



Case Study:  
**POLK STATE COLLEGE**

**Learning about Business Intelligence**  
Hands-On in the Classroom

As a result of this project, Polk State College graduates were able to move directly into the workforce with not just a theory-based knowledge of business intelligence software, but also experience using the software.

**Quick Facts:**

**Organization:** Polk State College

**Students:** 11,500

**Industry:** Education

**Solution:** Diver Platform

**Location:** Polk County, FL

**Website:** www.polk.edu

**Customer since:** 2010

Polk State College, a college of about 11,500 students, is located in central Florida, between Orlando and Tampa. It offers a bachelor's degree in business and management, and there are five concentrations in that program.

The goal of the Business Information Technology degree concentration is to provide students with hands-on knowledge and training to prepare them for a career in information technology. Four primary objectives that all business information technology program graduates should be able to achieve are:

- To serve as a liaison between the information technology and business divisions of a company
- To apply an understanding of the business process in order to gather, perform, analyze, and submit information to support business objectives
- To determine how information technology can support managerial decision-making and problem-solving
- To be able to formulate effective business intelligence data models and design system solutions, and integrate them into a sustainable business model

An advisory board made up of local community business leaders meets with members of the college to provide input on curriculum, best practices, and current trends and issues in the IT industry. One advisory board member used Dimensional Insight's Diver Platform™ (Diver®) for several years at Florida's Natural Growers and recommended it to the school as a way for students to be exposed to business intelligence in the classroom.

Following that recommendation, Polk State College formed an educational partnership with Dimensional Insight to provide students with hands-on experience in data mining and using business intelligence software. This type of partnership, that engages students in the use of real-world industry products, is consistent with Polk State's mission of preparing students for the workforce.

## INCORPORATING DIVER INTO THE CURRICULUM

Dimensional Insight provided training to administrators and instructors in the use of Diver and how to incorporate it into their classes. Dimensional Insight provided training manuals and set up modules using a data set that Florida's Natural provided for the project.

Dimensional Insight provided students with ProDiver, an interface that allows analysts to dive down into data to make more informed business decisions. It also provided the school with NetDiver, an online interface that would let Polk State College provide its off-campus and hybrid students with a way to access the analytics.

Students in the senior-level course, Management Information Systems, were the first to be introduced to Diver in Spring 2013. Their project consisted of four parts, with each part exposing them to different parts of Diver.

The first part of the project included an explanation of NetDiver. Students were provided with resources from Dimensional Insight including a glossary of terms and definitions and a NetDiver tutorial. The first two chapters of the tutorial walked students through different scenarios using sample data to help them become familiar with the program. Because the students were on a short timeline, each part of the project included screenshots of instructions to help the students learn how to use NetDiver as quickly as possible.

Each student was assigned a unique task so learning outcomes were different for everyone. This assured instructors that students were actually learning the software on their own. The project culminated in a business case scenario, in which students had to apply the information gathered in the previous parts of the project to develop an answer for the business case. This answer was presented in a graph to visually display the result in a report.

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Using Dimensional Insight has been so valuable in the classroom that the college, which is currently using Diver in two classes, started using Diver in two additional courses in Fall 2016.

## MOVING FORWARD

Polk State College worked closely with Dimensional Insight throughout the project. After experiencing some hosting issues at the college, Dimensional Insight stepped in to host the data. Polk State learned it was important to have all parties, including Dimensional Insight, the Polk State IT Department, and the instructors, meet at the very start of the project to have a collective understanding of the complexity and scope of the technological undertaking.

As a result of this project, Polk State College graduates were able to move directly into the workforce with not just a theory-based knowledge of business intelligence software, but also experience using the software. The college also found it helpful to set up policies and procedures, with input from everyone involved with the technology, so that everyone understood processes and

responsibilities, as well as how to revise the same. One example of the importance of flexible procedures involved administrative rights. Originally, a support person set up all accounts in NetDiver, but as instructors experienced the program and students moved in and out of classes, they determined it would be more valuable for the instructors to have administrative rights to add users themselves, and the change was made immediately.

Polk State College is continually assessing its classes to ensure that they are meeting program objectives. Using Dimensional Insight has been so valuable in the classroom that the college, which is currently using Diver in two classes, started using Diver in two additional courses—Healthcare Administration Informatics and Data Warehousing Design and Creation—in Fall 2016.



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## About Dimensional Insight

Dimensional Insight is the leading provider of integrated business intelligence and performance management solutions. Our mission is to make organizational data accessible and usable so everyone from analysts to line of business users can get the information they need to make an informed, data-driven decision.



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