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Anju Chhachhi
Database Administrator
Western Kentucky University

Industry:
Higher Education

Size:
Over 18,000 Students

Location:
Bowling Green, KY

Founded:
1906

Web site:
www.wku.edu

Western Kentucky University

Customer

Western Kentucky University is located in Bowling Green, Kentucky, 110 miles south of Louisville. The school was founded as the "Southern Normal School of Bowling Green" in 1906 and evolved into a teacher's college, state college, and eventually, a university. The University provides students with rigorous academic programs in the liberal arts and sciences, and traditional and emerging professional programs. The school places emphasis on baccalaureate degrees, complemented by associate and graduate-level programs. Western is committed to a holistic learning experience, which is achieved through high standards, a strong faculty, technological innovation, personalized attention, and public accountability for actions and outcomes.

Situation

The Telecommunications Department at Western Kentucky University supports nearly 10,000 subscribers. In addition to Local and Long Distance service, they also offer cellular service for faculty and staff business use and calling cards. Western Kentucky's workflow was extremely inefficient and much of it was conducted manually. Cable records, work orders, inventory, and other supporting information were stored in a separate Microsoft Access database, prior to PINNACLE Version 5 (V5). Technicians were given work orders that consisted of telephone and cable information from the Access database and manually entered tasks. While completing their tasks, the technicians were responsible for adding information about any equipment used on the job. They personally returned the work order to the office staff who then entered the total charge for the job in PINNACLE as an OCC (Other Charges and Credits) to bill the customer. This unorganized methodology left many places for errors, including using equipment and not billing for it, redundant data entry, and even technicians losing a work order or not returning it in a timely fashion. Cable records were also not updated adequately and many errors existed in the old database.

Solution

Upgrading to PINNACLE V5 and adding PINNACLE Operations Management Module was the answer to improving their workflow. During the analysis phase, the five-member project team met daily with their PINNACLE Product Consultant to review the workflow in the Telecommunications Department and to learn about the new features in PINNACLE V5. Understanding how the data would be used in V5 was important in writing the imports. Before the imports were created, technicians were sent into the field to verify the existing service and cable data and make any necessary corrections. After the data was reviewed and modified, the necessary import scripts were written.

Result

Western Kentucky University has broken all records by completing the PINNACLE Billing V5 upgrade process and implementing Operations in less than eight weeks. The success of this migration can be attributed to assigning the appropriate personnel to the project and adhering strictly to the pre-determined schedule. "We were able to stay on track with the upgrade because we all knew what we were supposed to do, and we all agreed on the time line for the assigned tasks," said Anju Chhachhi, Database Administrator. With PAETEC's assistance, the Telecommunications Department was able to understand the data in the import tables and how it was utilized by PINNACLE. "This was the most important reason for our success, according to the Director of Telecommunications Edwin Craft. The PAETEC team was able to devise solutions to overcome any stumbling blocks instead of reasons why they would slow down or stop the project. After the imports were completed, the PAETEC Product Consultant returned to Western Kentucky during the cutover to live production to assist with any issues. They began the migration process the third week of January and went live with PINNACLE V5 on March 1. This short time frame illustrates what a dedicated and focused team can do.