



Seneca College

Technology Procurement Advisory Services for Finance,
Human Resources, and Student

"The Tambellini Group helped set Seneca College on the path toward achieving our bold i3 initiative—Seneca's commitment to establish streamlined processes and improved services across our student, financial, and human resources systems. The Tambellini Group worked shoulder to shoulder with our team to help ensure the best business and technology decisions were made while mitigating financial and business risk."

ROY HART, former Chief Information Officer



Seneca College of Applied Arts and Technology, with ten campuses across the Greater Toronto Area, is one of Canada's leading colleges. Seneca provides a polytechnic education, enriched by technology-enabled and workplace-based learning opportunities, along with pathways to and from its partner postsecondary institutions. With a combined enrollment exceeding 100,000 full- and part-time students, each campus is dedicated to an academic specialty with a unique focus.

Today, the Seneca campuses offer more than 500 career options and a wealth of program offerings. With its emphasis on excellence in education and professional and career-based training, Seneca College has been named among the most entrepreneurial postsecondary institutions in Ontario.

THE CHALLENGE

As part of its ongoing conversation with the provincial government about its role as a leading college in Ontario, Seneca published the "Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA)." The agreement

articulates the college's mandate, vision, and priority objectives, and outlines how the school will continue to be a leader in Ontario's higher education system. The annual "SMA Report Back" provides a high level of transparency in reporting on the college's priority objectives such as retention, attainment, student satisfaction, work-integrated learning, and employer satisfaction.

Seneca's status as a top-ranking institution depends upon its diligent monitoring of trends in both its own demographics, and those trends affecting higher education overall. Over the years, Seneca noted a rise in the number of mature students, and the requirement that this population of learners requires flexibility. The methods and times that programs are delivered must accommodate the needs of learners who may be balancing work and family demands while returning to school. Seneca also began experiencing a growing demand for shorter-term credentials with more focus on skills needed immediately in the work force. Furthermore, the exponential growth in information technology heightened

an interest in transforming the existing information systems and education delivery platforms to meet student expectations for seamless interfaces and centralized processes that are accessible via computer, tablet, and cell phone.

Some of these needs were beginning to surface in 2010, a time when Seneca was hampered by an aging legacy system, process inefficiencies, and siloed data that inhibited strategic decision making. The college decided it was time to set a path toward actualizing a bold technology vision for the future. Seneca acknowledged that an across-the-board transformation of all of its business systems was necessary, beginning with the replacement of its legacy system of thirty-plus years. This marked the launch of one of the college's most significant and far-reaching initiatives, the i3 project (Innovation, Integration, and Information) which was designed to bring new and integrated student, human resources, and finance solutions to the college. The new systems would offer seamless interaction, ease of data access, and a consolidated view of data relevant to students, faculty, and administration.

THE SOLUTION

Seneca engaged the services of The Tambellini Group (Tambellini) to serve as an unbiased, experienced, and trusted advisor to assist the college as it launched its i3 initiative. The project would include navigating the complexities of RFP preparation, vendor

selection, and contract negotiations. Seneca desired a phased approach to implementation to position the college for a future migration to the cloud. Tambellini needed to provide comprehensive services to support Seneca's broad program offerings, business processes across multiple campuses, and diverse student and faculty populations. The college desired a knowledgeable advisor that would support and guide the college through its journey as it reinvented its information technology systems.

The Tambellini team for Seneca included Vicki Tambellini and a seasoned legal advisor, with the combined experience of more than 45 years in the software and technology industry, with a focus on higher education and public sector markets. Their mission was to provide guidance for information technology, procurement, vendor representatives, and senior management officials.

In the year that followed, Tambellini helped Seneca by providing up-to-date proprietary market data on IT service providers and trends in higher education technology investment decision making. As Seneca moved forward with its RFP and selection process, Tambellini assessed RFP responses from finalists, identified questions and issues to be addressed, and reviewed legal and business requirements.

Tambellini evaluated the selected vendor's proposed agreement terms and conditions, and worked closely



with Seneca College legal counsel to achieve the best possible outcomes. In addition, Tambellini reviewed the budget and financial plan to provide insights on payment schedules and strategies to ensure the agreements were realistic and met Seneca's needs.



THE BENEFITS

The final agreements provided Seneca with solid business understandings and a sound contract vehicle to effectively manage the project.

Working with Tambellini, Seneca's projected savings over the first five years of the project totaled nearly four million dollars, and project risks were significantly reduced. The operational savings from implementing a modern solution added to the overall benefit.

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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**
 - Campus-wide (SIS, HCM, Finance, iPaaS, LMS, IAM, CRM, BI)
 - Departmental-specific (Recruitment/Admissions, Grants Management, Financial Aid, Career Services, Alumni/Advancement/Fundraising)

DELIVERS PERSONALIZED MARKET ANALYSIS

- **Provides expert services for institutions of all sizes**—affordable for all higher education institutions, access to custom services, comparative data for peer institutions of like size and type
- **Addresses real-time needs**—delivers time to value; supports fact-based decisions, strategic planning, and transparency between institutions and solution providers

PROVIDES UNPARALLELED SYNERGIES

- **Direct access** to higher education analysts/experts
- **Incomparable research** and information ecosystem (supported by a database of 60,000+ data points)
- **Industry experience** and insight (incl. peer-to-peer networking)

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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 Seneca College.

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