



Metropolitan Community College Modernizes with SaaS

Metropolitan Community College in Kansas City knew moving to a SaaS ERP was daunting. Ellucian is making it easier.

More than 17,000 students attend Metropolitan Community College in Kansas City. Recently, the staff surveyed the student body to determine what kinds of technology would best serve the school and its students' successes. According to John Chawana, Ph.D., Chief Information Officer at Metropolitan Community College, many students' responses implied a need for modernization in their day-to-day lives—for example, accessing certain functions on their phones. This came as little surprise to Dr. Chawana in light of their old ERP system.

“The previous platform is a legacy platform that has not kept up with the developments that would facilitate the teaching and learning needs of the organization,” Dr. Chawana said. “We have a system that has been really stagnant for the last 20 years. We recently came up with a technology plan that aspires to ensure that we have a 21st-century technology infrastructure that allows us and our students to expand our potential and experience, and what we have right now is not something that is capturing that.”

Dr. Chawana said that part of the reason the school decided to migrate to a SaaS platform is to provide their students with a better computing experience—something that would be, in his words, “nimble” and best serve both the present and future aspirations of MCC students and staff.



Case Study

Main Challenge

Metropolitan Community College's ERP was outdated and hard to maintain.

Solutions

Ellucian Banner SaaS

Results

- Implementing Banner SaaS removes maintenance needs
- Ellucian staff partner with MCC to help migration
- Banner SaaS adapts to future technology trends

“Everything that we do at MCC, we have our students at the forefront,” he said. “Their voice, what they think, what they feel, how they interact with our systems is really important to us. They are our first customer, so to speak. Their input was very critical in providing us with the decision points to go down this path.”

Before long, they chose Ellucian Banner SaaS and are currently implementing it.

Choosing to Modernize

Having worked with it at a previous institution, Dr. Chawana was aware of the benefits offered by Ellucian Banner SaaS when it was selected by Metropolitan Community College.

“One thing that comes to mind is the interface—the way we interface with technology across the organization,” he said. “Our current platform is not fluid.”

“Banner SaaS is quite fluid; I’ve seen it work in other organizations. I’m familiar with Ellucian products and so I think it’s going to be an entirely new experience, especially for our employees who have not had the kind of technology accessed in a fluid environment. The benefit here is tremendous because it allows you to work from your cell phone if you have to, or your tablet, quite easily compared to now,” said Dr. Chawana.

He also said that the platform they’ve been using until now isn’t cloud-based, so the development, management, and hosting of their platform is more complicated than cloud-based, SaaS-based solutions. Additionally, their older system is such an uncommon one in higher education that hiring IT workers to maintain it is expensive.

Even still, some of his colleagues needed convincing. MCC is over 100 years old and some employees have enjoyed very long careers there. However, as it happens at any institution, that can come with the comfort of familiarity with an older system, so there was some reluctance and skepticism to modernize.



“Five years ago we were not ready, and it was not really about resources,” Dr. Chawana said. “It was about the framework of thinking and the cultural landscape that we needed to plow and water for us to be able to embark on this journey. The cultural mindset was something we had to navigate.”

Seeing MCC’s older system’s limitations and the potential of Banner SaaS helped convince some reluctant staff to migrate.

Planning for the Future

The only path to the future is along the present, and this is one fact at the front of Dr. Chawana’s mind when it comes to tech solutions for Metropolitan Community College.

“We want to ensure that with the technologies that we purchase, we try and balance the current needs of the organization with future needs,” Dr. Chawana said. “We wanted to make sure that our students have their present needs met, but the platform should be able to provide for a future with regard to innovation—the general trajectory of where we’re going—and that’s what informed us to go down the path that we find ourselves today.”

While MCC is still in the middle of their implementation, Dr. Chawana and the other campus leaders are eagerly anticipating fostering student success with Banner SaaS for years to come.



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