



University of Maryland Eastern Shore and Sierra-Cedar Leverage Resources to Complete a Lab Upgrade of Campus Solutions 9.0 On Time and Within Budget



UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND
EASTERN SHORE

BACKGROUND

The University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) is a land grant, historically black college founded in 1886 as the Delaware Conference Academy. Since its beginning, the institution has had several name changes and governing bodies. It was Maryland State College from 1948 until 1970, when it became one of the original five campuses that formed the University of Maryland. Today, the University offers major programs leading to the B.A. and B.S. degrees in 26 disciplines in the arts and sciences, professional studies, and agricultural sciences. In addition, UMES presents 13 teaching degree programs and eight pre-professional programs, as well as an Honors Program designed in cooperation with the University of Maryland at Baltimore to prepare students for professional school study. From its original building constructed in 1798, when George Washington was still alive, the University now has over 600 acres, 28 major buildings and 41 other units.

CHALLENGES

UMES needed to upgrade its PeopleSoft Campus Solutions 8.0 software to 9.0 prior to discontinuation of “legs and regs” support in August 2008. However, UMES had a very small and overworked IT staff that could not complete an upgrade without supplementary consulting resources. UMES had a very limited budget with which to upgrade their software using consulting resources. It was imperative that the upgrade be completed on time, within budget, and be accomplished with limited resources.

SOLUTION

UMES engaged Sierra-Cedar to do the technical upgrade work using the Sierra-Cedar Upgrade Lab and support services. By using the Upgrade Lab and services, UMES technical staff had sufficient time to focus on and learn the new tools versus spending time on the upgrade. In addition, this approach enabled the upgrade to move at a quicker pace than if UMES staff had done the work themselves. The formalized structure of the lab facilitated the on-time completion of the upgrade. UMES also used remote Sierra-Cedar technical consultants to assist with SQR retrofit development work, which provided a boost to the development effort that had to be completed to ensure a successful upgrade. Because many of the UMES functional leads were also the leads for the original 8.0 implementation in 2003–04, they were knowledgeable of the system and could adapt easily to 9.0. Functional consulting support, therefore, was targeted to assist only specific areas of need where there was less internal expertise.

Industry	Higher Education
Services	Implementation and Upgrade Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Account Management • Functional Consulting • Technical Consulting
Application & Modules	PeopleSoft Campus Solutions 8.0, Upgrade to 9.0: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus Community • Recruitment and Admissions • Student Records • Financial Aid • Student Financials • Academic Advising • Student and Faculty Self Service
Client Since	2002

Sierra-Cedar consultants created Upgrade Workbooks that supported the UMES functional leads, so they could own all testing responsibility. The Upgrade Workbooks supported 9.0 Fit/Gap sessions, documented a solid test plan, created a go-live checklist, and listed new setup requirements. The Workbook also supported the evaluation of existing customizations against new functionality. Sierra-Cedar emphasized the need for testing to ensure support for current business processes and stressed the importance of learning new functionality as it related to existing business processes.

Participating in the recent upgrade from PeopleSoft 8.0 to 9.0 was intimidating at first. The use of the Sierra-Cedar consulting services and the Upgrade Lab proved to be invaluable. With each test pass, the tasks became less daunting and provided for what I consider to be a smooth and seamless transition. The partnership that exists between UMES and Sierra-Cedar fostered working relationships that will last.

James W. Kellam
Director, Financial Aid

RESULTS/BENEFITS

Because the upgrade lab was responsible for a big part of the upgrade, the UMES technical team was able to focus on mission critical tasks like interface integration, development tasks, and security. UMES was able to add UPK functionality to its upgrade to assist with the go-live training. Additionally, because UMES was able to share a functional consulting team with several of the other University System of Maryland institutions, Sierra-Cedar leveraged consulting support and minimized upgrade costs to all the participating institutions. Knowledge transfer was expedited and enhanced because UMES was able to take advantage of the new 9.0 functionality and documentation from the consultants' work on other USM campuses. Furthermore, UMES was able to do its upgrade in a compressed time period, thus saving money and reducing stress on UMES staff. UMES eliminated some modifications by replacing them with new functionality in 9.0. Nearly all of the UMES development work was completed well in advance of go-live, which enabled detailed and thorough testing. An initial pass and three upgrade test moves were completed and tested six months prior to the June go-live.

www.Sierra-Cedar.com • 866.827.3786 • Contact@Sierra-Cedar.com

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