

Case Study

Witherslack Group

How Workday Adaptive Planning delivered a bespoke approach to FP&A, significantly improving financial reporting at the UK's leading and fastest-growing SEN education provider, Witherslack.



Benefits of Workday Adaptive Planning

- Improved accuracy and access to key data through efficient reporting
- Faster delivery of financial analysis for strategic decision-making as company grows
- Strong reporting functionality and a 'best-in-class' approach to FP&A

Background

With another FP&A model previously in place, planning still consumed a great deal of time for the finance team at Witherslack, and automated company-wide reporting was virtually non-existent. As a Special Educational Needs (SEN) organisation with almost 2,000 pupils and growing at a 25% CAGR, it was essential that Witherslack had a financial planning tool that could better meet its intricate and specialised needs.

Deployment

ICit Business Intelligence worked closely with the team at Witherslack to roll out Workday Adaptive Planning, primarily used by the FP&A teams for budgeting and forecasting in the early deployment stages, with plans for more sophisticated reporting across teams in the coming months. Following a further deployment with Workday FINS, the ICit team continued to work closely with Witherslack to iron out any integration challenges.

A shift needed to deliver better reporting

Witherslack Group plays a hugely important role in society as the UK's leading education provider for children and young people with special educational needs. Its finance team sits as part of a central link that supports 90 cost sites, including schools, learning centres and residential homes. The layers of financial planning and support needed is critical to ensure the smooth running of a Group that provides aspirational futures through focused education and care to over 2,000 pupils and 3,000 FTE.

As Head of FP&A, Ian O'Toole was already experiencing first-hand some of the benefits of ERP software having previously used another product. However, the Group was fast-growing, and the solution wasn't allowing him to efficiently extract and report on plethora of financial data he required. O'Toole explained:

“ Although we were able to extract the different types of data, the solution we were using couldn't provide the reporting capabilities we needed and are essential to the efficiency of our growing business. ”

Delivering the heavy lifting required

During the initial deployment of Workday Adaptive Planning, the benefits of implementing were almost immediate. The ease-of-use and real-time, unified view delivered by Workday has encouraged faster, more regular forecasting – saving weeks' worth of work annually. And consolidating reports across the business can now be done with the click of a button, O'Toole explained.

The OfficeConnect feature (Workday Adaptive Planning's seamless integration with Microsoft Office) has also brought reporting to life, enabling users to provide real-time financial analysis and drive business agility. Something that is essential with a SEN business where it is important that each pupil must be treated individually.

“There are so many varying needs across our schools – and a number of partners and authorities we have to work with. It's important we carefully track this from a financial point of view to ensure we are hiring at the right times and have the correct teaching resources in place,” explained O'Toole. He concluded:

“ Workday Adaptive Planning does so much of the heavy-lifting for the team today. The time savings, thanks to the solution, allows us focus on more value-added tasks such as greater analysis. What we have in place today is Best-in Class FP&A and sets the standard for the education sector. ”

Ready to find out more?

We have helped many businesses around the UK implement a range of Financial Planning & Accounting features, that are offered by **Workday Adaptive Planning for Education**.

Our team of specialist **Workday Consultants** can discuss your exact business needs, advise you on how to implement Workday Adaptive Planning within your finance practices and also offer training to those staff who will be using the software day-to-day.

Get in touch today

To find out more about the benefits of Workday Adaptive Planning, or ask any specific questions about how it could improve your current financial software options, please get in touch with us today.

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