



Butler Community College graduates to Oracle Cloud with help from Tharseo IT

With its migration to OCI, Butler Community College gained better system performance at a predictable cost

Challenges

Established in 1927, Butler Community College is a public, two-year co-educational institution located in El Dorado, Kansas. It's the second largest community college and sixth largest educational institution in the state with over 13,000 students and 1,200 employees.

For years, Butler has been running its business and student operations on Ellucian Banner, a popular ERP system designed for colleges and universities. Built on an Oracle Database, the system helps the college manage everything from the school's finance and HR departments to online student enrollment and grade tracking.

Recently, Butler found itself at a crossroads: Its Ellucian software was aging and needed an upgrade, and the hardware at the college's data center, which hosted its applications, was nearing end of life. As a result, the college would often experience slow system performance and downtime events. Patching and upgrading the on-premise software was difficult and the college's lack of a robust disaster recovery solution posed the risk of major system failure that could impact business and student operations.

It became clear to IT leaders that the college needed to modernize its IT infrastructure. But keeping its on-premise data center would be costly and require purchasing a new array of servers — a major capital expense. Leaders began searching for new solution that was cost-effective and easy to maintain while providing a higher level of performance and reliability. In addition, Butler needed to migrate to a new solution seamlessly without interrupting college operations.

“We noticed a very significant increase in access and speed in response time, once we moved to OCI and that has been huge.”

Bill Young,
CIO and VP of Technology

Solution

Butler looked at a range of options for modernizing operations, but early on saw the advantages of moving to a cloud platform for its Ellucian ERP and student systems and Oracle Database. IT leaders embraced the idea of radically shrinking its datacenter footprint and avoiding unpredictable hits to its capital budgets. In addition, it could free up staff by spending less time maintaining on-premise hardware and software.

The institution reviewed several cloud solution providers — including Ellucian's own cloud option — but after looking closely at Oracle's cloud solution, IT leaders decided to adopt Oracle Cloud Infrastructure (OCI).

To help with the transition to Oracle Cloud, Butler turned to Tharseo IT, an expert in OCI technology and migration projects. Tharseo was an ideal partner for Butler, managing the entire migration of Ellucian and other third-party apps to OCI testing environment in less than three months.

Oracle's key advantages included:

- **Industry-leading cloud security features**, including data encryption, complete cloud network isolation, and granular security controls
- **Enterprise workload-ready infrastructure** with one of the strongest SLAs in cloud computing, including performance, management, and availability guarantees
- **Flexible purchase and usage models**, enabling predictable cost planning
- **Automated OS and database backup procedures** that cut recovery times from 24 hours to less than an hour

Butler was also attracted to Oracle's cloud licensing model, which would cost less than the college's existing on-premise model. "Oracle saved us money with our annual licensing," says Bill Young, CIO and VP of technology at Butler Community College. "It just made more sense to move to OCI."



Result

Butler wanted to move Ellucian to OCI without disrupting its business and student operations – and Tharseo achieved this objective, executing the migration from the college’s 40-server data center to the cloud with zero downtime. By updating the Ellucian apps and database prior to the move, Tharseo helped ensure a fast migration, avoided downtime, and achieved expected service level agreements. “Tharseo was highly responsive,” Young says. “Anytime we needed something, we could get a response in just a few minutes.”

Lower costs

The move to OCI allowed Butler to replace its large-scale capital expenditures (CapEx) for data center hardware with a predictable annual fee for cloud services. “Butler gets the infrastructure it needs for today and we can easily expand it if we need to,” says Young. With OCI, the college stays current with its IT infrastructure and tracks spending and cloud usage throughout the year using tools built into OCI. This allows Butler to better control costs and redeploy IT staff from data center maintenance activities to more valuable tasks.

Better availability

For Butler, one of the most important benefits from switching to OCI was a significant increase in system availability. Today, the college has been achieving an average of **99% availability** across its applications, consistently meeting its service level agreement. “The Ellucian system is everything to us,” says Young. “Everything that we have runs on Ellucian. If Ellucian doesn’t work, every employee and student is impacted.”

Faster performance with industry-grade DR

Butler’s IT teams were delighted by the speed and efficiency of the Ellucian system after migrating to OCI. “The performance of the databases and applications has been just stellar,” says Greg House, Butler’s Director of Enterprise Applications and Portal Services. “It’s a night and day difference.” For example, before OCI, it used to take about 3½ hours to test Ellucian’s production databases. Now, using OCI’s advanced multi-tenant databases, it takes just 5 to 10 minutes.

Today, Butler’s system runs faster and more efficiently, providing guaranteed SLAs and giving the college a reliable platform able to accommodate further business and student growth. Butler also takes advantage of Oracle Active Data Guard, a cloud-based disaster recovery solution that provides high availability, data protection, and up-to-the-minute backups of production data — a major improvement over Butler’s nightly tape backup system.

Butler is now looking at exploring potential new services that are integrated with OCI, including additional storage capabilities. “There is so much more that I can grow into with OCI,” says Young. “I now have access to a full range of cloud services that I can unlock.”



About Tharseo IT

Founded in 2014, Tharseo IT, LLC is a minority-owned, small, disadvantaged business and HUBZone company headquartered in Washington, D.C. Tharseo specializes in helping federal, state and local government agencies move applications, workloads and data to FedRAMP-secure cloud services. The company provides on-prem and cloud-based software and services to enhance scaled agile design, development & integration; data migration and data cleansing through machine learning, artificial intelligence, robotic process automation; and 24/7 delivery and operational support.

“The Tharseo IT team overdelivered. The migration of the entire system to include OS and DB to OCI will now let us focus on our core competencies with the staff that we have.”

Greg House, Director of Enterprise Applications and Portal Services

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