



College of the Holy Cross Continues Its Strategic Partnership with Sierra-Cedar using an Upgrade Lab to Accelerate Timeline and Reduce Costs

Holy Cross

BACKGROUND

The College of the Holy Cross (Holy Cross), located in Worcester, Massachusetts, is among the nation’s leading liberal arts institutions. A highly selective, four-year, exclusively undergraduate college of 2,800 students, Holy Cross is renowned for offering a rigorous, personalized education in the Jesuit, Catholic tradition. Since its founding in 1843, Holy Cross has made a positive impact in society by graduating students who distinguish themselves as thoughtful leaders in business, professional and civic life. (www.holycross.edu)

CHALLENGES

Holy Cross faced a number of challenges associated with implementing and subsequently upgrading its ERP environment, including the following: (1) meeting go-live deadlines with limited staff and competing priorities; (2) understanding how much had changed from the existing versions to the new, both technically and functionally; (3) replicating customized self service in the upgrade; and (4) implementing security changes in more recent versions.

SOLUTION

Holy Cross met its required go-live deadlines by using the Sierra-Cedar Upgrade Lab. For the HCM and Financials upgrades, the Upgrade Lab consultants provided clear milestones and due dates for deliverables that were expected from Holy Cross participants. As a result, the project team members were able to stay on time and meet their deadlines. Having well-defined schedules was particularly critical because the Campus Solutions upgrade followed immediately on the heels of the HCM and Financials upgrades. For the Campus Solutions 9.0 upgrade, the Sierra-Cedar Lab installed all of the patches and kept them current throughout the project. This effort freed Holy Cross technical staff to work on other tasks associated with the upgrade and helped keep the upgrade project on schedule.

In all three upgrades, Holy Cross went from a client/server architecture to a web-based architecture, with numerous enhancements in functionality. For the HCM upgrade, one of the many challenges that Holy Cross overcame was jumping five versions in a single upgrade. Fortunately, the Holy Cross project team members went into the project keenly aware of the work that lay ahead of them. Each member understood his or her individual role, and they worked exceptionally well as a team. The Sierra-Cedar consultants and the Holy Cross team focused on training and spent the necessary time on fit-gap analysis to ensure that the Holy Cross team understood the significant changes and how they would impact users.

Industry	Higher Education
Services	Implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Management • Functional Consulting • Technical Consulting Lab and on-site Upgrade Services
Application & Modules	Implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus Solutions 7.6 Upgrades <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus Solutions 7.6 to 8.0 and 9.0 • HCM 7.6 to 8.9 • Financials 8.4 to 9.0
Client Since	2000

The Campus Solutions Upgrade, completed in 2008, was also a success, but posed some challenges along the way. In the middle of the upgrade, Holy Cross staff had to support a new freshman initiative, which affected all modules and seriously limited the time that the Student Records office staff, in particular, could devote to the upgrade. Involvement of the Student Records staff was critical for placing students correctly and developing the online page for students to select programs. To address these challenges, Sierra-Cedar consultants targeted their work to those areas where the need was greatest, such as Student Records testing and documentation and upgrading the highly customized self service features. In addition, time-sensitive changes in Federal Financial Aid lending policies required Holy Cross to move from FFELP loans to Direct Lending (“DL”) just four months before the upgrade was scheduled to go live. Sierra-Cedar supported the DL implementation in 8.0 and helped Holy Cross prepare for DL functionality in 9.0. Holy Cross performed business process analysis and completed extensive programming to expedite completion of the required work, while Sierra-Cedar’s Upgrade Lab assumed responsibility for the technical upgrade steps.

Using Sierra-Cedar’s Upgrade Lab contributed significantly to the success of the project as it had with the previous upgrade. The use of the lab helped on many levels. Working with the upgrade lab consultant was also a key success factor. Our point of contact at the lab kept us well-informed of progress on this end and helped us stay on track with the project schedule. It was a great partnership!

Ellen J. Keohane, Ph.D
Director, Information Technology Services

The Self Service capability in Campus Solutions 9.0 led to a number of changes and new security requirements to support the new Faculty Center and Student Services Center. Holy Cross had to do additional restructuring of

security because of new portal and component interface considerations. Therefore, Sierra-Cedar provided a security specialist, who transferred knowledge to the Holy Cross technical staff, which enabled them to bring forward students’ security user profiles from 8.0 to 9.0 and gave them the knowledge and tools necessary to identify and resolve potential security issues.

This was the smoothest upgrade of which I’ve been a part. Any issues that arose were quickly resolved. All of the Sierra-Cedar consultants who worked on this project were able to step in and meet our needs. I want to thank Sierra-Cedar for helping us over the past year. It’s been a terrific experience for me. My Sierra-Cedar experience has been as much, if not more, than I could have expected!

Bob Allen

Applications Development Director,
Information Technology Services

RESULTS/BENEFITS

Holy Cross has counted on Sierra-Cedar as a long-term provider to implement and subsequently upgrade its’ ERP environment because of the cost-effective approaches Sierra-Cedar offers and the successful outcomes that it has helped Holy Cross achieve. Using the Upgrade Lab enabled Holy Cross to upgrade HCM 7.6 to 8.9 in seven months and Financials 8.4 to 9.0 in eight months. With targeted on-site consulting and the use of the Upgrade Lab, Sierra-Cedar and Holy Cross upgraded Campus Solutions 8.0 to 9.0 in twelve months. All upgrades were completed on-time and within budget. Using the Upgrade Lab freed Holy Cross staff from most of the technical work involved in running and debugging upgrade scripts, which gave them the time they needed to resolve issues and improve processes. Consequently, Holy Cross was able to offer more Self Service capabilities in the Student Services Center and Faculty Center than they had in the past, which has benefitted students, faculty and staff.

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