

Catholic Education Northern Territory helps bridge the gap for remote schools, with Civica Education Suite



Five remote schools deploy CES in just thirty five days

It almost goes without saying that digitisation is transforming the education sector. Featuring some of the most remote regions in Australia, the Northern Territory represents significant physical barriers that need to be overcome in order to achieve full digitisation within schools. Aiming to provide best-in-class, online school administration tools to the region's Catholic schools, Catholic Education Northern Territory (CENT) has migrated to a new web-based software system developed by Civica, the Civica Education Suite (CES).

The CES is a web based and modular software solution, which includes an intuitive and powerful school management system. Five Catholic schools located in remote communities of the Northern Territory are now using the centrally managed system, with teachers recording daily attendance and student welfare information within it.

Prior to CENT's use of CES, the diocese had been using a Civica school administration system called Maze for 20 years to manage its daily administration processes.

35 days

Civica Education Suite deployed to 5 remote schools in the NT

"The migration at CENT is the fourth jurisdiction or diocese-wide project that we've undertaken in Australia. The expertise of the CENT staff, combined with our established migration process is a testament of our ability to migrate groups of schools efficiently and effectively. It is especially rewarding for us with the knowledge that we are able to play a small part in the ongoing success of schools located in some of the most remote areas in the whole of Australia, where delivering technology is an acknowledged challenge."

Simon Jones
Managing Director
Civica Libraries & Education

The migration process

Before choosing to implement the new solution, staff at CENT visited Civica's Perth Office and some of the schools already using CES. They analysed the functionality that their systemic schools used Maze for, and assessed these tasks against the new software to ensure that there was functional coverage in the new application. Finally, CENT reviewed its own schools to assess which would benefit the most from the new system.

Thirty five days later on 11 July, all five of their remote schools migrated from Maze to the new CES software. The process involved cleaning up each of the school's previous databases, and migrating data onto a new single database. There was also additional software development to adapt to CENT needs, training sessions, and network management tasks completed.

"Changing a business critical software application, such as your school administration system is a significant move for any educational establishment. We were fortunate that we had already made the move to a centrally hosted environment and my IT team had in-depth expertise in our school administration processes, enabling them to thoroughly test and review the software prior to rollout. This experience was relied upon when it came to releasing and deploying the software and I am very pleased to have achieved so much in such a short period of time," said Jeremy Howley, Manager Research and Development, Information Technology for the Catholic Education Northern Territory.

Person centric, web-based design

According to Howley, the key reasons for choosing the CES were due to its ease of use, person-centric design and web accessibility.

"The new system is very easy for end users to use, and it is available on multiple devices and has the capability to communicate with teachers, students and parents. There's no need for software on the end user's computer, so our teachers and school administrators can access the system from any internet enabled device. Being able to mark rolls electronically and manage school activities through the web-based platform has made our teachers' and administrators' jobs much easier," said Howley.

Centralised system

The new system is focused on the person record, so school and central office administrators can target services on the student and family regardless of which school or schools they attend. This also enables schools to share or transfer student records between each other (under agreed protocols), which is necessary when a student has a relationship with multiple schools or has moved schools.

"We were looking for a modern web-based enterprise application, as we look after multiple schools right across the Northern Territory. It was very important for us to have a system that was user friendly and featured a single database that was able to simplify security, reporting, data warehouse integration and system administration for our school system."

Jeremy Howley
Manager Research and Development
Catholic Education Northern Territory

The remaining 12 schools that CENT represents are scheduled to implement CES by end of 2017.

Outcomes

- ▶ **New, easy to use system focused on a central person record which enables schools to easily transfer student records between schools**
- ▶ **A single database which has simplified security, reporting, data warehouse integration and system administration**
- ▶ **Web based and available on multiple devices with capability to communicate with teachers, students and parents**