

Luther College uses K2 blackpoint® for 'Subject Selection' process

Manual, paper-based process reduced to **one click**; solution cuts
admin time by **4-5 days** per cycle



Luther College | EDUCATION
> CUSTOMER SOLUTION CASE STUDY



Australia's Luther College used K2 blackpoint® to transform student registration – from a manual, time-consuming class-selection process to a one-click solution that eliminates confusion, reduces paperwork and administrative load, and prevents missteps.

Christopher Topp, Luther's director of IT, estimates the solution saves 4 or 5 days of administrative work per cycle.

"This gives school administrators and coordinators more time to spend with students or reinvest in student-focused initiatives, as opposed to managing paperwork and sorting out errors," Topp said.

K2® partner jEyLaBs built the solution on top of Luther's extensive SharePoint investments, providing practical, easy-to-use tools that integrated seamlessly with technologies already being used at the school.

"We can't afford not to be using the best technology," Topp said. "We need good, cutting-edge tools because this generation – students and their parents – expects bang for its buck. It's true across verticals, but especially in education. And we pride ourselves in using the best technology available and being on the forefront in this field."

LOCATION Melbourne, Australia

INDUSTRY Education

SIZE 1000 users | 1,200 machines

SCHOOL PROFILE Luther College provides a learning environment where students and staff are encouraged to learn in close cooperation with each other, and it has been successfully educating young men and women since 1964.

SUMMARY jEyLaBs implemented a K2 blackpoint-based "Subject Selections" solution for Luther College. It reduces a set of manual, error-prone procedures into a simple, one-click process and eliminates a heavy administration load.

Problem

Once a year, Luther College students and their parents must select courses for the upcoming academic calendar. With more than 1,000 students, the college's manual, paper-based subject selection system resulted in a large amount data entry – each selection was hand keyed into separate databases – considerable time and expense, and the possibility for errors.

The process involved many administrative steps because each course selection must meet requirements, like class limits, availability and each student's schedule and goals.

"This manual way of doing things wasn't cutting it," Topp said. "It was an inefficient, labor-intensive process. Every one of our students was selecting up to eight courses at a time with up to 30 preferences for each course.

"On the administrative side, each course selection had to be validated, timetables had to be created, and various input from students, coordinators and parents had to be considered. It was a significant amount of information that we needed to pull together quickly and accurately."



Solution

Luther's "Subject Selections" solution was implemented by jEyLaBs in August 2009.

"Using K2 blackpoint, SharePoint and InfoPath, we were able to automate this complex process and reduce it to a single click," said jEyLaBs founder and K2 Insider Jey Srikantha. "The solution, which processes more than 500 forms per year and is used by every Luther student, takes into account all the various scenarios and stakeholders, including parents and coordinators."

jEyLaBs designed a solution that glues together various technologies to provide an easy-to-use and easy-to-configure system. SharePoint lists are used to host the configuration information for each class's subject selection, and SharePoint acts as a foundation for the solution. InfoPath forms guide the students through the selection process and submission, and then K2 blackpoint manages the workflow. Information is directed to teachers and administrators for review and approvals, then the

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– CHRISTOPHER TOPP, Luther College

has made a decision, so they can follow up with any concerns. K2 rules and policies prevent errors along the way, navigate complex requirements (like avoiding multiple enrollments) and ensure that the subject selections are valid.

BENEFITS

- > Drastic reduction of process time
- > Errors eliminated
- > Visibility

SOFTWARE AND SERVICES

- > K2 blackpoint
- > Microsoft SharePoint Server 2007
- > Microsoft InfoPath 2007

backend data transfer takes place, integrating the form data into a timetabling application. Parents are notified via SMS (text message) that their student

"The cost savings in terms of man hours is enormous – instead of a manual chain of events, each relying on the last to have successfully completed and documented a process, it is (literally) now a single click," Topp said. "K2 blackpoint guarantees all the pieces fall into place in a precise order.

"And because K2 blackpoint is so easy to use, we can hone the solution in the future, if our needs change."

Luther's Subject Selection process has been a "huge success," Topp said, and everyone that touches the process has embraced it. The school is looking at other potential areas for K2 blackpoint projects, like online parent portals, report cards and identity management.

jEyLaBs is a specialized IT consultancy that provides flexible, high-quality services in the area of workflow and process-driven applications.

Focused on the Microsoft platform, the jEyLaBs team of IT veterans work with K2, SharePoint and related .NET technologies.

K2 blackpoint enhances SharePoint

Luther College turned to K2 blackpoint, in part, for its deep integration with SharePoint.

"SharePoint is a critical part of what we do, and it is a key part of our strategy moving forward," Topp said. "SharePoint acts as our application platform, our core system for information dissemination and management and a basis from which we operate.

"Adding K2 blackpoint on top of this SharePoint investment opens up a wealth of capabilities for us. It cuts development time, drastically, and enables significant efficiency gains for us in terms of administration and flow of information. With K2 blackpoint, we can take the systems we already have in place, improve them and streamline exponentially."

According to Srikantha, building the same kind of solution with out-of-the-box SharePoint tools would have resulted in significantly more work.

"With K2 blackpoint, you can build very powerful SharePoint workflows with notifications, escalations, etc.," Srikantha said. "Coding all of that in SharePoint would be a mess and would have taken us weeks. With K2 blackpoint, we did it in a couple hours. We have built a number of K2-based solutions and the story is the same every time. K2 makes SharePoint a compelling process-driven application platform. Our expertise and focus is solely about this."

"Simply put, K2 blackpoint allows us to build solutions – quickly and inexpensively – that make life easier for everyone involved," Topp said.

A few more examples of how K2 is increasing efficiency, reducing IT costs and providing visibility for education customers all over the world:

OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT

- Budget approval and tracking
- Accounts payable/receivable
- Issue tracking
- Helpdesk
- Meeting minutes
- Project control and updates

COMPLIANCE AND GOVERNANCE

- Internal audit
- Regulatory reporting
- HIPPA
- Freedom of Information
- Grant information and management

HUMAN RESOURCES

- Employee onboarding
- Human-capital management
- Performance review
- Personnel training
- Recruiting
- Travel and vacation request



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