Transforming Learning Experiences:

Austin Community College District Engages Students Faster Using Cloud Integration

"Data management and data integration are a 'constant' in the life of any data-driven organization. Austin Community College requires continuous evaluation for effectiveness and cost considerations. Partnering with Informatica for us, is a strategic decision that will facilitate and augment our ongoing digital transformation."

Imad Costantini
Vice President of IT and CIO
Austin Community College District

Goals	Solution	Results
Drive digital and cloud transformation to enhance student experiences while supporting growing data needs across the college	Use Informatica Intelligent Cloud Services (IICS), an iPaaS (integration platform as a service) solution, for data and application integration, data quality, and API management	IICS enables Salesforce to integrate with Okta, resulting in granting students the ability to access student systems in seconds rather than the previous experience of 24 to 48 hours
Save time, reduce costs, and improve agility by moving away from point-to-point and application-specific integrations	Enable a hub-and-spoke, publish-subscribe data model by orchestrating data flows through Informatica Integration Hub	Helps improve educational experiences by giving students, faculty, and staff faster access to trusted information
Create a single view of every prospective and active student to help streamline communication with them	Master student data using Informatica, creating golden records that are independent from applications	Enables the college to improve communications with students by better understanding their goals and educational trajectory

Informatica Success Story: Austin Community College District

Austin Community College District (ACC) provides students with affordable, flexible pathways to better futures and new careers. More than 70,000 students enroll annually to earn degrees, learn new skills, and acquire new knowledge. In addition to associate degrees and certificates in more than 100 fields, ACC offers bachelor's degrees in nursing and information technology (IT), giving students more options than most community colleges provide.

To stay agile and efficient, the college wants to provide students with access to email and other applications as quickly as possible. To accomplish this, ACC is transforming its IT systems, replacing existing applications and databases with modern cloud solutions to benefit from cost savings, ability to scale, and having web-based remotely accessible applications that will ultimately enhance student experience. ACC is moving its legacy ERP system to Workday, implementing Salesforce for student recruitment, and migrating on-premises data center workloads to Amazon Web Services (AWS) for resiliency and cost savings. As the college reworked its business intelligence and analytics strategies for cloud, however, it quickly ran into integration roadblocks due to the point-to-point interfaces it had built over the years to connect applications.

Because each application used its own technologies and tools for integration, there was no consolidated view of all the integrations used by the college. Multiple applications pulled the same student, educator, and employee information from the same systems instead of reusing information, which introduced redundancies and duplicate work. Disparate integrations were difficult and time consuming for the IT team to maintain, requiring multiple skill sets. Some integrations were slow; for example, it took more than 13 hours to get data from the company's legacy ERP system. Real-time integration between applications was not an option, making it increasingly difficult to improve the student experience and make onboarding as efficient as possible.

"Like many colleges, we handled data integration at the system level for many years, using point-to-point methods," says Titon Hoque, AVP Solutions Development & BI. "But as more applications moved to cloud, we needed a more flexible, hub-and-spoke architecture that would allow us to evolve."

Modernizing data and application architectures

To bridge the gap between legacy systems and cloud applications, ACC deployed Informatica Intelligent Cloud Services (IICS), Informatica's iPaaS offering, a comprehensive solution for integrating data and applications and managing data for cloud and on-premises deployments. ACC is using Informatica Cloud Data Integration to move data from its application databases to and from its data hub. The majority of these databases have been standardized to SQL Server and a SQL clustered environment. ACC is using

Domo as its data lake in the cloud, with data moving from the data hub to the data warehouse and then from the data warehouse to Domo.

For applications that are cloud based, ACC relies on APIs or Informatica's connectors to those applications, like Informatica Salesforce Connector and Workday Connector. For its implementation, data integrations are used for movement within its own databases.

"Using Informatica Cloud Application Integration we are taking student applications from Salesforce admitting students into our ERP, creating a student record then returning student records back to Salesforce within moments," says Imad Costantini, Vice President of IT and CIO. "This type of efficiency was impossible prior to using Informatica."

Data from CRM and SIS systems is now integrated, subjected to data quality checks, and then made available via a publish/subscribe data model in Informatica Integration Hub. As ACC continues its journey to Salesforce and Workday, it can easily migrate data while keeping legacy systems current and operational.

The move to Salesforce and Workday is important because the legacy ERP was UniData-based. The legacy system stored and presented data in ways that made quick and meaningful access by other systems extremely difficult (for instance, multi-value fields, references to calculated columns, etc.). This led to significant inefficiencies for students, staff and faculty. The legacy system also made it difficult to change the way the organization functioned. The move to Salesforce and Workday was a strategic move aimed at simultaneously providing ACC with better user experiences on the front end and far more accessible and usable data on the back end. As a result of improved business capabilities, the organization could now serve the student population in ways it couldn't before. These shifts also meant ACC would now have the ability to be far more responsive and nimbler, which are invaluable capabilities.

"Imagine an environment where data moves seamlessly and is available to various systems at near real time speeds whether on premises or in the cloud. Now Imagine that data is automatically classified, cleansed, and secured while all this happens. This is what Informatica enables." says Jason Marshall, Enterprise Architect for ACC. "It's at the very core of our data-driven digital transformation."

With a consolidated view of all IICS integrations and the ability to use out-of-the-box connectors and build codeless APIs, ACC is saving significant time for IT, reducing operating costs, and allowing developers to focus on innovation.

"Informatica Intelligent Cloud Services is absolutely transformative for us," says Hoque. "It's going to change the entire college by accelerating data to provide business value for our students and student outcomes."

Improving student experiences

ACC plans to use Informatica Intelligent Cloud Services to integrate cloud apps such as Salesforce with the Okta Identity Cloud, which provides access control. In the near future, as soon as a new student is admitted in Salesforce, real-time integrations into Colleague and Okta will grant the student access to their austincc.edu email account and Blackboard learning management system in seconds. Previously, granting access took between 24 and 48 hours, during which time the student could not interact with university systems.

"With Informatica Intelligent Cloud Services, we're improving student experiences starting with their very first interactions with the college," says Marshall. "We're removing roadblocks and inefficiencies and putting ourselves in a position to be far nimbler."

Creating a single view of every student

As ACC continues down a hybrid, distributed path, it will be more important than ever to maintain a single view of every student, no matter whether the record originated in on-premises legacy systems, or across multi-cloud applications like Salesforce and Workday, or third-party data such as standardized test scores. To create a golden record the college will likely rely on Informatica's Master Data Management solution.

Hoque concludes, "Now that we have multiple places where students come into our ecosystem, Informatica will help us with data cleansing and deduplication. That will provide us with a single source of truth for our student data--helping us ensure that we understand that a student in one system is the same student in another system. We can increase our data quality for students, which improves the student experience and reduces time and cost."

Inside The Solution:

- Informatica Intelligent Cloud Services
  - Informatica Cloud Application Integration
  - Informatica Cloud Data Integration
  - Informatica API Management
- Informatica Change Data Capture
- Informatica Integration Hub

Digital transformation is changing our world. As the leader in enterprise cloud data management, we're prepared to help you intelligently lead the way. To provide you with the foresight to become more agile, realize new growth opportunities or even invent new things. We invite you to explore all that Informatica has to offer—and unleash the power of data to drive your next intelligent disruption. Not just once, but again and again.

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