

Making the faculty and academia even smarter at Boston University

SnapLogic's self-service integration platform automates admissions processes and solves identity authentication challenge

Boston University Backstory

Founded in 1839, Boston University is one of the largest private universities in the United States. The university is also one of the largest private employers in Boston and has over 34,000 enrolled students.

Company Overview

Headquarters: Boston, MA
Industry: Education
Students: 34,000+
Annual Endowment: \$1.96 billion

Challenges

- Required ongoing maintenance to support technology integration efforts
- Hindered decision-making by limiting access to information

Results

- ✓ Automated processes giving people access to information, research, and facilities
- ✓ Automated financial aid and admissions processes
- ✓ Eliminated manually coded integrations with clicks-not-code approach

Benefits

- ✓ Faster, trouble-free student application processing
- ✓ A seamless identity and access management process
- ✓ Improvements to information, research quality, and physical security
- ✓ Connected applications and performed data migration 2X faster

Integrations Connected

AWS - OnBase - Oracle - REST - Salesforce.com - SAP - SAP HANA - SOAP

The Challenge

As a leader in academia, Boston University (BU) believes higher education should be accessible to all. Unfortunately, challenges with the University's data architecture presented hurdles to students, faculty, and professional staff getting the resources and information they needed. The University relied heavily on the IT department to connect systems and automate processes like research operations, class scheduling, financial processes, building access, and others.

For example, BU's systems lagged when processing admissions and financial aid applications, which, in turn, caused delays in giving admissions decisions to prospective students. In some cases, students had to resubmit their applications.

In addition to needing a faster, more reliable admissions process, faculty and staff needed a better identity management system. Specifically, authorized personnel needed an easier way to access research laboratories.

One of the main problems with the University's data architecture lay in its approach to data integration. IT used a mix of homegrown ETL tools built out of Java and Pearl as well as a legacy data integration tool. They also created elaborate workarounds on the mainframes to complete integration tasks. These approaches required continuous manual support and maintenance. Despite having ETL and data integration tools, IT had to submit support tickets to their data integration vendor and manually write/rewrite code to fulfill integration requests whenever the data source code had to be changed.

"We wrote code whenever there was a need to connect two or more applications or move files from one database to another," said Carmine A. Granucci, Associate Director, Integration at Boston University. "We'd have a multistep process, and sometimes the data would appear empty or incomplete."

The Solution

Granucci and his team began evaluating different approaches to building integrations, migrating data to new cloud applications, and retiring legacy systems. Granucci wanted a standard integration approach for all the IT departments across the university with the help of an integration platform-as-a-service (iPaaS). His goal was to select an iPaaS that did not require hiring additional employees.

“We selected SnapLogic as our iPaaS because it enabled us to build codeless integrations and automate processes twice as fast as before by simply dragging and dropping Snaps together,” said Granucci. “We are now able to build and execute an integration within minutes.”

Once SnapLogic was deployed, IT optimized the application submission process for the Admissions and Financial Aid offices. Now, when a prospective student submits an application, the student information system automatically generates a new record for each application in Salesforce.com, the university’s internal applications portal. The Admissions and Financial Aid offices can now review applications within the expected timeframe.

Granucci’s team also helped the research and operations departments with identity management. By using the SnapLogic LDAP Snap and exposing REST API calls, IT automated the process of giving authorized students, faculty, and staff access to secure information systems, facilities, and research laboratories. Also, IT helped the university’s Animal Science Center to grant authorized people access to its training and procedures, thus minimizing errors in research.



“ SnapLogic enabled us to reduce our time to connect applications and move large volumes of data by half!

Carmine A. Granucci

Assistant Director Integration, Boston University

Business Outcomes

Boston University now has a single source of truth with the SnapLogic Enterprise Integration Cloud. As a result, BU has optimized their programs’ outcomes and enabled students to gain knowledge without disruptions. With SnapLogic as the integration standard, the IT team has eliminated siloed IT groups in the university while providing rapid integration support to the multiple departments and campus organizations. Through IT’s support, students, faculty, and staff are empowered to build and share knowledge across academia and research.

“SnapLogic has helped us become the relationship builders between groups on campus where we are a trusted party,” said Granucci. “We are pushing the limits with SnapLogic to help Boston University make an impact in the lives of its students and in the community.”