A Baker College Case Study

Five years ago Jacqui Spicer, Chief Operating Officer from Baker College, had a vision for the school's IT department. She wanted it to become a value-add solutions provider supporting the college's larger strategic agenda instead of remaining a typical IT systems management team. In higher education today, technology resources are fundamental to meeting a school's mission and providing a competitive edge.

While the college had built various technology systems over the years, the campus IT environment struggled to keep up with the evolving expectations of students, faculty, alumni and administration. The infrastructure needed to modernize to deliver the personalized digital experience required by its users. Jacqui also saw an opportunity to address the growing demands for effective cyber security, mobile access, 24x7 system availability, and regulatory compliance. To successfully adapt to these and future requirements, while still containing costs and improving efficiencies, a new innovative approach to IT was needed.

As a modern career college, Baker College has a history of being innovative and focused on meeting the needs of its student body. Founded in 1911, it's the largest independent college in the state of Michigan, serving nearly 16,000 students at eight separate campus locations. Their mission is to enable graduates to build successful and rewarding careers right out of college. The school provides job-focused higher education and more than 100 up-to-date career programs for fields such as nursing, teaching, and computer technologies. The school also offers a popular online program and a College of Graduate Studies.

The Benefits of Cloud Computing

Jacqui's strategy to improve her department's business value to the college was timely. Other schools were successfully meeting requirements to maintain/support standard IT core services while also facilitating growth and innovation, and they often use new technologies to do so. Like them, Jacqui wanted a flexible, adaptable IT infrastructure to enable the school's mobile and technology savvy students and employees.

She knew cloud computing was the answer. Many institutions had already turned to cloud-based models for ERP, HR and other crucial systems, often to contain costs and improve system availability. Transforming the IT environment into a more collaborative, interactive experience with easier access to data helps institutions better serve their students and improve organizational efficiency.

With a cloud environment, information can be available at any time, in any place, on any device. Scalable and agile, cloud computing can:

- Provide a secure environment
- Deliver greater speed in deployment and system upgrades
- Respond to changing conditions and workloads
- Use scarce IT resources efficiently
- Free up in-house IT resources to provide greater service to students
- Lower costs

"For us, the cost has decreased significantly,"

Jacqui Spicer says of her school's switch to Jenzabar for IT management.

Creating a Campus Cloud Strategy

Along with improving services for end-users, less workload for the IT department, lower costs and improved efficiency, Jacqui recognized that Baker College would derive other benefits from migrating their enterprise Software as a Service (SaaS) offerings to the cloud, including:

- The ability to leverage industry best practices and outside resources
- Access to the latest technology for better system performance and IT security
- Higher availability and less downtime
- Partnering with vendors/providers to extend data center capacity
- Better use of IT resources for more value-add solutions
- Improved user experience and engagement

However, one of the key benefits was freeing up her staff to work on projects with higher business value to the college. Jacqui was committed to increasing the value of the college's IT department by becoming a solutions provider, not a serv-ers' provider. At many organizations, overstretched IT staff are so busy with system patching and maintenance they don't have bandwidth to develop/support higher-value IT solutions. Jacqui realized an institution-wide cloud migration would allow her team to collaborate with other departments, improving relationships and ensuring that all stakeholders' concerns were addressed.

Keeping those requirements in mind, she developed a 5-year plan to migrate the college's legacy enterprise systems to the cloud. Her strategy included:

- Migrate core or critical systems, including Collaboration tools, Learning Management System (LMS), Student Information System (SIS), to a SaaS model.
- Partner with constituents (faculty, students, etc.) to design and provide IT solutions with enhanced business value.
- Set up a flexible, elastic IT foundation for growth and innovations down the road.
- Uncover and eliminate hidden/unsanctioned systems across the campuses.

"We're finding that institutions that invest in the cloud are feeling the advantages right away,"

said Ben Bassett, Jenzabar's Executive Vice President and General Manager.

"It's our job to make the process seamless for our clients, and our cloud retention rate proves that we're capable of doing that."
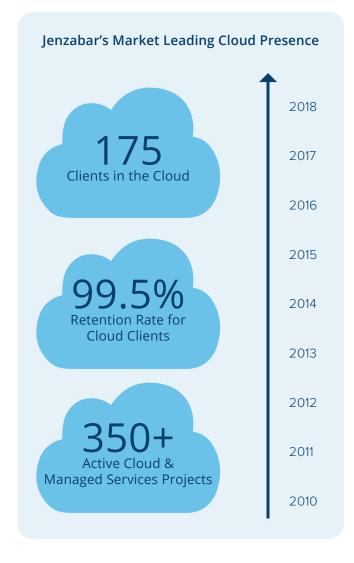
Jenzabar: A Trusted Advisor and Partner

In order for Baker College to achieve their objectives, they needed the right cloud provider and partner to work with them all along the line. Enter Jenzabar, offering technology solutions and services tailored to fit the evolving needs of institutions both today and in the future. Jenzabar exclusively serves higher education, acting as a trusted advisor to help clients get the most out of their technology investment.

"We're finding that institutions that invest in the cloud are feeling the advantages right away," said Ben Bassett, Jenzabar's Executive Vice President and General Manager. "It's our job to make the process seamless for our clients, and our cloud retention rate proves that we're capable of doing that."

Baker College had worked with Jenzabar in the past, so Jacqui knew their comprehensive software suite would provide the functionality she wanted. And with a decade of experience transitioning and hosting solutions in the cloud, Jenzabar would have the expertise needed for a successful migration and to support product updates as needed. While the technology and services were key, Jenzabar's collaborative personal attention were also important.

With a large portfolio of cloud and managed services, Jenzabar Cloud Services lets clients run their Jenzabar applications in a scalable, on-demand, and affordable way. The cloud solution easily scales based on actual day-to-day usage or peak demand periods—ensuring users get the best IT experience possible. Jenzabar Managed Services provides a highly effective option for improving constituent service, enhancing efficiency, controlling costs, and mitigating risk.

Jenzabar's Market Leading Cloud Presence

175
Clients in the Cloud

99.5%
Retention Rate for Cloud Clients

350+
Active Cloud &
Managed Services Projects

2018
2017
2016
2015
2014
2013
2012
2011
2010

Conclusion: A Better View in the Cloud

As the college enters the final stretch of the five-year strategic plan, they have successfully migrated their enterprise SaaS applications, enabling them to reduce costs, mitigate IT risks and delight their users.

Handing off the everyday support and management of the datacenter to Jenzabar freed up the internal IT team to work on high-value services and strategic initiatives for their constituents. Better yet, Baker College is poised for the future with built-in flexibility to adapt their IT systems as the institution changes and technology evolves over time. Other changes and benefits from the cloud migration are quick to see.

A Summary of Benefits

Superior service and support – The school can leverage best practices and Jenzabar's expertise to manage the system environment, adapt to changing needs, and implement product updates. The school's systems are automatically updated to the latest version, reducing costly and disruptive upgrade projects.

Improved system uptime – with a 99.95% high availability IT environment. The high availability and disaster recovery optimization provided by Jenzabar translates into increased uptime and productivity.

Secure environment – Jenzabar Cloud Data Centers maintain full SSAE & SOC compliance for best-in-class security of data and personal information.

User-centric IT team – The IT team can deliver an improved user experience and higher value to the school. The IT staff has been retrained to be business analysts who perform higher-value functions.

Cloud hosting saves money – The school has reduced costs by only paying for IT resources actually used. The result is an efficient, secure, cost-effective IT strategy that delivers unparalleled agility.

Looking back, Jacqui is satisfied that the cloud migration improved the IT operations and reduced costs. An integrated IT environment eliminated functional silos and increases productivity. Likewise, the cloud has transformed the digital experience for the college's tech-savvy students and employees, providing them access to the latest innovations as soon as they become available.

While the Jenzabar Managed Services team maintains the systems remotely via a scalable and reliable cloud platform, the Baker IT team can focus on what they do best–supporting their school's strategic mission to help students become successful graduates.

Find Out More

📞 1.800.593.0028

✉ info@jenzabar.com

💻 jenzabar.com/jenzabarone

JENZABAR®