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CASE STUDY:

University of the Basque Country creates new online presence to guide tomorrow's digital students

eman ta zabal zazu

UPV   EHU

Ricoh helps University of the Basque Country to optimise and manage more than 500 web sites, cutting costs and hugely enhancing the student and staff experience.

COMPANY & CHALLENGE

One of the 400 best universities in the world according to the Academic Ranking of World Universities, The University of the Basque Country – officially known as Universidad del País Vasco/Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea (UPV/EHU) – offers 103 undergraduate and 108 master's degrees in its 20 faculties and schools, and enrols some 48,000 students annually. Supported by around 3,500 academic staff, the University incorporates many historic institutions, including faculties for economics, medicine, science, engineering, and business.

Founded in 1980, UPV/EHU is committed to sharing and extending knowledge, internationally and focusing on close ties to Basque culture. The University's history reaches back to 1886, and over the years many institutions have joined the extended network of thirty centres of excellence.

The central UPV/EHU corporate website, based on Liferay Enterprise Portal Manager, supports about 500 sites hosting thousands of pages, driven by constant delivery of new content. Prospective and current students, staff and administrators rely on the site, which has become essential for communications, collaboration, and course interactions.

Naturally, over the years UPV/EHU has revised the site appearance and information architecture, and connected multiple back-office applications for enrolment, finance, human resources and more. Multiple stakeholders contribute content on a daily basis; for example, calendars and activities are continuously revised, with specific publication deadlines to ensure students and staff are fully updated.

In 2020, when Liferay chose to end support for earlier product versions, the UPV/EHU team considered the challenges and opportunities of upgrading the platform, which now supported a very large, complex set of sites, pages, and solutions.

Iñaki Ortega Bergara, Production Manager, elaborates: "Migration would enable us to upgrade and enhance our on-premises infrastructure, optimise our site administration and content management, and improve our responsiveness to the academic community. Site changes would affect and involve almost every department in the university, and we wanted to ensure that they could continue to manage, update and create pages without interruption."

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> Essentially we wanted to combine the Liferay technical leap with wide-ranging improvement projects, while business-as-usual continued. We looked for a partner with deep Liferay experience and full understanding of UPV/EHU, able to commit to what could be a complex project.
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> *Iñaki Ortega Bergara, Production Manager, University of the Basque Country*
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"We selected Ricoh IT Services based on its proven capabilities in infrastructure, applications development, system integrations, and customer experience"

Iñaki Ortega Bergara

SOLUTION

For many years, UPV/EHU retained Ricoh to provide print, scan, network, and IT infrastructure services. Based on the strength of this relationship and on successful Liferay projects with other universities, UPV/EHU selected Ricoh IT Services – a Liferay Platinum Partner in Spain – for its web migration programme.

UPV/EHU ran its existing sites on Liferay Enterprise Portal Manager 6.2, using on-premises production, test, and development servers. For the migration, the University chose to move straight to Liferay Enterprise Portal Manager DXP. Iñaki Ortega Bergara comments, "We selected Ricoh IT services based on its proven capabilities in infrastructure, applications development, system integrations, and customer experience – which also gave us confidence to move straight to Liferay DXP."

Alongside the technical upgrade to Liferay Enterprise Portal Manager DXP, objectives included redesigns to improve the look and feel, and to enhance the user experience. To enable this, site management would include consistent style and corporate image for all the sites, with accessibility compliance, governance, and multi-language support.

Working with Ricoh, the UPV/EHU team created three related workstreams around the core home site, the sites for the independent schools and faculties, and the shared services for news, events, calendars, and interactivity. For each portal, the team defined the scope, delivery date and cost, supported by detailed plans listing stakeholders such as content editors and site administrators. To ensure the broadest possible access for all users, Ricoh and UPV/EHU defined and drafted inclusive language, adopted the latest Web Content Accessibility Guidelines for all content, and enabled standardised information quality criteria that enhance site search and SEO rankings.

The migration project was completed over 22 months of uninterrupted work. The project team migrated the contents of 408 web portals, including more than 38,493 html pages. Some 102,117 attachments were processed, and obsolete or duplicate content was eliminated, cut by 77% to just 23,437 items used in production. Additionally, editorial reviews were completed on all pages, rephrasing for clarity and inclusive language.

During the migration, the UPV/EHU team and Ricoh consolidated and, where appropriate, created new portals, resulting in a total of 521 sites running on Liferay Enterprise Portal Manager DXP. Ricoh provided in-depth training to help

> ## The new solution helps us to establish a shared look and feel for all our sites while preserving local control. Working with Ricoh establishes us as a beacon of digital excellence in the education sector.
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> *Iñaki Ortega Bergara, Production Manager,*
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> *University of the Basque Country*

UPV/EHU transfer easily and quickly to the new Liferay solution, delivering 76 courses in the three Campuses to 537 content editors (49 courses) and 253 portal administrators (25 courses).

As Iñaki Ortega Bergara remarks, "We are aware of the internal complexity of our organisation, and Ricoh has been able to manage all communications and collaboration between the areas involved and achieve what other suppliers would struggle to carry out. Ricoh is a Liferay Enterprise Portal Manager Platinum Partner, and enabled UPV/EHU to complete this technological migration very successfully. "

BENEFITS

At the conclusion of the project, UPV/EHU benefits from a significantly streamlined web service. For example, 11 on-premises production servers were shut down, and additional pre-production and development servers were retired, all reducing the management and administration workload,

generating valuable time and cost savings. Importantly, the redesigned solution architecture allows content producers to share, use and re-use assets, greatly reducing management complexity and helping to establish a consistent look and feel for all UPV/EHU sites. Similarly, content producers can launch new assets and update pages rapidly, ensuring students and other staff are kept fully abreast of news and changing course materials.

Iñaki Ortega Bergara concludes, "The new solution helps us to establish a shared look and feel for all our sites while preserving local control. For example, marketing teams can update, preview, and publish content, re-using shared assets and content very easily. Working with Ricoh establishes UPV/EHU as a beacon of digital excellence in the education sector."

ABOUT RICOH

Ricoh offers innovative services and solutions for the digital workplace, enabling people and companies to use smart working more widely. For 85 years, Ricoh has helped to transform workplaces with document management solutions, IT services, communication services, commercial and industrial printing, digital cameras and industrial products.

Headquartered in Tokyo, Ricoh operates in more than 200 countries. In the financial year ending March 2020, the company had global sales of $19.06 billion.

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