

CUSTOMER PROFILE



UCF Global

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

IMPROVING THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AT UCF GLOBAL

Founded in 1963, the University of Central Florida (UCF) is a thriving preeminent research university located in metropolitan Orlando. In Fiscal Year 2016 UCF researchers received \$145.8 million for research. With more than 64,000 students, UCF is one of the largest universities in the U.S., conferring over 15,000 degrees each year through its 93 bachelor's, 86 master's, 27 research doctorates, three professional doctorates, and three specialist degree programs. In addition to its impressive size and strength, UCF is ranked as a best-value university by The Princeton Review and Kiplinger's, and is recognized as one of the nation's most affordable colleges by Forbes.

The University's UCF Global unit functions as the primary international hub for students, faculty, and staff. UCF Global is responsible for all students studying abroad (from short term programs to semesters abroad) as well as bringing international students to the campus. Through strong partnerships with the Office of Global Perspectives and Global UCF, UCF Global is committed to increasing international mobility and enhancing the University's global competency. Encompassing the English Language Institute, UCF Abroad—and multiple support services for the international population on campus—UCF Global aides in transforming the lives of the UCF global community.

UCF Global is on a quest to provide access to high impact, international experiences across the University and global community, with a commitment to excellence in partnership, innovation, and services.

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Mikel Etxeberria Alustiza

Associate Director for
Strategic Initiatives and Technology

THE MISSION OF UCF GLOBAL

UCF Global is comprised of about 120 employees, including faculty, senior administration leaders, student advisors, immigration advisors, IT and support staff. As the Associate Director for Strategic Initiatives and Technology, Mikel Etxeberria Alustiza oversees all of UCF Global's IT efforts, including projects and services, facilities, admissions and records, and front desk staff.

The group's broad mission ensures plenty of demand for Etxeberria's team. Under the aegis of UCF Global, the University partners with foreign governments and institutions to bring internationally-focused programs to the campus, and is engaged in no fewer than 130 active agreements with universities in Japan, China, Saudi Arabia, Italy, Brazil, and Russia.

Similarly, UCF Global "supports international faculty, staff, and students across the entire University with an array of services in such areas as immigration compliance, employment authorizations and visas, and international taxation," explained Etxeberria. UCF Global's English Language Institute, a key component of the support structure for members of the University's international community, looks to double its current enrollment by 2020.



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CRITICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR GROWTH

Seeking to build on UCF Global's record of success, the Strategic Initiatives and Technology team embarked on a journey to:

- Support the English Language Institute's aggressive enrollment target application process
- Improve the user experience for all stakeholders.

Etxeberria knew that UCF Global needed a system that could process applications in a timely fashion, while providing a great experience for the students submitting them. With aggressive goals for the year 2020, the IT team recognized that the platform they were then using would not fit the bill. “While we are cost conscious, reducing costs is rarely the primary reason for the decisions we make; rather, our goal is to provide a better customer experience while becoming more efficient. From a strategic point of view, we knew we needed a platform that was flexible and scalable – and would enable us to provide our users a great experience, end to end. That's why we needed a BPM solution,” remarked Etxeberria.

In preparation for issuing a tender for that technology, Etxeberria's team developed a rigorous

set of requirements, ensuring that the selected platform would offer a variety of important features, such as:

- Attractive, web-based, and responsive user interaction;
- Built-in support for multiple languages, locales, and cultures;
- Easy integration with a broad array of databases, web services, and applications;
- Directory synchronization with LDAP, Active Directory, and Windows network security;
- Full integration with federated authentication services, including Oauth and SAML.

- Strong encryption of data at rest, and data in-flight;
- Digital signature of documents;
- Granular permissions structure, with temporary privilege escalation.

Etxeberria's team understood that vendor capabilities also play an important role in the selection of any critical technology. They sought a vendor with a long and successful history working with customers and offering instructor-led training, and reliable and responsive technical support.



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As a public university, UCF Global handles vast amounts of confidential information. Such data is protected by federal and state regulation, of course; but, even more importantly, it is the lynchpin of the trust relationship that the institution forms with its students and other stakeholders. UCF Global's set of requirements reflected that importance by specifying features including:

- Comprehensive and automatic logging, with digital signature, of every action taken by any actor, human or automated;

Over the course of a year, of the numerous vendors responding, only four were short-listed for further evaluation. This final phase entailed product demonstrations, detailed discussions, and hands-on trials. In the end, UCF Global chose Process Director from BP Logix as the platform that was best positioned to meet or exceed their critical business requirements.

According to Etxeberria, “When we decided on BPM, we had a vision that went beyond solving the

business problem we had at that time. We believed the technology would also enable us to ignite a digital transformation initiative and mentality. Now we are seeing the real results of that decision.”

FAST AND SEAMLESS

A year ago, the technology team went live with its first Process Director-driven application. UCF Global enjoyed a seamless transition to the new environment, and appreciates the ways in which Process Director continues to enable them to transform the way they work. As he looks back, and forward, Etxeberria commented, “Everything

the services UCF Global provides. Best of all, the entire solution was designed, developed and implemented in only 45 days! Staff quickly came up to speed, and the system was live in time for the move to the new facility.

The ability to offer services anywhere, and at any time, enables UCF Global to address the needs of a student population that is increasing by 15% year over year. To do so with no additional staff—and no additional budget—transforms how Etxeberria’s team meets the needs of this dynamic population.



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The UCF Global team built its first application quickly. Having moved into a new building, the technology group created sign-in stations on each floor, prompting students to enter their university ID and tell the system what they were there to do. The stations draw information from other systems, offering a list of services which, when selected, are routed to specific reception areas and employees. The application also interacts with students, providing advice and direction as requested, and generates reports used by Etxeberria and others for deeper insights into the needs of those consuming

As importantly, the ability to support over 3,000 students with the same staff while providing the same amount of face-to-face time is meeting the expectations of this progressive University.

LEVERAGING TOOLS FOR FUTURE EXPANSION

Having successfully built and released its first Process Director application, UCF Global embarked on the task of transforming and digitizing in other key areas. Etxeberria’s team tackled a purchasing application for the English Language Institute, the international student admission process, leave requests, off-campus experiential learning, student services, and more. Critically, the results of these efforts often directly impacted the experience of students as well as UCF Global staff,

making the organization more accessible to its customers and more appealing to its employees.

On average, the team spent less than a month conceiving, creating, as well as deploying each application; their most complex application to date required only four months.

“Changes to current apps are quick and easy,” observed Etxeberria. “That’s not only been important to the timely delivery of applications, but also to our ability to stay on top of requests for enhancements and new features and functions. For us, it’s not just about the technology: it’s about leveraging technology to improve key business processes to advance institutional goals,” he remarked.

Using Process Director has another benefit as well to cross functional teams. They are now able to access the same data at the same time and make decisions for their respective areas without having to wait for one another. “This gives us the opportunity to see inter-dependencies that were previously not available and to look ahead to key drivers when deciding whether a process needs to be redesigned. Centralizing communication and providing the complete history of communication provides a huge advantage,” commented Etxeberria.

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The leadership at UCF Global is pleased with the results of the technology team’s efforts. In the next phase, the University will be continuing down the path of digital transformation. “We did what we set out to do in Phase I. Now we have a platform we like, which we’ll exploit in order to add value to the business. We can automate thousands of things, but it’s not just about moving from paper to digital – it’s about leveraging Process Director’s capabilities to improve and transform how we conduct business, in keeping with our agenda and the University’s initiatives,” concluded Etxeberria.

