Agresso solution Case Study

Immediate return on investment for Plymouth University with Logix4

The University

Established in 1862, Plymouth University is now the largest University in the South West of England with over 30,000 students and almost 3000 staff. One of the biggest employers in the region, it generates an annual income of around £160 million and in 2012, as it celebrated its 150th anniversary, Plymouth University received a Queen's Anniversary Prize for Further and Higher Education.

Plymouth is widely regarded as a modern and dynamic University with a long record of high quality, innovative teaching and research. The University's mission is to become the number one enterprise University and its professional and academic structure reflects this vision. The activities of the University include teaching and research in the fields of Arts, Health & Social Work, Social Science & Business, Medicine & Dentistry and Technology.

Identifying the need

The University operates in a dynamic environment where it is important for management to access financial information so that they can react quickly to changing circumstances. The University's finance team however used a time consuming system to extract accounting information, relying on a variety of reporting tools and spreadsheets. The University decided to streamline the data analysis and reporting process.

Key stakeholders evaluated data analytics tool Logix4, concluding that it would enable end users to quickly interrogate underlying data held in Agresso Financials, part of the University's Agresso Campus Platform provided by UNIT4 Business Software, to provide the rapid visibility of financial operations that it required.

Tasha Deacon, Senior Management Accountant at the University, said: "What appealed to us initially about Logix4 was that it was quick to deploy, database agnostic and would generate an immediate return on investment. End users can use Logix4 to easily gain a more structured insight into the key areas of cost savings and efficiencies across the organisation."

Mark Taylor, Deputy Director of Finance at Plymouth University, added: "One of the main reasons we chose Logix4 was the pre-built analytics packs it delivers across Agresso Campus Platform's modules. Like many other Higher Education Institutions, we are relentlessly focused on using innovative means to uncover value from our underlying data."

Implementation

The implementation of Logix4 on the Agresso Campus Platform was quick and easy, taking less than ten days from requirements analysis to go-live.

According to Taylor: "What really impressed us about Logix4 was how quickly it was up and running. As soon as it was installed on my desktop, I could start gaining insights into our Finance data". Taylor was also highly satisfied with the support and assistance provided. "From the start, the Logix4 implementation team were focused on meeting our requirements and satisfying our data analysis needs in a fast and efficient manner."

Logix4 also provides valuable insights into the team's underlying procurement data. Maggie Martin, the University's Systems and Training Accountant, explained: "I was impressed with the standard procurement enquiries. I was asked by our government procurement card provider to submit information that is taken from two areas in Agresso, i.e. supplier master file and logistics. Using Logix4 it took me less than thirty minutes to extract this information which included supplier address and postcode, payment terms, number or orders raised and their total value and number of invoices processed. We also have to report on volume and amount of purchases made to our local suppliers.

EMBRACING CHANGE

"I have also been very impressed with the response to the ad hoc requests we have submitted. As an example, I asked if the sales ordering process enquiry could include whether or not the sales invoice had been paid. This was promptly actioned by the Logix4 technical consultant so we now have a standard enquiry that not only brings together all the relevant sales order and invoice details but also if the invoice has been paid plus all the customer address details."

The University chose to implement all the analytics packs available, pre-packed with Logix4 - including Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, General Ledger, Fixed Assets, Budgeting and Workflow. After only half a day of training, the finance team were able to explore and analyse key metrics and generate flexible, interactive reports which could be shared and distributed.

Time and cost savings

Logix4 has empowered the University's end users to create reports and charts in minutes, which means more focus can be given to the department's day-to-day activities. Previously, time and resources were being lost due to the time-consuming nature of their data analysis and reporting process. The team are using Logix4 on a weekly/ad-hoc basis as the solution is extremely simple to use. Taylor comments: "Logix4 allows you to quickly go in and get the answers – job done!"

Greater insights and analysis

Logix4 is currently being used by the University to report across a wide number of financial areas including supplier activity, purchase order invoices, fixed assets, workflow and much more.   As reporting capabilities have improved, the University has a more comprehensive view of income and spend. Management can get an up-to-date picture of how they are performing instantly. Ultimately, this has led to timely, more informed decisions and better management of internal resources.

Empowerment of end users

End users with little or no technical knowledge can now access their underlying Agresso Financials data and bring together information for analysis and research. Taylor strongly believes this is the major advantage of Logix4

over other data analytics tools in the marketplace. "Logix4 is a single, integrated solution that meets all our data analysis needs. It allows us to achieve a maximum level of productivity and a lower total cost of ownership."

The future

Based on the success of Logix4 in the finance department to date, the University plans a wider rollout of the solution across its Agresso Campus Platform to include Agresso Procurement. This will allow buyers to quickly and effectively perform extensive analysis of data on suppliers and spend. Moving forward, the University will also implement Logix4Web to provide read only information to selected users via a web browser.

Benefits

- Plug-and-play Agresso Campus analytics
- Up and running in days
- Instant insights & return on investment
- Minimal training requirements
- Quantifiable time & cost savings

About UNIT4

UNIT4 is a global business software company that creates, delivers and supports adaptable software and services worldwide, to help fast-changing organisations manage their business needs effectively. We strive to set the global standard for business solutions that help dynamic organisations to embrace change – simply, quickly and cost effectively.

We have a broad portfolio of solutions that address different markets, requirements, technologies and types of organisation; the UNIT4 group incorporates a number of the world's leading change-embracing software brands, including the Agresso Business World ERP suite and Coda financial management software. UNIT4 has operations in 17 European countries and 7 countries across North America, Asia Pacific and Africa (as well as sales activities in several other countries) for easy, local access to service and support.

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