Digital Tools Are Key For Today's Busy College Students

(NAPSA)—College students today have a lot of distractions, and challenging schedules make it even harder for them to focus.

A recent survey by Cengage Learning and Eduventures found that nearly half of today's college students hold jobs and 30 percent report being distracted by external responsibilities such as raising families or by financial issues, like paying for school. On top of that, students are entering school lacking essential skills, which is significantly impacting their ability to study and focus.

Nevertheless, students and instructors agree that educational technology can help improve engagement and learning outcomes. In fact, 86 percent of students surveyed report that their academic engagement and learning outcomes have improved as they have increasingly used digital tools in their coursework. Help is on the way in the form of new educational technologies and digital tools.

One such technology is Mind-Tap, a program of digital products and services that engages students through interactivity and offers instructors choice in content, platforms, devices and learning tools. Beyond an e-book, course delivery platform or Learning Management System, Mind-Tap is the first in a new category of Personal Learning Experiences (PLEs).

The MindTap program offers a variety of digital learning apps and services. These customizable apps actively encourage students to interact with their course content, as well as with their peers and instructors. The flexible delivery platform also lets instructors and students incorporate open content in the context of the overall syllabus.

MindTap is designed to work anytime, anywhere—on multiple devices, platforms, learning management systems or with a print text.

Students can tap into content from Cengage Learning's Gale library databases. They can learn anytime and anywhere via multiple devices. They can also access multimedia content such as videos, podcasts and images.

According to Ken Baldauf, director, Program in Interdisciplinary Computing at Florida State University, "Interactive online tutorials, instructional videos, RSS news feeds and other online resources bring relevance to the course material."

He continued, "My online learning community provides a platform for students to discuss course materials with me and each other anytime throughout the day. The classroom must extend beyond a physical location and set times to be accessible to students at their convenience."

Students agree. The Cengage Learning/Eduventures survey showed that the majority of students who are employed full-time or part-time prefer more technology-based tools in the classroom. Demand for new educational technologies will likely grow along with students' busy schedules.

For more information, visit www.cengage.com/mindtap.