

Unit4 on Azure Cloud drives 20% increase in productivity at leading healthcare university



Logan University



Logan University, a leading specialist in chiropractic and health sciences education, is building an exciting, automated future with Unit4 and Microsoft. A connected Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system residing on Azure Cloud is spearheading a 20% increase in financial management productivity and the equivalent savings in IT management time.

- Unifies financial information for faster, more informed decision making
- Frees people from financial transactions processing to focus on students and strategy
- Enables students and staff to securely connect from anywhere
- Drives agility and low-cost adaptability using a modern cloud environment

Back to the future

Since 1935, Logan University has been grounded in chiropractic education while continuously enriching academic options with degree offerings in health sciences. Located in Chesterfield, MO, the University has 1,705 students — 859 Doctor of Chiropractic students and 846 College of Health Sciences students.

Prior to implementing Unit4, Logan was using an on-premises Microsoft Dynamics GP platform for finance management. Despite the excellence of this mid-market ERP accounting system, it remained a standalone system, and was associated with a large volume of manual, paper-based processes.

Rick DeCaro, Director of Information Technology at the University, picks up the story. “We had outgrown the capabilities of the platform and it wasn’t user friendly. Purchase order requisitions, invoices, and other processes remained paper-based, and that didn’t work for us. We wanted to drive an even more exceptional student experience – and that demanded a more agile, flexible, and automated system. We also wanted to be in the cloud.”

Simultaneously, Rick and his team were contemplating a shift from the legacy PowerCAMPUS student information system (SIS). It made sense to also move the SIS to the cloud, given that almost 70% of Logan University’s systems are already SaaS-based. “We’re a comparatively small and lean university, ideally suited to a cloud-first strategy.”

When it came to choosing Unit4, one of the deciding factors was that the self-driving business applications are built on the Microsoft Azure cloud. “Azure represents the future. It’s the system of choice for any institution looking to move

Industry
Higher Education

Location
Chesterfield, MO

Size
1,705 students across
112-acre campus

Product
Unit4 Enterprise Resource
Planning (ERP)

Challenge

Dynamic, growing healthcare university was reliant on a standalone, legacy ERP platform. Data resided in different silos, and a significant amount of time was absorbed with manual financial transaction processing.

Key metrics

20%

PRODUCTIVITY & SAVINGS

Increase in finance productivity and savings on IT resources using Azure Cloud



AGILITY

Fast, trusted, complete decision-making

“The University prides itself on its evidence-based decision making. With Unit4, we can pull data from different sources and rely on the quality of the data for fast, informed decisions.”

Rick DeCaro

Director of Information Technology, Logan University

to the cloud. It's adaptive, cost-effective, and entirely secure. Unit4 is the ideal complement here: the cloud ERP platform has been proven countless times across the higher education sector. It offers almost limitless automation, and people can connect from anywhere,” says Rick.

ERP modeled for higher education

Logan University is using Unit4 Financial Management to power its finance function, including accounts payables, receivables, and requisitioning – all modeled for higher education. And because Unit4 is built on a native Azure Cloud platform, the ERP platform can adapt, expand, and be integrated across the institution.

Among many advantages, Unit4 ERP helps the University staff and faculty do more of what matters: achieving the best in education and research. Rick explains, “I'm an everyday end user of Unit4 ERP, whether it is to check financials, approve invoices, or sign off on requisitions. With the old system, our office manager would come into my office every day with a stack of papers that I would have to physically sign. If the value exceeded a certain amount, she then had to walk down the corridor to my boss for signature. That was time consuming, error prone, and inefficient.”

“With the new system, it's all automated,” Rick says. “When a PO is created in the system, I receive a notification and can immediately review the task. The system shows me how much budget is available and which source of funds it is

derived from. Unit4 automated workflow accelerates processes by an average of 20%. That's 20% more time people now have to focus on more strategic tasks.”

The efficiencies don't end there. From an IT perspective, the cloud-based model eliminates the need for platform maintenance, patching, upgrades, and other tasks. “The Azure Cloud ERP model saves about 20% in IT resources. They are using this time to concentrate on business-oriented tasks, like reporting and innovation.”

A trusted partnership

The Azure environment is also rock-solid. Lejla Tica, a programmer at the University, comments, “We trust Microsoft as a partner. We are confident the data is secure. Availability is first class and the performance is excellent. The one question we ask ourselves is, ‘Why didn't we do this earlier?’”

Using Unit4, Logan also has a platform for agility, which will enable the University to respond to market disruption, boost resilience, and

grow. “We were outgrowing our old system. With Unit4 on Azure, we can be more agile. The platform is no longer a barrier to how the University will grow in three, five, or ten years.”

Crucially, the single source of the truth enables faster, more assured data sharing and decision making. “The University prides itself on its evidence-based decision making. With Unit4, we can pull data from different sources and rely on the quality of the data for fast, informed decisions.”

The new Thesis SIS is scheduled to go live soon and will be integrated with Unit4. Beyond that, Rick and his team are eager to implement additional ERP modules. “HR, Payroll, and Recruitment are all on our agenda. For now, it's exciting to have more time free to focus on our students' needs. Together, Unit4 and Microsoft are helping Logan University build for the future,” he says.

