

SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY

Santa Clara University Connects to Workday to Visualize Historical Student Data

Workday reports within any tool

Santa Clara University can now connect to Workday data from the analytics platforms they choose, allowing for flexible, robust reporting.

Historical trends unearthed

CData helps Santa Clara pull Workday data to understand trends related to student enrollment, retention rates, and more over months and years.

Customizable analytics views

CData allows Santa Clara to create and save custom views of their Workday data in Tableau, allowing the flexibility to continuously innovate.



Santa Clara University relies on CData to access Workday data in their preferred reporting platforms to better understand historical program trends and improve student engagement.

Company

Santa Clara University

Industry

Education

Country

United States

Product

CData Drivers

Snapshot

Santa Clara University gains deeper insights into student and enrollment activity using the CData Workday ODBC Driver to connect to Tableau, R/Rstudio, WinSQL, Excel, and more.

Established in 1851, Santa Clara University is the oldest operating university in California. The prestigious institution consistently seeks out opportunities to enhance the experience for its 9,000 undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in over 50 majors and programs. To that end, they needed to understand the factors that support student success and apply continuous quality improvement.

Santa Clara recently adopted Workday to effectively manage student and program data. However, Workday's reporting capabilities didn't provide the flexibility the team needed.

When efforts to integrate Workday data with their data warehouse for reporting became too cumbersome, Santa Clara turned to CData to provide direct out-of-the-box connectivity between Workday, Tableau, and other disparate systems.

The challenge: Visualizing programmatic trends

Santa Clara's Institutional Research department traditionally used Oracle PeopleSoft to collect data on its programs and students and stored that data in a custom-built data warehouse for analysis. Recently, the university migrated from PeopleSoft to Workday in order to modernize the way they manage administration processes.

The school prioritizes data-driven reporting to understand major trends affecting admissions, enrollment, faculty, graduation and retention rates, student-faculty interactions, and more.

Conor Roycroft, Santa Clara University Director of Institutional Research, and his team are charged with analyzing historical data on how students engage with and perform in each course and when and why students might drop out of courses. They also needed to manage changes in program information as the university grows to ensure that historical data remains intact and accessible.

While Workday did deliver significant benefits, they found that the native analytics capabilities only provided a snapshot in time, rather than the type of historical reporting the research department needed.

“We realized very quickly that the built-in tools weren’t going to serve our purpose. We want to be able to build a history and discover patterns as that data builds upon itself so we can invest in quality assurance for our academic programs.”

– Conor Roycroft, Director of Institutional Research, Santa Clara University

To build the sort of reports they required, Roycroft and his colleague Stacy Connolly, Assistant Director for Data Visualization and Communications, needed a way to integrate Workday data with their database, along with other tools used for analytics, including R/ RStudio, Tableau, and WinSQL.

“Prism is relatively new, and there were too few data visualization tools that were natively available [as integrations],” said Roycroft. “So it was really a eureka moment of ‘I found it!’ when we came across CData.”

The solution: One connectivity tool to capture critical insights

Using the [CData Workday ODBC Driver](#), Roycroft and Connolly were able to connect to live and historical Workday data directly within their analytics tools. Connolly can now easily extract and share public metrics on Santa Clara’s website, automatically pull data from Workday into WinSQL and Excel, keep a detailed record of programmatic changes, create detailed Tableau reports on internal survey results, and more.

"Departments regularly review their whole program to understand how they are serving their students, and if there are opportunities for improvement," said Connolly. "And that data compiles so, while faculty are looking at two to three years of data, we're looking at larger trends over 20 or so years of data."

"It was going to be a real problem – pulling all this data out into Excel files, then having to join, manipulate, combine them. It would have been an unenviable process."

– Conor Roycroft, Director of Institutional Research,
Santa Clara University

They also combine their Workday data with metrics from the National Student Clearinghouse and other external sources to understand, among other things, whether students who leave the university transfer to another school or discontinue their education altogether.

"That's a very different kind of student than one who's leaving who doesn't enroll in another

school. Just looking at students who withdraw, for example, is insufficient," said Roycroft. "It makes it very difficult to detect the signal and the noise when you can't distinguish between those two."

The alternative to CData connectivity? Manually combining data from these different data sources into an Excel spreadsheet or Tableau dashboard and combing through it to find deeper insights.

"It was going to be a real problem," said Roycroft. "Pulling all this data out into Excel files, then having to join, manipulate, and combine them. I'm sure if anybody works in data, you know that that process is prone to error. It would have been an unenviable process."

The outcome: Customizable Workday reporting

The Santa Clara research team can now easily pull reports from Workday into multiple reporting applications for their various use cases. Understanding student and program trends across the university allows the staff to evaluate whether a program is achieving its goal, or if there are opportunities for improvement.

Roycroft and Connolly also encountered an unexpected benefit in the CData Workday Driver: Accessing saved views within Tableau.

"You can write SQL, drop it in, and it saves it as a view," said Connolly. "We can put in any sort of generic SQL statements and get them to run in Tableau. We were really excited about that."

“We could’ve pushed it upstream and have our developer build views, but then we’re locked into those views, and a particular report or analysis may require subtly different views,” said Roycroft. “[With CData] we can save particular views for particular purposes and ensure we’re getting the same kind of results each time we run the query. It’s a very useful function.”

The next step for Santa Clara University is to standardize on Tableau for all reporting across the university, and CData will help Roycroft and Connolly spearhead that effort with ease.

“We want to be able to look at the university through a data lens, and we need CData for that.”

– Conor Roycroft, Director of Institutional Research, Santa Clara University

CData helps you work better with Workday

[CData Workday Drivers](#) are built to easily integrate Workday data with your favorite tools – whether that’s Tableau, Microsoft Power BI, Looker, Amazon QuickSight, or any other analytics platform. CData offers over 300 connections to the applications your business uses every day.

Need more than one driver? Want the flexibility of connecting in the cloud? CData Connect Cloud bundles all the drivers you need to connect your cloud data, all within one cloud-based virtualized interface.

[Download a free trial today.](#)



CData Software is the real-time data connectivity company. Our connectivity solutions provide easy access to live data from hundreds of on-premises and cloud applications. Consumable by any user, accessible within any application, and built for all enterprises, CData is redefining data-driven business.