

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY®

About

Kansas State University (K-State), a public research university located in Manhattan, Kansas, is home to 24,000 students and 4,500 faculty and staff. K-State opened in 1863 as the nation's first operational land-grant university and was the first public institution of higher learning in the state of Kansas. For more than 150 years, K-State has taught agriculture, science, military science, and engineering to any interested student, as well as sought to better the lives of others through research and service.

Sierra-Cedar was instrumental in assisting K-State with restoring our production HR System and migrating the system to AWS, allowing us to meet our immediate payroll deadline. They have also assisted us in staging other ERP systems for DR/BC capability in the future.

Gary L. Pratt
Chief Information Officer

Location:

Manhattan, Kansas
www.k-state.edu

Industry:

Higher Education

Technology:

- AWS
- PeopleSoft Human Resources

About Sierra-Cedar

Sierra-Cedar delivers industry-focused client success by providing consulting, technical, and managed services for the deployment, management, and optimization of next-generation applications and technology.

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Background

On May 22, 2018, a three-alarm fire broke out on the roof of K-State's Hale Library that resulted in extensive water and smoke damage. K-State's datacenter, located in the basement of Hale Library, was significantly impacted by the event. After the fire was extinguished, all power was shut off and remained off for months; however, when the library building's backup generator was turned on a week later, K-State quickly began restoring vital communications and connectivity.

Challenges

K-State had only a few days to meet an upcoming deadline that required the PeopleSoft HR system to be operational for payroll processing and transmission to the State of Kansas. Faced with the daunting task of recovering multiple systems and resolving the impact to infrastructure components, K-State engaged Sierra-Cedar to assist with recovery efforts. Several architecture, infrastructure, security, and PeopleSoft application- and database-specific aspects also had to be addressed within a short timeframe, as per industry-leading practices.

Solution

Sierra-Cedar worked with K-State staff over the Memorial Day weekend to migrate K-State's Production HR system to AWS. Sierra-Cedar built the recovery plan by mapping available backup resources, target architecture, and automation. Sierra-Cedar used proprietary automation tools to help with password encryption and PeopleSoft domain customizations. The team also employed AWS tools, Oracle's PeopleSoft Deployment Package Kit, and security-leading practices such as managing ingress and egress rules for security groups, encrypted OS volumes, and IAM groups and policies.

Sierra-Cedar deployed K-State's PeopleSoft HR production environment in under 48 hours using backups stored at K-State's disaster recovery facility. Sierra-Cedar's extensive experience and knowledge, built over years of hosting PeopleSoft in its internal private data center and in the AWS public cloud, were key factors in K-State's recovery success. K-State completed its Payroll process on time and experienced faster run times for batch processes and improved OLTP performance overall.

Key Project Highlights

- Migrated PeopleSoft HR Production environment to AWS
- Established security-aware architecture
- Helped improve batch processing and OLTP performance

