Hybrid Cloud Helps University Transform, Expand Services

The California State University (CSU) is the largest public university system in the U.S., with nearly half a million students at 23 separate campuses.

In 1999, CSU started a first-of-its-kind, system-wide application project that directed all of its 23 campuses to replace legacy administrative software with a new Common Management System (CMS), comprised of centralized Human Resources, Finance, and Campus/Student Administration. CSU's mission for CMS was to provide efficient, effective and high-quality service to students, faculty and staff. Today, CMS delivers a wide range of services critical to running the entire university – from student scheduling and registration to human resources, financials, and employee compensation – for approximately 484,000 students and 52,000 faculty and staff at all 23 CSU campuses.

CSU wanted to take advantage of recent advancements in cloud technology to further enhance the student experience and expand student success beyond the academic experience. CSU selected Unisys to implement a secure, system-wide Hybrid Cloud to leverage the combined performance and stability of the private cloud with the flexibility and elasticity of the public cloud, to implement cloud strategies, while, also, enhancing operational efficiency and reducing costs for CMS.

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The Unisys solution will include extensive analytics services capitalizing on university-wide information sources to create predictive models to identify new service initiatives and optimize governance and support services delivery at campuses.

The Unisys Cloud Management Platform (CMP), a software-as-a-service solution, is at the center of the CSU hybrid cloud environment. CMP identifies private and public cloud services that match appropriate CSU requirements, and allocates the most effective and cost-efficient resources for a given task. Supporting CMP is also a common security platform providing analytics-driven managed security services to detect, prioritize and neutralize cybersecurity threats arising from both external and internal sources.

"The Unisys solution creates a secure, analytics-driven cloud environment to integrate our information resources to develop and deliver more innovative educational and administrative services across all 23 campuses quickly and cost-efficiently," said Steve Relyea, executive vice chancellor and chief financial officer for CSU.

Unisys is deploying a private cloud for CSU at a state-of the art data center in Santa Clara (in the heart of Silicon Valley) with the proximity to the public cloud providers in order to expand into public cloud services as CSU operations require.

"Unisys and the CSU clearly have a common commitment to digital transformation as a vehicle for enhanced student service," said Eric Hutto, senior vice president and president, Enterprise Solutions, at Unisys. "We will enable CSU to lead the way in using an analytics-driven, flexible hybrid-cloud environment to understand the needs of all members of the university community, and expand its services to enhance the learning process and accelerate students' success beyond their academic experience."

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