



California Lutheran  
UNIVERSITY

## Customer Story

# California Lutheran University's Journey: From Disjointed Data to a Data-Driven Campus with Informer

Conversation with Justin Barkhuff, Director of Enterprise Applications, Information Technology Services and Kajal Phabiani, Analyst, California Lutheran University

### Pain points

- **Continuity Gaps:** CLU managed various student services using separate software platforms causing significant data manageability challenges.
- **Cumbersome Processes:** Manual data processing became time-consuming, error-prone, and was not scalable or sustainable.
- **Lack of a Single Source of Truth:** Faculty and administrators struggled with multiple systems, data sources, and spreadsheets, resulting in inefficiencies, errors, and a disjointed user experience.

### Results

- **Achieved Data Governance:** Established a Single Source of Truth to promote organizational data-driven decision-making, improved operational efficiency, data integrity, security, and quality.
- **Data-Driven Culture:** Leveraged real-time data analysis for housing allocation, budget management, committee participation, etc.
- **Integrated Platform:** Bolstered staff and student engagement through Informer's platform for club participation and management.
- **Improved Communication:** Facilitated the reliable dissemination of information across campus and streamlined internal communication.
- **Sustainable Scalability:** Implemented a scalable and traceable solution to meet evolving data demands and institutional goals, ensuring long-term adaptability.



## California Lutheran University Story

### Challenge

CLU operates much like a bustling, self-sufficient city, where the administration is singularly responsible for a wide array of student services, including health, security, and residential life, encapsulating the needs of over 3,300 students from diverse backgrounds. Managing such extensive operations necessitated a plethora of software platforms that lacked cohesion with internal platforms like Canvas and Colleague operating independently of one another. This disjointed digital environment led to significant challenges in data manageability and business continuity.

Faculty and administrators juggled multiple systems, each siloed with its own set of data, resulting in inefficiencies and inconsistencies that made reliable data analysis an arduous task. Moreover, the manual management of information through spreadsheets and fragmented exports was fraught with potential for error, undermining data integrity. The university grappled with finding a manageable, reliable, and consistent place for data aggregation to ensure ongoing business continuity and trustworthy reporting. The need for a single source of truth became not just a preference but a crucial requirement for the university's sustainable operation and strategic growth.

## Solution

To surmount these challenges, CLU embraced Informer, a versatile data management tool designed to consolidate and clean vast quantities of data from disparate sources. Informer enabled CLU to merge and transform data seamlessly, ensuring that information remained accurate and up to date across all platforms. This transition allowed the university to replace error-prone spreadsheets with Informer's sophisticated rules and automation, enhancing operational efficiency.

The Informer solution provided CLU with:

- A single source of truth for data across various platforms, including Canvas and Colleague, with the power to apply nuanced manipulations to data within a central hub, ensuring that all information displayed across campus systems was consistent and reliable.
- An advanced API integration capability that synchronized data across all systems minimizing data inconsistencies.
- An innovative 'Roadshow'; to introduce and integrate each department with Informer's tools, creating a collaborative data management environment.
- Automated administrative processes, such as the management of faculty contracts, which previously were managed through third-party platforms or manually.
- The development of custom applications within Informer, allowing CLU to build tailored experiences and dashboards for its students and staff.

Informer's analytical capabilities meant that the university could not only collect but also interpret data with greater clarity and depth. By establishing a consistent and unified source of data, CLU was poised to gain deeper insights into student behavior, academic performance, and resource allocation.

## Results

The comprehensive adoption of Informer has been transformative for CLU. The university experienced a marked improvement in decision-making processes due to readily available and accurate data insights. Informer's integration catalyzed several key developments:

- **Operational Excellence:** Operational tasks that once consumed hours of manual input are now automated, freeing up valuable time for faculty and staff to engage in more meaningful work that directly benefits student success.
- **Strategic Initiatives:** CLU's strategic initiatives now capitalize on real-time data for initiatives such as housing allocation, budget management, and committee participation analysis. For instance, the integration between Colleague and StarRez allowed for more efficient housing application processes, while Informer's dashboard capabilities gave real-time insights into adjunct budgeting and time allocations.

- **Student Engagement:** By creating a better solution for Student Clubs through Informer, CLU has enhanced student engagement by providing an integrated platform for club management and participation.
- **Sustainability and Growth:** The university now stands on a sustainable model for growth, with a scalable solution in Informer that can adapt to increasing data demands and evolving institutional goals.

Utilizing Informer, CLU has solidified its stance as a forward-thinking institution that values and implements technological solutions for a more cohesive, efficient, and data-centric academic environment. The journey towards digital transformation has established a benchmark for how higher education institutions can leverage data to enrich the collegiate experience and operational efficiency.



*"It (Informer) lets me just focus on the business needs of the organization and meeting the requirements of the users"*

**Kajal Phabiani, Analyst, California Lutheran University**