

Case Study

CLAREMONT

UNITE STUDENTS BOOKING SYSTEM

THE CLIENT

Unite Students is the UK's largest and most established manager and developer of purpose-built student accommodation. It provides a home for around 50,000 students, in more than 140 properties, across 28 leading university cities in England and Scotland. Unite works in partnership with more than 60 Higher Education institutions and also lets rooms directly to students.

The Background

Having investigated the market for a suitable solution, Unite Students chose to work with Claremont to design an accommodation booking and maintenance solution, based on Oracle E-Business Release 12, integrated with Unite Students' existing back-office Oracle Financials system.

The Business Challenge

Unite Students wanted to adopt a strategic solution to replace their legacy room booking tool, able to provide greater functionality and integration for the room booking lifecycle. This includes: marketing, managing availability, capturing bookings, billing, managing terminations and generating accounting information.

The focus was to create a system capable of operational, system and business efficiencies, scalable to support Unite Students' future growth strategy.

UNITE
STUDENTS

Benefits

- **Business Improvements through On-Line Processes:** All bookings and terminations are now tracked through online processes. This has improved Unite Students' booking sales conversion by 25%. It has also reduced the average time for a tenancy return from 10 days to 2 days. Use of an online tenancy acceptance process has also reduced paper consumption, saving 20 tonnes of carbon per annum.
- **Process Efficiencies savings support Improved Customer Service:** The streamlining of the check-in, check-out, room move, booking and refunds processes has saved thousands of hours to the business and significantly reduced the effort in the contact centre to chase tenants. This effort has been redirected to delivery of a great customer service.
- **Enhanced Management Information:** Integration of the maintenance, booking and Backoffice Financials systems means Unite Students are now in a position to be able to quickly assess key financial information such as the profitability of rooms, room types and properties.

Client Testimonial

"The new system is at the heart of many key operational processes. A robust, scalable solution supports both planned revenue growth as well as delivering key operational efficiencies, such as the move from paper based to online tenancies. The booking and maintenance system will be critical to Unite Students' growth strategy."

Ashley Hewson,
Head of IT & Digital

The Solution

Claremont identified the solution should be focused on the core business elements - the room and the customer. All system functionality could be centred against these core data elements. The solution was delivered in a number of elements:

Planned Maintenance

The planned maintenance solution was implemented using Oracle Enterprise Asset Management (EAM). This allows Unite Students to generate work items against all plant and property throughout their portfolio. Desktop and tablet-based access was developed for maintenance staff to allow access to work items.

The planned maintenance solution is currently being used by over 50 maintenance staff throughout Unite Students property network.

Tenancy Management

The tenancy management solution focused on a master room 'availability matrix' able to offer and track all room bookings. Room attributes such as size and orientation are held against each room allowing selection based on preference.

Bookings made against an offering were translated into a contract used to bill the customer. Integration with the planned maintenance solution came through capturing bookings against child room instances to the master room assets. Further functionality provided ability to terminate bookings early, generating termination charges/credits at the point of termination as well as managing customer room moves, inspections, check-ins/outs and damage charges.

Integration with the core Financials modules, including managing delinquencies through Advanced Collections, allowed all associated core operational and financial back-office processes to be managed.



The Benefits

The solution provided by Claremont has allowed Unite Students to make a significant step in managing their business:

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- Process Efficiencies savings support Improved Customer Service:** The streamlining of the check-in, check-out, room move, booking and refunds processes has saved thousands of hours to the business and significantly reduced the effort in the contact centre to chase tenants. This effort has been redirected to delivery of a great customer service.
- Enhanced Management Information:** Integration of the maintenance, booking and Backoffice Financials systems means Unite Students are now in a position to be able to quickly assess key financial information such as the profitability of rooms, room types and properties.

With the potential future introduction of reactive maintenance, Claremont will have provided a solution capable of booking, managing, maintaining and analysing Unite Students' complete property portfolio allowing them to significantly differentiate themselves from their competitors.

Figure 1 - Room and Customer Solution

Figure 2 - The Collections Centre

Figure 3 - The Availability Matrix