

The Customer

Industry: Higher Education

Geographics: Dallas, Texas

Endowment: \$905 Million

Budget (FY2004): \$286 Million

Employees: 1,469

Enrollment: 11,161 Students

PeopleSoft Enterprise Products

Financial Management

Asset Management

General Ledger

Payables

Purchasing

Human Capital Management

Benefits Administration

Human Resources

Payroll

Position Management

Campus Solutions

Contributor Relations

Student Administration

Enterprise Portal

Implementation Team

Internal

PeopleSoft®

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— John O’Connor, Controller
Southern Methodist University



Business Challenge

Southern Methodist University wanted to upgrade to an integrated, state-of-the-art system to manage its finances and student administration functions. In particular, the university needed a new financial system to control costs, maximize the value of tuition funds, and improve compliance with more stringent financial reporting requirements governing institutions of higher learning. A web-based student administration system was also necessary to meet growing demand for online student services.

PeopleSoft Solution

Southern Methodist University selected PeopleSoft Enterprise Financial Management and Campus Solutions applications to upgrade its finance and student administration systems and proactively deal with tighter budgetary conditions. PeopleSoft was selected for its product vision, technology leadership, and ability to deliver a cost-effective, fully integrated solution.

Business Benefits

Southern Methodist University uses Financial Management and Campus Solutions to fulfill these business requirements:

- Increase accountability over expenditures by using financial best practices such as commitment control.
- Improve reporting and strategic decision making through access to real-time financial information and budget data.
- Facilitate end-user training with an intuitive user interface.
- Enable students to conduct all campus business online by using web-based applications, freeing university personnel to work on more value-added activities.

Quantifiable Benefits

- Pure internet architecture delivers \$75,000 to \$100,000 in annual administrative savings.

PeopleSoft Helps Southern Methodist University Maximize Tuition Dollars

Operating in an environment of tighter budgets and increased scrutiny from administrators, board of directors, and donors, universities today must demand greater accountability for the success or failure of IT projects. Many are learning that choosing a single software vendor with a comprehensive solution suite can be the key to long-term success. That was the rationale behind the decision of Southern Methodist University (SMU) to standardize on PeopleSoft's world-class financial management and campus solutions as part of a university-wide upgrade of SMU's legacy system architecture.

"PeopleSoft's broad, interoperable enterprise suite was a benefit we could not ignore," explains George Chrisman, chief information officer, Southern Methodist University. "In particular, we liked the tight integration between Financial Management and Campus Solutions, which enabled us to leverage the best practices in both applications. More than anything else, we believed in PeopleSoft's vision and ability to deliver the kinds of web-based, self-service applications that enable anytime, anywhere access to information for students, faculty, and staff."

Leveraging the Web for Real Savings

PeopleSoft's pure internet applications simplified the roll out of applications to end users, allowing SMU departments to get up and running quickly and cost effectively on their new applications. Training was also easy because users were already familiar with internet browsers. Plus, that same web functionality is enabling SMU to extend the life of its desktop computers beyond their normal four-year replacement cycles, thanks to substantially reduced computing power requirements. Based on all these benefits, SMU expects to save \$75,000 to \$100,000 per year in administrative costs.

Maximizing Tuition Dollars

Like many institutions, SMU has seen the value of its endowment and investment portfolios decline over the past few years. Deciding to take a proactive approach to the budget crisis, SMU officials selected Financial Management to streamline

financial processes, implement strong financial controls, and maintain fiscal integrity to avoid drastic budget cuts and painful administrative layoffs.

"Although we've been able to avoid any major budget cuts, there are certainly no loose dollars lying around," notes John O'Connor, controller at Southern Methodist University. "We chose PeopleSoft's Financial Management solutions over other enterprise solutions because of its tight integration with Student Administration and best-practice processes designed specifically for universities, such as fund accounting and encumbrance reporting. PeopleSoft is helping us maximize our tuition dollars during these tight budgetary times."

Strong financial control is achieved through best-practice functionality such as commitment control and workflow, which enables university officials to aggressively monitor and control the amount of spend across the entire campus. Automated query tools enable users to drill down into accounts payable transactions in real time so that they can see current transactional information throughout the entire month, whenever they need it. Monthly budget reports are also circulated electronically to staff by using PeopleSoft nVision, enabling SMU's finance staff to make better decisions about how and where to spend the university's money based on current financial information.

Happier Students, More Productive Staff

Prior to deploying Campus Solutions, SMU students were plagued by manual processes and long lines at the registrar's office. But thanks to PeopleSoft, today's students can conduct all their campus business online by using an average web browser. For instance, they can review course offerings, register for classes, review grades and transcripts, pay bills, and even apply for graduation—all at their convenience from the comfort of their dorm room or any other computer worldwide. Not only does the solution help students review vital information in real time, but it has also lifted an extra burden off SMU staff. Employees are now able to be more productive by spending fewer hours on data entry and more time on value-added services.



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