



San Juan College

Steve Miller is Assistant Controller at San Juan College of New Mexico, located in the “four corners” region of the state. Although relatively new to San Juan College, Steve’s 12-plus years of experience in higher education finance gives him a robust understanding of the budgeting challenges that colleges are facing today.

San Juan College had been using an ERP and Excel for its budgeting process and was dissatisfied with the results. Budget officers were often unable to get their budget spreadsheets completed or returned on time, and the ERP system was tricky for non-financial people who didn’t use it often enough to understand or retain its intricacies. Steve explains how personnel changes added to the confusion and became the tipping point for moving to a new, cloud-based budgeting system:

“It’s hard for a new staff member to pick up what somebody else has created and try to move forward with it. These personnel changes kind of forced us into finding a better solution – one that was user-friendly and was able to give us all the information that we needed in order to compile the final budget and get it back into our ERP system.”

Steve says that their new cloud-based system is already paying off. He tells the story of how it has allowed them to use their budget money more effectively:

“Previously, our adjunct budget money pool of funds was divided up at the department levels. Every year it was either, ‘Well, yes, we need the same amount,’ or, ‘We want more.’ But we weren’t really able to look at whether that department actually needed the budget for adjuncts, for example, or overloads. It was simply based on historical allocation.”

San Juan College’s new budgeting system has given them the tools to explore those previously hidden details.

“We’ve been able to take the process out of the department levels and move it higher up to the VP level, where they can dole it out according to actual need. The system gives us a way to pull it all together and better utilize those funds where they are needed at the time, as opposed to just based on historical information.”