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StarChart™: 2026 Catalog and Curriculum Management

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INTRODUCTION AND REPORT SUMMARY

The Tambellini Group, the leading analyst and advisory firm focused on higher education, is pleased to present the *Tambellini StarChart™: 2026 Catalog and Curriculum Management*. As institutions navigate unprecedented change associated with societal forces and economic factors, a StarChart™ is designed to help higher education institutions visually navigate their current technology landscape through the lens of usability and innovation—which Tambellini research shows are the two biggest drivers of how institutions make technology investments.

StarCharts are part of Tambellini's multifaceted approach to helping institutions achieve their best technological state while also leveraging Tambellini's Future Campus™ Framework. Tambellini's Future Campus Framework complements the StarCharts, providing additional clarity on an institution's needs and requirements and ultimately helping to inform and guide modernization initiatives. The Future Campus is Tambellini's vision of where innovation and cutting-edge technology converge to create a sustainable, leading higher education institution.

This groundbreaking approach builds on more than 20 years of higher education research and proven success, providing relevant and timely contextualized information. Tambellini's proprietary methodology leverages input from hundreds of higher education institutions, Tambellini analysts and strategic advisors, vendors, implementation partners, and more.

Catalog and Curriculum Management solutions enable institutions to author, govern, approve, and publish the courses, programs, and policies that define the academic catalog of record. These platforms have evolved from document-centric catalog production and proposal routing into integrated governance environments that manage curriculum proposals, multi-step approval workflows, catalog publishing, syllabus management, and cross-system integration with student information systems and related platforms. Increasingly, solutions leverage analytics, automation, and embedded AI to streamline proposal review, surface labor market and outcomes data, and keep curriculum, catalog, and downstream systems aligned.

To include a Catalog and Curriculum Management solution in the 2026 StarChart, Tambellini analysts evaluated solutions based on a specific set of criteria. Tambellini included Catalog and Curriculum Management solutions that are currently in use by at least one higher education institution, support Catalog and Curriculum Management functionality, and are currently being sold in the United States higher education market.

Tambellini StarChart: 2026 Catalog and Curriculum Management shows how Catalog and Curriculum Management solutions scored against a matrix of usability and innovation criteria. The scoring is developed to help guide institutions in their journey to identify the best-fit solution to suit their needs.

It is important to note that placement on the StarChart does not necessarily mean a solution is the best fit for every institution. In fact, the underlying innovation in the approach proves that depending on the orientation of the institution, the same solution can appear stronger to one institution than another.

The Catalog and Curriculum Management vendors evaluated include a mix of purpose-built curriculum and catalog platforms and broader academic operations solutions with dedicated catalog and curriculum capabilities. Vendors included in this analysis are:

The Catalog and Curriculum Management Vendors Evaluated

- Acadea (CurriQunet META)
- Clean Catalog (Course Catalog and Curriculum Management)*
- Coursedog (Curriculum and Catalog)
- CourseLeaf (CAT & CIM)*
- Kuali (Catalog and Curriculum)
- Modern Campus (Curriculum and Catalog)*
- Watermark (Curriculum Strategy & Catalog)

* CourseLeaf, Clean Catalog, and Modern Campus opted to not participate in the vendor request for information, which may negatively impact their StarChart placement.

eLumen maintains curriculum-related capabilities but has established an exclusive partnership with Coursedog for curriculum and catalog management functionality.

FUTURE CAMPUS IMPACTS

The Future Campus™ Framework is Tambellini's innovative tool for generating strategic-level conversations and action for appropriate investments and divestments across the four key pillars of people, process, data, and technology. The Framework is scored across ten key higher education workspaces.

Catalog and Curriculum Management solutions can affect the following Future Campus workspaces:

Outcomes

Catalog and Curriculum Management shapes the structure, accuracy, and availability of programs and pathways, directly influencing students' ability to understand requirements and complete programs efficiently. By keeping curriculum, prerequisites, and catalog information accurate and aligned with progression requirements, institutions can reduce confusion, support timely completion, and improve overall educational outcomes.

Recruit

When the catalog is opened to prospective students, Catalog and Curriculum Management supports recruitment by giving prospects clear, accessible information about academic offerings and program requirements. Accurate, well-published program and course information helps prospective students evaluate fit, understand pathways to completion, and make informed enrollment decisions.

Retain

Catalog and Curriculum Management supports student persistence by ensuring requirements are clear, current, and consistently published across the catalog, degree maps, and downstream systems. Accurate curriculum data reduces time to degree, lowers friction during advising and registration, and strengthens the student experience across academic planning.

Operations

Catalog and Curriculum Management modernizes institutional operations by replacing manual, paper-based proposal and catalog production processes with integrated, governed, data-driven platforms. This includes automation of curriculum approval workflows, improved system interoperability, and the use of analytics and AI to streamline review and decision-making.

Revenue

Catalog and Curriculum Management contributes to revenue stability by accelerating the launch of new and in-demand programs, aligning offerings with labor market signals, and reducing the lag between curriculum approval and catalog publication. Faster, better-governed curriculum change supports enrollment in relevant programs and helps institutions manage their academic portfolio more effectively.

NAVIGATING THE TAMBELLINI STARCHART

On the right side of the StarChart™, institutions should expect to see the most complete and usable Catalog and Curriculum Management solutions that have been proven to support institutions of all types and sizes. However, as you might expect, usability comes at a cost, possibly making these solutions cost-prohibitive for some institutions. The Catalog and Curriculum Management solutions positioned on the left side of the StarChart support less functionality that is typically needed by large and complex institutions, and they have not demonstrated scalability in these larger segments. However, solutions on the left side are more affordable and have been proven to support the needs of small- to mid-market institutions, depending on their requirements.

Usability is evaluated based on the following factors:

- User satisfaction survey results
- Vendor usability evaluation (customer support, software release cadence, implementation, training)
- Functional solution breadth
- US higher education market presence (demonstrated scalability in the market)
- Presence of 2026 market usability differentiators (Market Reputation, Selections, Time on Market, Ease of Use, and Resources Required to Maintain)
- Integration within the vendor's broader academic operations platform capabilities (Accreditation Management, Assessment Management, Catalog and Curriculum Management, Course Evaluations, Faculty Information Management, Syllabus Management, Research Information Management), reflecting reduced system fragmentation and a more unified user experience

At the top of the Tambellini StarChart, institutions should expect to see products that both demonstrate innovation and possess the capacity for sustained and future innovation. The products on the bottom of the Tambellini StarChart generally have less embedded innovative features and may not have the ability to innovate and sustain that innovation at scale.

Innovation is evaluated based on the following factors:

- Vendor capacity for future and sustained innovation
- Innovative functionality within core features
- Presence of 2026 market innovation differentiators (Workflow/Automation Maturity, Catalog Publishing Depth, Curriculum-Catalog Cohesion, AI/Analytics Strength, and Extensibility/Platform)
- Platform extensibility across academic operations (Accreditation Management, Assessment Management, Catalog and Curriculum Management, Course Evaluations, Faculty Information Management, Syllabus Management, Research Information Management), enabling shared data models, cross-functional workflows, and expanded decision-making capabilities

Tambellini StarChart: 2026 Catalog and Curriculum Management

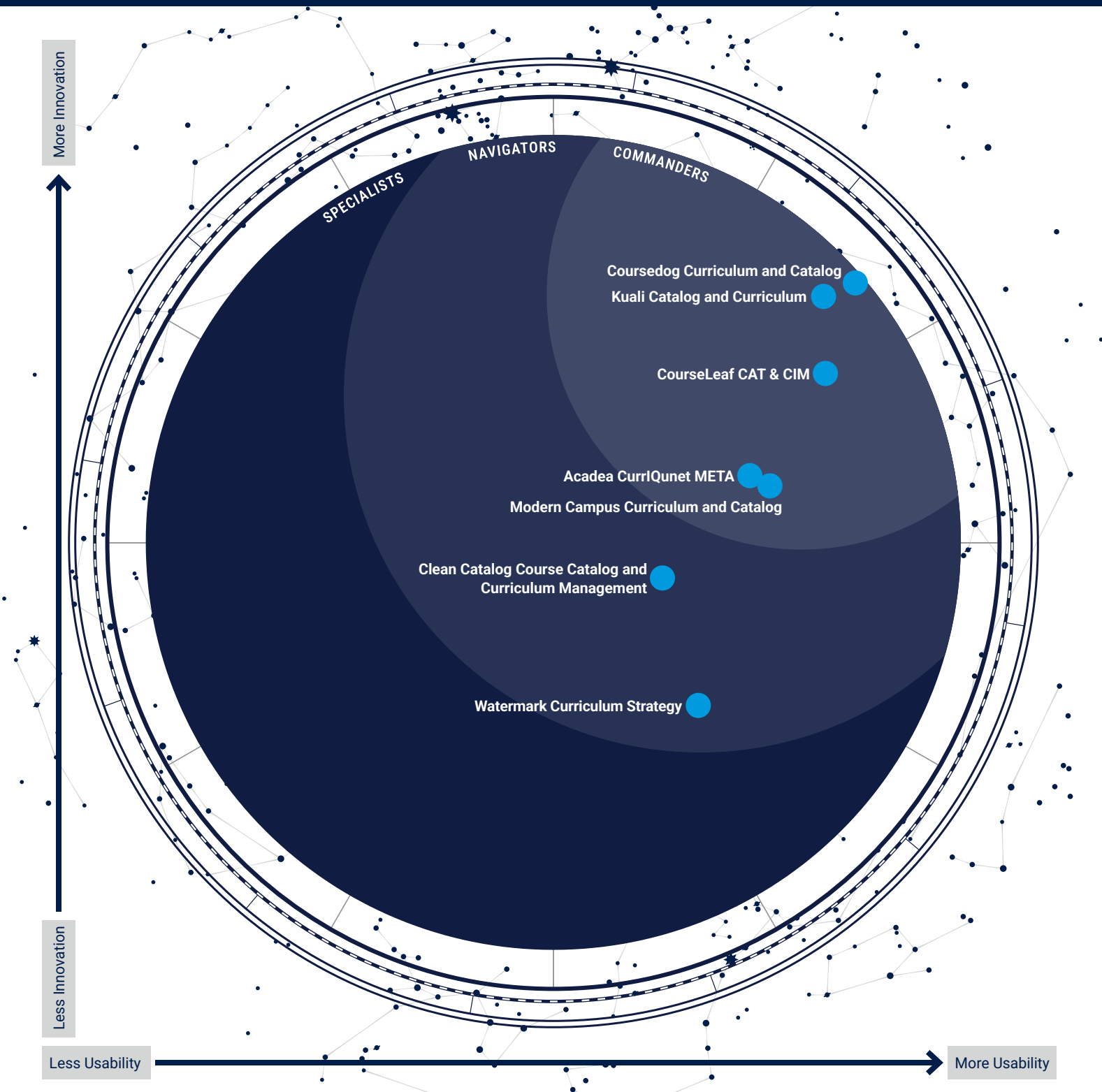
Tambellini StarChart Orbits further segment vendor solutions into three categories on the StarChart. The **Commander** category is the outermost orbit located in the top right corner of the StarChart. Institutions should anticipate that solutions in the **Commander** Orbit are market leaders with highly innovative and user-centric designs that set the benchmark for what is possible. The **Navigator** category is located in the middle orbit. Solutions in this orbit demonstrate a balance of innovation and usability with more comprehensive and adaptable capabilities beyond niche specialization. The **Specialist** category is the innermost orbit. Solutions in this orbit represent niche offerings that are more narrowly focused on specific technology and functional needs, providing high-value to its clients and meeting focused market demands.

Tambellini also positions products not yet generally available on the market. These are called **Forming Planets** and their position will reflect our projection for their score once released. A solution that has been announced and is in development will receive an outline of a planet.

An important consideration is that no position on the StarChart is either “good” or “bad” for all institutions. Those institutions with more complex needs and resources are likely to focus on one area of the StarChart, while other institutions with fewer resources and complexity may opt to focus on another area. The StarChart is not aimed at being the sole resource to make a final decision, but rather it provides a point of navigation to help make sense of the market, and down-select to a more manageable number of products to take that next step.

For a more nuanced understanding of the chart and the particular vendor solutions, please contact us to arrange a meeting with a Tambellini Analyst.

StarChart™: 2026 Catalog and Curriculum Management



KEY: ● Catalog and Curriculum Management Solutions

Usability measures the degree of ease in using a system and the degree of breadth in suitability for users to accomplish objectives.

Innovation measures the degree of addressing unique challenges and requirements with novel and/or advanced capabilities.

Forming Systems are in development but not generally available. Their positions are a projection.

CATALOG AND CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT EVALUATION INSIGHTS

Catalog and Curriculum Management solutions in this report range from comprehensive academic operations platforms to more focused catalog and curriculum offerings.

At the more comprehensive end, solutions support curriculum management, catalog, and syllabus within a unified solution that is part of a broader academic operations environment spanning scheduling, assessment, program review, and related functions. These platforms are designed to share a common data model across curriculum, catalog, and downstream systems, enabling institutions to govern proposals, automate workflows, and keep academic information aligned across the institution.

More focused solutions concentrate on the core catalog and curriculum lifecycle: proposal authoring, approval workflows, and catalog publishing, sometimes with syllabus support. These solutions often provide depth within curriculum and catalog but rely on integrations or additional systems to support assessment, scheduling, and other adjacent academic operations needs.

All solutions in this report are evaluated using a common set of usability and innovation criteria. This approach reflects the increasing expectation that catalog and curriculum solutions operate as coordinated components of a broader academic operations platform rather than isolated point solutions. As a result, solutions that deliver integrated workflows, shared data models, and cross-domain capabilities across the broader academic operations environment tend to score higher across both usability and innovation.

- **Acadea CurriQunet META** is a comprehensive, curriculum-centric platform from Acadea (formerly CurriQunet) that supports course and program management, digital catalog, syllabus, assessment, program review, and policies. The vendor has deep tenure in the market, having operated in curriculum management since 2001 with a long-standing concentration on the West Coast and a well-established presence among institutions seeking curriculum-centric solutions. The platform is delivered as a refactored, SaaS-architected web solution and supports bidirectional integration with the LMS, SIS, and other platforms through web services and APIs.

The product's core strength is the depth of its course and program management, which drives every other module so that catalog, syllabus, and policy content can be assembled directly from approved curriculum data, supported by configurable workflows, advanced search, and historical change tracking. For a July 2026 release, Acadea is introducing curriculum impact reports and Resource IQ, an AI-enabled course-material recommendation capability leveraging data science assets acquired through BMG. Acadea expects these capabilities to be incorporated more fully into the platform over the coming months, extending its analytics and decision-support capabilities for curriculum management. The key takeaway is that CurriQunet META offers the deepest curriculum-management heritage in this evaluation, making it a strong fit for institutions that treat course and program management as the strategic center of their academic operations.

- **Clean Catalog Course Catalog and Curriculum Management** is a focused catalog and curriculum solution that also supports syllabus and handbook publishing, oriented toward community and technical colleges and smaller institutions. The vendor is a specialized provider with an established presence among community colleges and smaller institutions, operating with a lean team and a modest research and development budget. The product is delivered as a cloud-native, hosted solution with automated PDF generation and API and SIS integration, and a stated emphasis on accessibility.

The product's core strength is straightforward, accessible catalog production paired with configurable curriculum approval workflows that fit the needs of its target market. Clean Catalog did not participate in the vendor request for information, and there is no publicly available roadmap for Clean Catalog. The key takeaway is that Clean Catalog is a strong fit for smaller institutions that prioritize an affordable, easy-to-deploy catalog and curriculum solution over the breadth and advanced capabilities of the larger platforms.

- **Coursedog Curriculum and Catalog** is a comprehensive academic operations platform that supports curriculum management, catalog, and syllabus as part of a broader environment that also spans academic scheduling and, increasingly, course evaluations. The vendor has established a significant and rapidly growing presence in US higher education, particularly among institutions pursuing academic operations modernization. Coursedog is delivered as a cloud-native platform built on a unified data model, and it integrates bidirectionally with student information systems through APIs and file-based interfaces.

The platform combines configurable proposal forms and approval workflows with catalog publishing, degree maps, requirements management, and a recently launched public syllabus repository that helps institutions meet new federal syllabus requirements. Through Coursedog Intelligence, the vendor is rolling out natural-language and prebuilt reporting, advanced workflows that connect actions across modules, and AI agents surfaced through its Ask Cassie assistant, with these capabilities releasing in phases across 2026 alongside a new labor market data add-on. The key takeaway is that Coursedog offers the most platform-oriented and actively innovating approach in this evaluation, making it a strong fit for institutions that want curriculum and catalog managed within a unified, intelligence-enabled academic operations environment.

- **CourseLeaf CAT and CIM** is a market-leading catalog (CAT) and curriculum (CIM) solution from Leepfrog Technologies, focused on the core curriculum and catalog lifecycle. CourseLeaf maintains one of the largest and most established footprints in this category, reflecting substantial market durability and broad adoption across institution types. The product is delivered as a cloud solution and integrates with student information systems, commonly operating alongside the broader CourseLeaf environment that includes section scheduling.

The product's core strength is its mature, deeply configurable curriculum workflow and catalog publishing engine, with strong impact analysis, approval routing, and a long track record of supporting large and complex institutions. CourseLeaf did not participate in the vendor request for information, and there is no publicly available

roadmap for CourseLeaf. The key takeaway is that CourseLeaf remains a benchmark for comprehensive catalog and curriculum management, particularly for large institutions that prioritize depth, configurability, and proven scalability.

- **Kuali Catalog and Curriculum** is a comprehensive academic operations offering that supports curriculum management, catalog, and syllabus within the broader Kuali platform. The vendor has an established presence in US higher education, with particular strength among institutions that value configurability and a no-code administrative model. Kuali is delivered as a cloud-native, continuously delivered SaaS solution and integrates with student information systems and campus platforms through modern APIs and single sign-on.

The platform's core strength is its highly configurable curriculum workflow engine, built on the Kuali Build no-code framework, with native synchronization between curriculum and catalog and configurable proposal forms, approval routing, and governance controls. Kuali has continued to invest in dashboards, reporting, and an emerging set of AI capabilities introduced with its broader academic operations suite, though these AI features are earlier in maturity than the market leaders. The key takeaway is that Kuali is a strong fit for institutions that prioritize workflow configurability, governance, and a unified, continuously delivered platform across curriculum and catalog.

- **Modern Campus Curriculum and Catalog** is a curriculum and catalog offering, delivered through Modern Campus Curriculum (formerly Curriculog) and Modern Campus Catalog (formerly Acalog), that is part of the broader Modern Campus platform spanning web content and student engagement. Modern Campus maintains one of the largest installed footprints in the category through its widely adopted catalog and curriculum products. The solution is delivered as a SaaS-architected application refactored from earlier deployment models and integrates with student information systems, with a connector to Modern Campus's Omni CMS for web publishing.

The product's core strength is its mature, web-based curriculum approval workflow and relational catalog database, with a large, long-established install base and embedded training guidance. Modern Campus did not participate in the vendor request for information, and there is no publicly available roadmap for the Modern Campus Curriculum and Catalog products beyond general references to AI assistance within the broader platform. The key takeaway is that Modern Campus offers a proven, widely deployed catalog and curriculum solution, particularly for institutions already invested in the broader Modern Campus ecosystem.

- **Watermark Curriculum Strategy** is a focused catalog and curriculum offering within Watermark's broader educational intelligence suite, with particular strength in its adjacency to assessment and program review. Watermark maintains a broad presence across higher education through its educational intelligence portfolio and long-standing market position. The solution is delivered as a cloud-native, continuously delivered platform and integrates with student information systems and campus platforms, including single sign-on and security standards such as encryption and HECVAT.

The product's core strength is the connection between curriculum and catalog and Watermark's assessment and program review capabilities, giving institutions a path to align curriculum decisions with outcomes data. Watermark's curriculum and catalog functionality is less deep than the category leaders, and its innovation in core curriculum workflow and AI is more measured. The key takeaway is that Watermark is best suited for institutions that prioritize the link between curriculum, catalog, and assessment within a single vendor relationship.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

Over the next one to three years, the Catalog and Curriculum Management market will shift from a focus on proposal routing and catalog production to a focus on curriculum intelligence and connected academic operations. Institutions should evaluate whether solutions can surface labor market signals, outcomes data, and program demand directly into the curriculum review process. The defining question will not be whether a system can route a proposal and publish a catalog, but whether it can help institutions make better curriculum decisions and keep curriculum, catalog, syllabus, and downstream systems continuously aligned. In this context, manual, document-centric curriculum processes will become increasingly difficult to sustain as institutions face program portfolio pressure, compliance demands, and the need to launch new offerings quickly.

This shift is not purely technical. Institutions are encountering meaningful change management challenges as they move toward governed, data-informed curriculum processes. Faculty and committee resistance remains a significant factor, particularly where curriculum and catalog decisions have historically been driven by departmental autonomy, paper-based proposals, or legacy practices. Moving to modern curriculum management requires not only new tools, but also institutional alignment around outcomes such as program relevance, timely catalog publication, and compliance. Vendors that can support this transition through transparency, explainability, and workflow governance will be better positioned to help institutions operationalize change.

Catalog and Curriculum Management is also becoming more tightly connected to the broader academic operations ecosystem, including academic scheduling, assessment, faculty workload, and student planning. At the same time, core student system vendors are beginning to expand their capabilities in this space, introducing new competitive dynamics as they move beyond system-of-record functionality. The strongest vendors will be those that treat curriculum as a strategic capability, delivering shared data models, governed workflows, and embedded intelligence that support continuous improvement across academic operations.

EVALUATION AND METHODOLOGY SUMMARY

Vendor solutions are positioned on the StarChart™ based on a proprietary algorithm that leverages usability and innovation data points. Usability data points include institutional usability surveys, functional breadth, segment presence, and demonstrated scalability. Innovation data points benchmark each solution's ability to address unique functional and operational requirements and the vendor's ability to sustain the innovation at scale.

Tambellini conducts proprietary, original research, and information used in the StarChart is derived from System Usability Scale (SUS) survey results, vendor surveys, interviews, selection data, and other information sourced from Tambellini Analysts, Advisors, and the Research team as appropriate. Usability is evaluated across criteria categories, including cost, implementation, US market segment presence, functional solution breadth, customer support, software release cadence, implementation, training, and customer experience. Innovation is evaluated across criteria categories, including vendor company and resource profiles, functional solution breadth, integrations, security, partnerships, and capacity for future and sustained innovation.

In 2024, Tambellini introduced three orbits as part of its StarCharts, including Commanders, Navigators, and Specialists. Orbits in this framework represent the path and reach of a solution's innovation and usability in the technological universe. The concept of an orbit allows us to visualize how closely aligned a vendor is with core market needs, as well as the extent to which they impact and are interconnected with the broader ecosystem.

- **Commanders** stand at the forefront of innovation and usability, leading the industry with groundbreaking technologies and user-centric designs. Solutions in this orbit command the highest category, distinguished by their visionary approach and the transformative impact of their solutions. Commanders set the benchmarks for what is possible, pushing the boundaries of technology and usability to new heights. Their leadership is characterized by a consistent track record of excellence, significant market influence, and the ability to anticipate and shape future trends. Commanders not only excel in their offerings but also drive the industry forward, inspiring change and innovation across the technology landscape.
- **Navigators** demonstrate a balanced blend of innovation and usability, guiding their customers through the complexities of the technology landscape with reliable and forward-thinking solutions. Positioned in the middle category, Navigators have successfully expanded their capabilities beyond niche specialization to offer more comprehensive and adaptable technologies. Solutions in this orbit are marked by their ability to steer development and adoption in promising directions, leveraging emerging trends and customer insights to navigate the market effectively. Navigators represent a critical bridge between focused expertise and broader market leadership, offering versatile and evolving solutions.
- **Specialists** represent vendor solutions designed to operate in a specific niche or aspect

of technology. While they may not yet showcase broad innovation or high usability across a wide range of criteria, their focused, targeted solutions carve out significant value within their domain. Specialists are recognized for their deep understanding and capabilities in particular areas, making them valuable partners for specific needs. Their concentrated approach allows for specialized offerings that meet distinct market demands.

Tambellini's proprietary algorithm uses more than a hundred data points to position solutions on the StarChart, including information from surveys, vendor briefings, industry knowledge, institutional interviews, and more. All vendor solutions in each StarChart are evaluated using the exact same methodology and algorithm based on institutional criteria deemed most important by higher education. Additionally, Tambellini applies proprietary weighting to every StarChart, to ensure institutional criteria deemed most important in the current year's market, according to our research, has an appropriate impact on the final score. This weighting is applied consistently across all vendors and products in each StarChart. Incomplete information provided by vendors lowers the usability and innovation scores for their products. Tambellini reviews vendor survey responses against our body of research to ensure accuracy.

THE FUTURE CAMPUS

Tambellini's Future Campus™ Framework complements the StarCharts, providing additional clarity on an institution's needs and requirements, and ultimately helping to inform and guide their modernization. Tambellini analysts have identified that resilient institutions prepared to thrive through the changing digital landscape need to address a core set of problems—such as offering in-demand programs and experiences with proven employment outcomes, attracting and enrolling the right students, delivering the right experiences to retain and graduate students, modernizing operations, and right-sizing technical debt—to name a few.

Solving these problems requires a focus on people, process, data, and technology in parallel to propel institutions to the next state—their future campus. The Future Campus is Tambellini's vision and framework where innovation and cutting-edge technology converge to create a sustainable, leading higher education technology ecosystem. Not every institution will successfully make the transition. We are living through a pivotal turning point, forcing institutions to modernize at an unprecedented pace in order to remain competitive.