

Case Study

CLAREMONT

UNITING HR DATA WITH ORACLE E-BUSINESS SUITE

THE CLIENT

Unite Students is the UK's leading manager and developer of student accommodation. They provide a home for over 45,000 students in 132 purpose built properties across 28 of the UK's strongest university towns and cities.

They have over 1,000 employees and work in partnership with more than 60 higher education providers, as well as renting rooms directly to students. Their properties provide high quality, well-located, safe accommodation that is close to University campuses, transport and local amenities.

Founded in 1991, The Unite Group plc is a FTSE 250 company listed on the London Stock Exchange. They are pursuing a sustainable growth strategy designed to make the most of the resilient nature of the student accommodation sector.

Unite Students chose to work with Claremont to deliver the first stage of their Employee and Manager Self-Service project in 2014. This was part of a wider strategic programme that involves the expansion of Oracle's R12 E-Business Suite to support a number of key business processes such as booking, planned maintenance, customer relationship management and the integration of back office support processes.

The Background

Unite Students implemented Oracle Human Capital Management in 2002. This supported a number of core HCM processes and brought together HR data into a single place. HR employee processes were supported through an HR Shared Service centre that was notified of changes by phone, email or post and made updates on behalf of employees. Information requests were processed on behalf of line managers and employees.

Benefits

- EmployeeCentre (branded "All About Me" at Unite Students and given a look and feel consistent with the corporate branding) was well received by all employees, with considerable adoption rates of the new system. Queries to HR were reduced as information was now immediately available online freeing HR resources to focus on higher value adding activities.
- Employees welcomed the introduction of online payslips, as did Payroll who no longer had to print and post them, and found it helpful to be able to review salary information online.
- The system supported and enhanced the Unite Students culture providing employees with a sense of community through the social features such as the "About Me" Bios, Tags and feedback all of which were enthusiastically completed by all levels of the organisation.

Client Testimonial

"Claremont has helped us to develop our Oracle ERP system over recent years, which has provided a platform for Unite Students' strategic growth plans and delivered tangible business benefits."

Vice President, Business Applications & Integration.

UNITE
STUDENTS

Unite students recognised the potential to:

- Improve core HR processes and reduce inefficiencies.
- Provide the capability to enter and maintain data at source. Reduce central processing and the administrative burden on HR and City managers.

In 2014 Unite Students made the decision to build on its strategic systems solution Oracle's R12 E-Business Suite (EBS) and embarked on a program to increase its Oracle footprint to support a wide range of business processes. As a part of the programme the decision was taken to provide self-service functionality to employees and managers with the ambition of providing the capability to manage much of the employee data at source.

The Business Challenge

With a geographically diverse employee and manager population of varying levels of IT competence and often with shared access to systems it was important to provide an easy-to-use and intuitive system, providing the ability to access the right information at the right time. In addition to the broader need to empower employees to manage their information, there were a number of specific challenges that had been identified:



- Reliance on paper forms for requests and approvals with the potential for keying error or omission, increased response times and backdated adjustments.
- Administrative burden for city managers pulling together multiple sources of data.
- Processes requiring data to be entered in multiple places.
- Slower response times when providing a full picture of data to support line managers.

In addition there was a desire to implement an HR system that could act as a platform to support future functionality at the point of use, allowing employees easily to access and update their own personal and employment data using a number of access points. This was also seen as an important enabler in being recognised as a top employer. (Unite Students has achieved the Investors in People Silver Award and the accolade of being one of the top 100 employers to work for.)

Unite Students wanted a solution to facilitate an integrated process starting in self-service at the source of the data, through automated approval processes to a single accurate source of HR data.



The Solution

To support the provision of a self-service portal for line managers and employees, building upon the existing Oracle E-Business Suite (EBS) functionality, Claremont recommended implementing the Applaud suite of products with Applaud EmployeeCenter as the initial foundation component.

EmployeeCenter provides intuitive access to data and uses navigation styles common to most internet users reducing the need for end user training. Unite Students opted to implement the employment profile, work list, photos and personal information, addresses, payslips, org chart and teams, EITs and search functionality within Applaud and included links to Oracle Self Service for P60 and P11Ds. Additional screens were built using the Applaud toolkit to hold HR checklists and diversity information and video training was embedded into the homepage to support user adoption.

The implementation built the groundwork for possible future roll outs of additional Applaud functionality such as Time Cards and Absence, and to link to more detailed Oracle Self Service process flows for manager led transactions such as role changes. EmployeeCenter also provided the foundation for mobile and tablet access to the Applaud App without the need to reconfigure. This is the next stage project for Unite Students.



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Choosing The Right Managed Services Provider

If you are looking for an Oracle partner who can help you with your Managed Services, goes about it the right way and can back up the talk, then contact us.