

Arcadia University: Building a Culture of Data-Informed Improvement

Strengthening Decision-Making Through Aligned
Assessment and Planning



University Uses Tech to Turn Plans into Progress

Arcadia University, a private institution in Glenside, Pennsylvania, was seeking a tool to help increase impact with their strategic plan, foster collaboration, facilitate decision-making, and create a culture of data-informed improvement.

“When Arcadia started its strategic process, we knew that we didn’t want it to be traditional,” said Rashmi Radhakrishnan, Vice President, Enrollment Management, Technology & Innovation/CIO, Arcadia University. “We wanted it to be highly adaptive, and it has served us well. Part of the initiative was also a digital transformation effort. We knew that whatever technology we would invest in had to be sustainable.”

Enabling Data-Informed Improvement

Arcadia settled on Nuventive’s technology solutions and services, enabling institutions and higher education individuals to plan more consistently, collaborate more effectively, make smarter decisions, and create a culture of data-informed, goal-aligned improvement.

“There’s no doubt there are many ways we could have built a data-informed culture, but Nuventive has really helped us leapfrog this transformation,” said Ajay Nair, Ph.D., President, Arcadia University. “Having a single source of data that the community agrees upon is powerful because it democratizes information, builds confidence, trust, and transparency, and helps the organization row in the same direction at every level of shared governance. This data-informed culture has brought transparency because our conversations are now founded on data.”

Arcadia is invested in the Microsoft stack, so it made sense to go with a system based on Microsoft technology. Nuventive’s ability to integrate with pre-existing dashboards and data was a significant selling point.

“The ability to see the dashboards and have your goals and objectives in the same line of sight is really helpful and people like that,” said Bridget Miller, Ed.D., Assistant Vice President for Institutional Research and Effectiveness, Arcadia University.

Customer Profile

Arcadia University is a private institution in Glenside, Pennsylvania, serving more than 3,600 undergraduate and graduate students. Known for its values-based education and global emphasis, Arcadia consistently ranks number one nationally for undergraduate study abroad participation. The university offers more than 75 academic programs in the liberal arts, sciences, health sciences, business, education, and professional fields, with small classes and strong faculty mentorship. Recent data shows 97 percent of graduates are employed, in service, or continuing their education within six to nine months of graduation.

Opportunity

Arcadia University sought to strengthen assessment and planning across academic and administrative units while fostering a culture of improvement.

The Nuventive Improvement Platform offered a flexible, unified system that aligned diverse initiatives, simplified reporting, and used data to inform actionable insights for institutional decision-making.

Informing Decision-Making

Arcadia is using Nuventive to inform decision-making in support of initiatives like strategic planning, student retention, graduation rates, and learning outcomes. The solution makes it easy to aggregate data, organize it by purpose rather than source, and make it accessible at the moment it is needed.

Nuventive Adapts to Unique Institutional Plans

According to Miller, "Arcadia needed a platform to assist with planning, assessment, and reporting for our approved adaptive strategy. We had just finished our self-study for the Middle States Commission on Higher Education's eight-year review of accredited institutions. Arcadia needed a system to access relevant data for compliance and regulatory requirements. Nuventive hit the criteria in terms of its ability to be flexible, accessible, and to grow with the university's needs."

She added, "We also wanted something that was more ours. We didn't want to take our adaptive strategy, our institutional assessment plan, operational plans, or student learning plans and adapt them to a tool. Instead, we wanted a partner that could adapt the tool to how assessment, planning, and transparency were evolving at Arcadia. Nuventive provided options that allowed us to build the solution we needed."

A Single Source of Truth for Adaptive Planning

Nuventive's solution has proved itself to be a single source of truth for Arcadia's adaptive strategy tracking and progress, reducing data duplication. All operational units and academic programs are on the system, creating a holistic view across the organization. This helps assess whether the initiatives of operational units and academic programs support the progress and ultimate success of the university's adaptive strategy.

About Nuventive

Nuventive enables higher education institutions to turn their plans into progress through the better use of information. Its cloud-based platform brings business process and information together to support any improvement initiative, including overall strategy, accreditation, student success, learning outcomes, general education, sustainability, administrative outcomes, and program review.

Nuventive is headquartered in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.



Key Benefits

- + Unified academic and administrative units in a single, consistent platform.
 - + Turned assessment data into actionable insights for leadership decisions.
 - + Reduced reporting burdens and freed faculty/staff to focus on improvement.
 - + Flexible enough to include non-traditional units and diverse initiatives.
 - + Helped foster a culture of continuous improvement across the institution.
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"For the first time – and this is what's most exciting to me as a president – we have a story to share that's grounded in data. We've become more effective storytellers."

- Ajay Nair, Ph.D, President,
Arcadia University

"One of the great capabilities in Nuventive is that we can use that right pane based on permissions. Each instance is built specifically for that institution so you really can get whatever you want."

- Bridget Miller, Ed.D., Assistant
Vice President for Institutional
Research and Effectiveness,
Arcadia University