Industry and Academic Partnership Leads to Student Driven Success Using an Innovative Cloud Product in the Classroom

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ABSTRACT

The relationships between Education/Training and Information Technologies at Farmingdale State College are accelerating, with the newest partnership involving the new CloudSuite Industrial Product, CSI, form Infor, USA, Inc. In this arrangement we have a dedicated Intern, Sayem Shahrier, a student at Farmingdale State College who assists with use of the CSI product in the classroom. According to this Intern, the implementation of the Infor CSI tool has been a great real life and hands-on experience. Students in the Education Alliance Program finally received a taste of how an ERP system works. Whether a company is big or small, it should be capable to manage and keep track of all their products and customers in real time. From local companies throughout Long Island all the way up to global mass markets have utilized the Infor CSI tool and have taken customer data to further maximize not only on profits but improve on operational excellence, customer intimacy, and the manufacturing process.

Using this innovative tool and this partnership synergy, makes our students best prepared for industry entry and successes. This partnership brings together researchers and practitioners to support the bridging process between Education/Training and Information Technologies.

Keywords: ERP, Collaboration, SCM, Effective, Learning, Bridging Process, Student Driven Success.

1. INTRODUCTION

The collaboration our faculty and Infor has embarked on is to integrate proven industry-specific software and innovative Enterprise Resource Planning solutions into the classroom to expose students to leading industry tools. We have worked together to integrate Infor technology into the campus by combining an innovative lab and learning environment.

According to this new relationship these projects will support skill development for those students in majors such as: Technical Engineering, Computer Science, and Business. The goal is to create a pipeline of students within the Infor Scholar and the Education Alliance Program.

2. STUDENT DRIVEN SUCCESS

Having a dedicated student Intern significantly motivates the student body and supports these academic efforts resulting in success. Our Intern, Sayem, is always fascinated about the innovative technologies that revolve around big data, artificial intelligence, self-driving cars, and more. Being able to work with customer data, manipulating, and producing reports have changed his outlook on how companies run and manage at a macroscopic level.

This effort will drive thought leadership on current and emerging technology and business trends, by allowing for research and exploration of critical challenges in technology and integration of key learnings into relevant curricula [1].

3. STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

This strategic partnership between Farmingdale State College and Infor, USA, Inc includes access to Infor curricula, training, sample projects, and research as well as the potential opportunity for collaboration with Infor scientists, development leads, alliance managers and Infor scientists, development leads, alliance managers and Infor partner(s) of all industry-centered products. Students will build deeper analytic skills with the ability to assess software design, user experience, and successfully complete Infor's current requirements of Infor's Partner Network.

This collaboration includes joint announcements and other activities relating to joint interviews, quotes, press releases, collateral, events, speaker engagements, interviews, marketing materials, and social media support [1].

This Scholars Program provides access to professional skills training (self-direct online and hands-on via working with Infor subject matter experts) for students who meet certain criteria as established by Infor, including, but not necessarily limited to a required grade point average or "GPA", particular field of study, available work schedules and physical location of the student; and further limited to students, who are selected by Infor to work as interns within various Infor departments, such as Sales, Marketing, Consulting, Development, or Support. Infor will facilitate connections with potential employers from Infor's

customer and partner community through promotions of the student achievement within Infor's internally established electronic networks. We collaboratively hope to publish student success stories and joint announcements relating to the successful programmatic outcomes and impacts of the collaboration [1].

Farmingdale State College piloted the foundation course this Fall semester under the direction of Dr. Jill O'Sullivan with the assistance of Sayem Shahrier, the CSI Intern. The intent was to bridge student qualifications and the skill sets employers demand. The course introduced students to the professional, technical, and enablement skills necessary to pursue a career as an entry-level ERP Implementation Consultant, Project Manager, or Sales Associate. Infor provided for Farmingdale Students supplemental workshops (scheduled throughout the semester) including; *A Day in the Life of an Infor Implementation Consultant*. Students also attended the workshop on *Maximizing Interpersonal Relationships* that covered strategies for effective communication and developing positive working relationships. Students were provided sample links to video resources for the course and a Welcome video [2].

4. STUDENTS EXPLORE ENTERPRISE IT SOLUTIONS

Students explore the management of enterprise-wide IT solutions using Infor Cloud Suite. Students examine enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems and supply chain management (SCM) systems. Cloud computing, a widely-used architecture to deploy enterprise applications as a service over the Internet. Case studies are employed to expose students to real-world scenarios [3].

Solutions leveraged: Students in classes at Farmingdale State College learn to implement software tools.

1) Infor CloudSuite Industrial
2) Infor ION
3) Infor Supply Chain Management

Students voluntarily joined a virtual community of Infor on LinkedIn where they see Infor partners, customers, and current trends as well as job and career opportunities. As reported by the CSI Intern using this platform, the virtual community has been a relatively close cohort of unique members from students and Infor staff. This platform allows students to network digitally, represent themselves, and connect with Infor customers and partners looking for skilled employees. These students attended workshops and were made aware of trends revolving around topics such as how to become a software consultant while traveling around the world and how to improve your presentation skills and engage with the audience.

We are using Blackboard for classroom content, registering and administering students' performance. In this Introductory Foundations course, the students go through the following lessons.

1) Lesson 1 – Introduction to CloudSuite Industrial Fundamentals - 101
2) Lesson 2 – Quote to Cash Processes (CSI)
3) Lesson 3 – Procure to Pay Processes (CSI)

4) Lesson 4 – Demand to Build Job Order Processes (CSI)
5) Lesson 5 – Financial Planning Processes (CSI)
6) Lesson 6 – Business Concepts (CSI)

5. SUMMARY OF STUDENT LESSON

Partnering with Infor for the CSI tools to be used in my ERP classrooms provides my students with the skillsets they need to differentiate themselves as they graduate and enter the workplace. This partnership is crucial to bridging the gap between academia and industry with the intent to meet the needs of industry with skilled students ready to hit the ground running upon entry into their companies. We need these types of collaborations.

6. CONCLUSION

This author believes strongly in establishing and maintaining industry relationships that provides her students the opportunity to use innovative tools, and the methodologies associated with state of the art cloud products that will best prepare her students for success. Having a dedicated intern to learn the system, take part in meetings, help in the class, with student assignments, assisting in arranging workshops, and modifying campus webpages about this new CSI program has proved successful. According to this CSI Intern, this experience has opened his eyes on how big manufacturers work in the background of production management. There was an important value to attend Infor workshop trips and be able to take those valuable skills and apply them to all his day to day work life.

This partnership bridges the gap between academia and industry. Farmingdale State College is collaborating with one of the most prominent world leaders in ERP, their customers and partners to significantly prepare our students.

Having the opportunities for students to learn these lessons on a real-world tool integrating into ERP will enrich their classroom experience and benefit their future industry contributions.

Students can be more effective in industry with the skillsets acquired in this course. They have a significant competitive advantage.

In the words of a student, our intern, as students are receiving these opportunities within this partnership, they are learning the purposes of ERP systems, how to use a Cloud based solution, and potentially get a job at what they are learning as declared by this CSI Intern. He proclaims, college is important for students to learn and build these relationships with software companies that way we are better equipped and ready for the job market There you have it from the student intern of the CSI Project at Farmingdale State College, Sayem Shahrier. Thank you to Infor, USA, Inc. and Sayem for their dedication to the success of this ERP cloud solution implemented within my classroom.

REFERENCES

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