

Esteemed U.S. University Delivers Cutting-Edge Services by Self-Funding a Transition to the Cloud



Client Profile: Xavier University was founded in 1831 in Cincinnati, Ohio. The Jesuit university has more than 7,000 students and counts many notable politicians, entrepreneurs, religious leaders, athletes, and celebrities among its alumni.

Industry: Education

Geography: Cincinnati, Ohio

Applications: Oracle Database 12c, Oracle Fusion Middleware including WebLogic, Rimini Street Advanced Database Security, Rimini Street Advanced Application and Middleware Security

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Mark Brockman

Executive Director
of Information Technologies
Xavier University

"The choices we make in IT have a critical impact on the survival of the entire university."

– Mark Brockman, Executive Director of Information Technologies, Xavier University

For college students, there is an inescapable expectation that their higher education experience should leverage the same social-media-driven interactions that embellish other facets of their life. "This means that we have to make sure that all of our touchpoints — including our public-facing online presence, as well as systems and services restricted to current students and faculty members — deliver the very best possible experience," commented Brockman.

"We are constantly striving to create an optimal IT environment, but we do this in a way that directly contributes to the university's number one priority: equipping our students with the skills needed to make a positive impact on the world."

Technology as the Enabler

Accessibility and affordability of higher education have been ongoing discussions in the U.S.; now, as this is amplified by the enforced focus on studying from home, technology-infused remote teaching methods have become the norm. Xavier IT projects serve to improve the support of students. One such initiative involved the planned transition of key functions to a managed cloud solution.

This touches many core aspects of Xavier campus life, including purchasing, registration, and finance. The integrated cloud-based solution — developed specifically for complex education environments — enables the university to deliver cutting-edge capabilities to students and staff. The transition also excited the IT team. Brockman explained, "The upsides of moving to the cloud are huge for us. Everything is taken care of. The resources we'll have for uptime, business continuity, and disaster recovery mean that we can almost guarantee 24/7 application availability for our users."

There's Always a Catch ...

Having made the decision to implement a specialty higher-education managed-cloud solution, Brockman faced the realities of financing the transition: "We had always been an Oracle database support shop, but fulfilling our highly expensive contractual license and

Benefits

- **50% reduction in database and application support costs:** Savings funded a transition to a managed cloud ERP solution.
- **Enhanced security:** Proactive virtual patching reduces vulnerabilities and burden on staff.
- **Improved support:** High caliber of technical support speeds problem resolution and remediates issues more effectively.

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For More Information

To learn more about Xavier University or to read other client success stories, visit www.riministreet.com/clients.

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LR-68834 | LT-US-080620

support obligations while simultaneously funding this cloud move made us take a hard look at our approach. At first, we considered stripping back the contracts to just cover the functions we relied on most but discovered this would have triggered a complete renegotiation. We couldn't even get out of paying for things we weren't using."

Staying Supported and Secure

To facilitate the move, Xavier looked for a partner that could lift the Oracle database support financial burden without inflicting any operational disruptions or compromising the university's overall security.

"Security has always been of paramount importance to us. We are entrusted with large volumes of very confidential and sensitive information," stated Brockman. "Xavier has always strongly adhered to the FERPA privacy law and the multiple federal, financial, and other education-related regulatory mandates that we fall under. We needed to make sure that we resolutely maintained this compliance."

With ERP at the center of many of the university's critical functions, having a viable patching process for Oracle was a high priority ... and a challenge. "We started out by applying patches each quarter, but the number of servers we have, coupled with modest resources, resulted in us falling back to doing it twice per year."

Solving the Equation

The big breakthrough came when Brockman's research revealed a solution that would deliver dramatic returns. "Talking with Rimini Street, we realized it was viable to extract ourselves from our Oracle contracts. We saw we could achieve significant cost savings, as well as elevated levels of support and advanced security for Oracle database — exactly what we were looking for."

The significant cost reduction achieved by transferring to Rimini Street support made a large contribution toward the university's ERP transition. "Rimini Street has been a big driver in helping us get to the cloud," enthused Brockman. "Onboarding was very straightforward, and we had a seamless transition."

In addition to receiving Rimini Street support for Oracle database and applications, Xavier also purchased Rimini Street Advanced Database Security. The subscription service uses virtual patching to overcome the limitations of traditional patching models, such as the need for extensive regression testing and production system downtime.

These solutions were enhanced by adding Rimini Street Advanced Application and Middleware Security to protect the university's Fusion middleware and WebLogic components.

"We still have some older versions that are no longer fully supported by Oracle. However, with Rimini Street, there is no need to perform unnecessary upgrades just to continue receiving full support or security patches," added Brockman.

Brockman concluded, "I feel very secure with Rimini Street. The virtual patching is proactive and immediate. We don't have to sit around and wait for something to happen before we get sent a patch months later. We're saving time and resources as well as being more secure. My team is now able to work on strategic projects that make a tangible difference to Xavier. I would not hesitate to tell anyone in a similar position to take the leap with Rimini Street and just do it!"