuming – especially in the case of large software, like SAS, which could take up to four hours and required students to change discs partway through the installation. Also, students' hardware was starting to outpace the university's means of offering software – staff were receiving more and more complaints from students who could not install software from a disc because newer computers no longer had disc drives.

- **High Support Burden**

Related to both above points, the university's software-distribution practices were causing a high volume of support inquiries. The SAS installation process described earlier would trigger a flood of calls from students confused by the process every semester. This was frustrating for students and created even more back-end work for the university's already-overburdened Software Licensing team. The university's new solution would need to reduce – or, ideally, eliminate – this problem for students and staff alike.

- **Overhead Costs**

Manually distributing software involved significant costs for the department responsible. This department was not centrally funded by the university; it had to keep its operating costs down to remain solvent. The need to purchase and maintain CD burners, labels, and vast quantities of burnable discs, flash drives, and media sets was not making that easy. The university's new system for distributing software would need to eliminate these overhead costs and be affordable for the Text Store to adopt and maintain.



The Solution

The school's Software License Manager began by exploring the possibility of developing an in-house solution for digitally delivering software. However, that idea was quickly abandoned, as her team lacked the staff and technical expertise to develop, maintain, and support such a system.

"How do we keep it up to date; how do we keep it secure?" she recalls thinking at the time. "We didn't have those types of resources." And so she started looking into third-party solutions – a search that soon brought her to Kivuto Solutions.

Kivuto has been transforming how academic institutions manage and distribute software since 1997. Their Kivuto Cloud platform frees up IT resources through automation and provides students, staff, and faculty with a one-stop shop where they can self-serve access to all software they need.

"We needed something consistent, that was 24/7, that people could rely on and trust us with," says the school's Manager for Client Experiences. "Kivuto Cloud totally fits the bill. It wasn't going to break the bank, and it could solve our problems quickly and easily."

The Results

The university started using Kivuto Cloud to provide online access to software less than six months after the search for a solution began. Here are the key benefits this has brought to the institution.

- **Less Back-End Work**

By digitizing the distribution of software and providing students with self-serve access, Kivuto Cloud has eliminated the back-end work involved in physical distribution. This means no more burning software to discs, printing/applying labels, or directly putting software in students' hands – and far more time for staff to focus on more important and rewarding work.



- **Improved Student Experience**

Students used to have to obtain software in person, within set hours, and spend hours installing it from physical media. With Kivuto Cloud, they can download the software they need online, from anywhere and at any time, and install it in a fraction of the time it would take to install from a disc.

- **End-User Support**

Kivuto Cloud includes full end-user support around accessing and downloading software. This has cut the number of support requests that staff must field almost to zero. And when students do reach out to them with problems, or staff need a change made to the online store, Kivuto is always happy to engage and connect with stakeholders and end users directly to resolve the issue as quickly and efficiently as possible.

- **Cost Savings**

By eliminating the burden of physical distribution, Kivuto Cloud has also eliminated the associated costs. The institution no longer needs to purchase physical media or devote billable hours into the time-consuming process of burning software to that media. This has made it easier for the department responsible for distributing software to stay in the black while making more efficient use of their limited staff resources.

About Kivuto

Since 1997, Kivuto has transformed the way academic software is delivered. Today, Kivuto streamlines the management and distribution of academic digital resources through Kivuto Cloud – a secure and centralized platform for schools to offer any type of digital resources to their students, faculty, and staff.

Find out how Kivuto Cloud can help your institution. [View our solution brief](#) or [book a demo](#) today.

Kivuto's team and technology made these improvements not only possible but painless. "There is a level of consideration that we see from Kivuto that is leagues above what we tend to find from our other vendors," says the Manager for Client Experiences.

"I would definitely recommend Kivuto," adds the Software Licensing Manager, citing Kivuto's willingness to engage with end users and understanding of the education industry. "Kivuto understands how higher ed works and that we're not a commercial business."

Kivuto Cloud has completely transformed the student experience involved in obtaining software at the university and drastically reduced the work and cost involved in distributing that software. These improvements have brought the institution's software-distribution practices into the digital age and to a standard befitting an institution of their status.