Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), the second largest district in the United States of America, has a truly colossal job: educating more than 1.07 million K12 and adult education students at 1,065 campuses and centers around Los Angeles and neighboring cities in an area covering 710 square miles. The enormous challenge of educating a large and diverse student body requires the efforts of 68,000 employees and more than $5 billion annually.

LAUSD, the second largest district in the US, educates more than 1.07 million K-12 & adult students in Los Angeles, California.

LAUSD Embraces xRM to Build Powerful Employee Help Desk.

LAUSD struggled to serve 68,000 employees with a dated system for tracking and resolving employee payroll issues. The district needed to implement a new solution that could meet the needs of its employees accurately, efficiently, and affordably.

The district was using an outdated help desk system for fielding and resolving help requests from employees regarding issues including payroll, benefits, retirement, taxes, vacations, and insurance. The volume of help requests from 68,000 current employees and 24,000 retirees had become cumbersome and unmanageable using the existing system. It needed to modernize the way help requests were tracked and processed but faced the dual hurdles of the prohibitive cost of generating a new proprietary system from scratch and an extremely challenging economic period of drastic budget cutbacks and potential layoffs. LAUSD needed a new employee help desk solution that could meet the needs of its employees accurately and efficiently, be robust at any scale, and be economically feasible.

LAUSD is large and complex, similar in size to many Fortune 500 companies, and robust solutions are needed to keep the system functioning. LAUSD faced a creeping challenge familiar to many large and growing organizations: an IT solution that no longer met its needs.

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LAUSD needed a robust solution that could grow and evolve as the district’s needs change. The extensibility and flexibility of Microsoft Dynamics® CRM made it the perfect platform on which to build a flexible, affordable, and futureproof xRM solution. Ron Chandler, LAUSD’s Chief Information Officer, explains, “The LAUSD is a massive, complex organization responsible for educating hundreds of thousands of students every day. Supporting its operations requires systems that are agile and robust, enabling us to problem solve quickly and focus on the business of helping our students succeed.”

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xRM.com showed Mr. Chandler and his team how adopting a best in class, enterprise level xRM solution based on Microsoft Dynamics CRM would enable the district to build the kind of powerful and flexible line of business applications that the district needed and to do so more quickly.
and more cheaply than is possible with proprietary software developed in house.

After meeting with LAUSD’s personnel to learn about the department’s practices and requirements, xRM.com quickly created a new pilot Employee Help Desk based on the xRM concept. In the first phase of the project, the xRM.com team removed unutilized modules in Microsoft Dynamics CRM, customized entities to reflect the terminology used in the district’s old employee service application, built plugins to expand the functionality of Microsoft Dynamics CRM to handle the processing of employee payroll issues, and designed an adapter that generates support cases from incoming faxes, the district’s primary line of support for employee issues.

Benefits

By deploying an employee service solution based on Microsoft Dynamics CRM, LAUSD has achieved its two primary goals: improving service to the district’s employees and conserving resources that are desperately needed in the classroom. LAUSD’s new Employee Help Desk allows the district’s employees to initiate service requests by phone, email, or fax and to get answers to their questions more quickly than was possible using the old employee service application. The Employee Help Desk also improves service by enhancing the tracking and management of support tickets, increasing accountability, and enabling managers to analyze the handling of cases.

The xRM.com team and LAUSD can continue to leverage the district’s investment in the platform, deploying new applications without the expensive programming from scratch that plagued the old employee service application. Switching to an xRM solution based on Microsoft Dynamics CRM provides LAUSD with a tremendously flexible and powerful platform on which to build functionality in the future, a power that the district lacked with the service application it developed in house.

The xRM platform provided by Microsoft Dynamics CRM, one of its most powerful characteristics, enabled the xRM.com team to customize the entities in Employee Help Desk to match the entities in the district’s old employee service application. By mimicking the old system’s entity names, the xRM.com team helped to smooth the transition of LAUSD’s employees from the old service application to the new solution, reducing the amount of training required and increasing user adoption. xRM.com also streamlined the interface by hiding unused features and removing screen clutter in order to reduce training and increase user comfort, an important consideration for an organization with users of varying technical skill levels.

During today’s harsh fiscal reality, LAUSD has had to be more careful than ever with its limited resources. Every dollar spent on IT infrastructure has to produce returns. xRM.com understood this reality and designed a system that was responsible to the needs of the district’s most important constituents: students.

“In these challenging economic times, we’ve had to learn how to do more with less. A strong and valuable partner to LAUSD, xRM.com worked with us to build a modernized, flexible system that allows us to meet the needs of thousands of District employees so they can focus on the business of educating our students,” says Mr. Chandler. The new Employee Help Desk allows the district to serve its employees more efficiently and its teachers to focus on educating students. Thanks to the success of the Employee Help Desk, the partners continue to identify unique areas in which an xRM solution based on Microsoft Dynamics CRM can be successfully deployed, including curriculum development, instruction, assessment, parent outreach, community engagement, and student safety. Every future deployment helps to leverage the district’s investment even further, receiving an even greater return on it investment. Eventually they plan to leverage the powerful platform to better serve students, parents, and volunteers, as well as employees.

Together, Los Angeles Unified School District and xRM.com plan to push the boundaries of what can be accomplished with the xRM concept, leveraging the district’s current investment in software licenses to automate laborintensive business processes and improve service.

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During the initial phase of the project, xRM.com deployed the new Employee Help Desk to thirtyfive employees for testing. In June, 2011, xRM.com and LAUSD began the second phase of the project: a massive deployment of nearly 70,000 licenses, the largest in the history of Microsoft Dynamics CRM.

Microsoft Dynamics

Microsoft Dynamics is a line of integrated, adaptable business management solutions that enables you and your people to make business decisions with greater confidence. Microsoft Dynamics works like familiar Microsoft software such as Microsoft Office, which means less of a learning curve for your people, so they can get up and running quickly and focus on what’s most important. And because it is from Microsoft, it easily works with the systems that your company already has implemented. By automating and streamlining financial, customer relationship, and supply chain processes, Microsoft Dynamics brings together people, processes, and technologies, increasing the productivity and effectiveness of your business, and helping you drive business success.

For more information about Microsoft Dynamics, go to: www.microsoft.com/dynamics