

SAP Customer Success Story Higher Education and Research



AT A GLANCE

Summary

When Duke University introduced SAP® software across the organization, it bid farewell to disparate, homegrown IT systems and manual information processing – and gained the agility and transparency it needed to deal with ever-tightening budgets.

Web Site

www.duke.edu

Key Challenges

- Improve visibility throughout organization
- Enhance operational efficiency
- Improve support for two major lines of business – higher education and healthcare

Project Objective

Replace disparate, homegrown IT systems with flexible, integrated solution to reduce costs

Solution and Services

- mySAP™ Business Suite family of business solutions
- SAP NetWeaver® Business Intelligence component

Why SAP Solution

- Support for future growth
- High level of integration
- Comprehensive support for users with wide range of skills and requirements
- Availability of effective analysis tools

Implementation Highlight

A rapid, successful implementation, thanks in part to ASAP, SAP's proven implementation methodology

Key Benefits

- Single application platform supporting both higher education and healthcare lines of business
- Streamlined purchasing
- Support for strategic decision making, thanks to an improved ability to quickly generate reports based on real-time data

Implementation Partners

- SAP Consulting
- KPMG consultants (now BearingPoint) for the mySAP Business Suite implementation

Existing Environment

Non-SAP software

Database

Oracle 9i

Hardware

IBM (RS6000)

Operating System

AIX 5.3

“The overall SAP solution has given us better visibility into the business and a greater ability to generate reports and make strategic decisions. All told, we've continued to add more functions and more capabilities, but we've barely scratched the surface of what the software can do.”

Todd Orr, Assistant Vice President for Administrative Systems and Support,
Duke University

DUKE UNIVERSITY

One of America's Most Prestigious Universities Turns to Software from the SAP® for Higher Education & Research Solution Portfolio to Keep Its Competitive Edge

When Duke University introduced SAP® software across the organization, it bid farewell to disparate, homegrown IT systems and manual information processing – and gained the agility and transparency it needed to deal with ever-tightening budgets.

“We knew we needed a single platform,” says Todd Orr, assistant vice president for administrative systems and support at Duke University. “If we were going to achieve the level of visibility and efficiency we were looking for, we had to find an integrated solution that would allow us to grow and adequately support users with a wide range of skills and requirements.”

Duke University is one of the country's most prestigious universities and centers of academic healthcare, with a lofty reputation for high-quality research, teaching, and patient care. From an administrative perspective, Duke is a massive organization, spanning multiple colleges and clinical facilities. On a regular basis, it has to manage more than US\$2 billion in revenues, process more than 27,000 employee paychecks, and purchase hundreds of millions of dollars in goods and services. Needless to say, the effective use of information technology to meet business issues and adapt to student demands and government regulations will always be a high priority in the university's quest to keep costs down and remain competitive.



The Path to SAP Software

As educational institutions such as Duke face greater budgetary constraints, administrators must grapple with several key questions regarding organizational performance and the factors affecting it: How do we know what is happening? Do we know why? How can we find out how much we are spending on any particular project? Are we benefiting from our investments, and – if so – how? Can we introduce useful, timely reporting without adding to the administrative layers that are already in existence? Can we deliver transparency and efficiency that reduce the time and cost of getting things done, while also learning how to do those things better?

These were the questions Duke addressed when it analyzed potential vendor offerings after deciding to replace its existing administrative systems. After reviewing all major enterprise systems, Duke selected the mySAP™ Business Suite family of business solutions from SAP. Although the SAP software offered a broad array of functionality, Duke assessed its organizational culture – and opted to initially implement a set of specific core functionality and ration the amount of change encountered by the user community. So, it first implemented software for the management of finances and purchasing, followed later by human resources and payroll.

Ensuring User Acceptance

When the university began the implementation, it took a proactive stance to ensure user acceptance and set up an extensive information and communications program.

However, explaining SAP software was only the first step. Duke also wanted to point out how the new integrated technology would benefit the user community. To do this, the implementation team took a “high touch” approach, visiting each operational department and even walking the floors of the hospitals on all shifts during the initial go-live period.

SAP Consulting, which Duke credits with successful knowledge transfer during the project, paved the way for self-sufficiency, and at go-live, Duke’s administrative system management team, headed by Orr, took over. By that time, the team had acquired all the skills necessary to not only manage the new system, but to implement additional functionality and perform upgrades.

More than 40 Duke employees, representing both the university and the Duke University Health System, worked closely with SAP Consulting and KPMG consultants (now BearingPoint) on the design and implementation of the initial system. By following SAP’s proven ASAP methodology, the team realized a rapid and successful implementation.

Moving Ahead with Business Intelligence Software

Subsequently, Duke elected to address its enterprise-wide reporting needs and implemented SAP Business Information Warehouse (SAP BW), which is now a part of the SAP NetWeaver® Business Intelligence component. “A major benefit,” says Orr, “is that our previous experience and knowledge meant we didn’t have to start from scratch.”

The university's previous SAP implementation provided the perfect set of building blocks for the introduction of the SAP BW component, which enables the storage, reporting, and analysis of data from SAP and non-SAP systems.

"Our experience with SAP technology and the end-user tools gave us a lot of flexibility in implementing the SAP business intelligence software," Orr adds. However, in order to best architect the software, Duke decided to engage a small group of experienced consultants so that the introduction would not disrupt day-to-day operations. The eventual consulting team was a collaborative one. Says Orr, "SAP Consulting provided the people who knew the software. We provided the people who understood how our university works."

The end result? "The overall SAP solution has given us better visibility into the business and a greater ability to generate reports and make strategic decisions. All told, we've continued to add more functions and more capabilities," says Orr, adding, "but we've barely scratched the surface of what the software can do."

A Major Step

Today, Duke faculty members use the integrated solution to view the status of their research grants over the Web, while the financial department uses the business intelligence software to generate reports based on real-time data. Employees in procurement use the SAP software to streamline purchasing — all of which helps the university save time and money. And as the university grows, it can rest assured it has adequate IT support. For example, when Duke added two additional hospitals during the original SAP implementation project, it was able to integrate their systems and operations with the existing SAP software, notes Orr, and aggregate all critical information.

The installation of SAP software represented a major step in Duke's business transformation — a process that continues today, which is evidenced by Duke University's current project centered on the SAP Manager Self-Service application and the SAP NetWeaver Enterprise Portal component. Duke anticipates similar success as it continues to rely on its proven, deliberate approach toward change and its willingness to involve users every step of the way.

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