



Nevada System of Higher Education

Contract Advisory Services: ERP and Implementation Services Agreements

"If I could change one thing about working with The Tambellini Group, I would have brought them in earlier. If Vicki Tambellini had assisted us prior to releasing our RFP, our results might have been even better. Tambellini was part of our team and together we achieved results that impressed our Chancellor and Board Chair. We could not have achieved the same results in our time-frame without their insight and assistance."

RENEE YACKIRA, Special Advisor to the Chancellor, Nevada System of Higher Education



With Nevada's tourism and gaming industry no longer supporting the state's economic needs, it became clear that the "New Nevada" must reflect a different economic base—a knowledge-based economy powered by human capital. A key success factor would be the development of a better-educated workforce. In the fall of 2011, in reaction to severe economic recession and high unemployment across the state, the Nevada Board of Regents released "The State and the System: NSHE Plan for Nevada's Colleges and Universities."

THE CHALLENGE

The plan set specific goals for combining excellence and austerity to improve performance at every level of the system. At that time it was estimated that by 2020, 58 percent of all jobs in Nevada would require a degree of post-secondary training. Nevada's attainment rate was trailing far behind

the national average. Nevada had to close the knowledge-and-skills gap of its population if it were to build a more resilient and diversified economy.

The Nevada System of Higher Education's (NSHE) 2015 Strategic Plan clearly articulated that a New Nevada required ensuring its evolving workforce attained more certificates and associate, baccalaureate, and advanced degrees that closely aligned with the state's economic development plans. The NSHE Strategic Plan called for significant gains to continue to be made in expanding performance, access, success, opportunity, efficiency, and alignment across the state's education system. These aggressive goals needed to be met in the face of declining budgets for public and higher education. The challenge required achieving greater efficiency, transparency, and accountability across the entire system.

A cornerstone of NSHE's efficiency is iNtegrate 2—an initiative dedicated to providing new information systems for all NSHE institutions. The mission of iNtegrate 2 is to create a high-functioning, unified system of information in combination with the efficient management of administrative services for students, faculty, and staff. The system will replace legacy finance and human information technology resources and will support efficient and effective business practices. NSHE set aggressive goals to establish a platform of shared services across its institutions.

THE SOLUTION

NSHE selected Workday as the solution to replace its legacy finance, human resources, and payroll systems as well as many paper-based systems. Key decision factors included Workday's clear position of leadership in providing for higher education business needs and the ability to consolidate NSHE's many legacy systems into a single, unified, state-of-the-art, cloud-based system that would be easily accessible by all NHES institutions. Sierra-Cedar was selected to be NSHE's implementation partner.

After an RFP process, the executive leadership at NSHE sought industry expertise and insight to ensure the modernization project was negotiated favorably on behalf of the system. The work was sole-sourced to The Tambellini Group, whose contract experts had reviewed and successfully

negotiated more than one thousand contracts and brought to NSHE over 45 years of combined experience in higher education.

NSHE determined that The Tambellini Group represented the contract negotiation and technology expertise to support NSHE's mandate for a technology solution that would provide greater levels of excellence and austerity. Key Tambellini team members included Vicki Tambellini, President and CEO, and Leslie Spasser, Attorney at Law at Bodker, Ramsey, Andrews, Winograd & Wildstein, P.C., who partners with The Tambellini Group to provide legal advisory services. With more than 30 years of experience in higher education as advisor and contract negotiator, Vicki Tambellini's vast knowledge of technology solutions for higher education is in constant demand. Leslie Spasser brings extensive legal expertise in complex technology transactions involving cloud computing/hosted services, technology and media licensing, data and/or content licensing, and integration.

THE BENEFITS

The Tambellini Group reviewed the vendor offerings for cloud services, including implementation, and advised NSHE on business and legal terms. The combined Tambellini expertise provided assurances that NSHE would secure a technology solution that reduced overall risk while providing for the efficiencies and cost savings that would contribute



to NSHE's mandate for excellence and austerity across all business processes.

Negotiations were complex as the interests of NSHE were highly complicated. The successful outcome required hundreds of hours of dedicated time on behalf of Tambellini and NSHE representatives. The engagement took place over a period of approximately four months and included negotiations with Workday and Sierra-Cedar.

In the final outcome, The Tambellini Group was able to save NSHE nearly four million dollars beyond the vendor best-and-final offers, while reducing the project risk.

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The Tambellini Group is the world's leading independent analyst and advisory firm dedicated exclusively to higher education. Tambellini offers direct interaction with the top industry analysts, and access to custom advisory services based on verified data and unbiased research. Our members leverage Tambellini's data-driven insight on the changing education technology landscape to make fact-based technology decisions and achieve key strategic goals.

EMPOWERS DECISION MAKERS

- **Analyst/advisory services**—actionable data to make strategic decisions and reduce risk
- **Insight/expertise across technologies**
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The purpose of this case study is to provide higher education institutions with information about strategic sourcing, contract negotiations and advisory services available from The Tambellini Group.

The report is based on the experience of The Tambellini Group and the Nevada System of Higher Education.

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