

# Better planning, budgeting, analysis and growth with Unit4



## FH Campus Wien



Since 2013, Austria's largest university of applied sciences has been working with Unit4 FP&A to create a solution that smartly integrates finances, planning and analysis. Giving their team a single source of truth. And according to CFO Horst Rode: **"We've achieved all our goals."**

FH Campus Wien switched to Unit4 Financial Planning & Analysis (FP&A) in 2013. Before that, they worked with an Excel-based system dominated by data silos and uncertainty. Since the change, their institution has been growing fast.

The main benefits:

- Intuitive, flexible and easy-to-use software
- Faster creation of the overall budget
- Single source of truth
- All relevant KPIs available at a glance
- Shorter decision-making processes
- Faster insights for strategic planning

### **"With Unit4, we've chosen flexibility."**

When Horst Rode took over as CFO and Managing Director of FH Campus Wien in 2013, he had a clear vision: adapting finances, planning and strategic development to the competitive environment, introducing a modern solution and setting the institution up for growth.

To accomplish these objectives, they needed a clean break from what came before. With around 4,000 students in 2012/2013 (today: approx. 7,000 students), increasingly complex processes and rising costs, the previous systems' shortcomings became more apparent. The university of applied sciences managed its finances using an Excel-based system and had to deal with data silos, slow processes and a lack of data security.

CFO Horst Rode remembers:

"At that time, our existing system didn't get us anywhere. The budget managers for each degree program transferred the figures from our accounting system into Excel spreadsheets, but due to our rapid growth, the processes became

#### Industry

Higher Education

#### Location

Vienna, Austria

#### Size

7,000 students, 600 employees, turnover of €60m, largest university of applied sciences in Austria

#### Product

Unit4 Financial Planning & Analysis (Unit4 FP&A)

#### Challenges

- Replacing an existing Excel-based system dominated by data silos, inflexible processes and a lack of data security with a single reliable point of truth.
- Planning and managing the institution's rapid growth, securing its leading position within the industry.

#### Impacts

**75%**

Managing 75% more students since 2013, using the same resources.

**0**

Due to the software's usability and intuitive handling there's been no need for extensive training.

For further information, go to:

[unit4.com](http://unit4.com)

## “We deliberately chose a flexible and adaptable tool that doesn’t restrict us in any way. Unit4 FP&A is our single source of truth.”

### Horst Rode

CFO and Managing Director, FH Campus Wien

increasingly complex. With 5 to 8 spreadsheets for each degree program, our Excel folder alone contained about 300 sheets that we had to process for overall budgeting”.

There was no way of ensuring that all data was correct and that no errors occurred when transferring or editing figures.

Therefore, FH Campus Wien was looking for a solution capable of automatically importing actual data from the previous systems and allowing precise, transparent planning. The system had to be easily customizable to the institution’s specific requirements to standardize the budgeting processes and offer intuitive, user-friendly handling.

**Horst Rode:** “After a brief selection process, we found Unit4 FP&A (note: known as “Prevero” at the time). What impressed us then, and still does today, was the fact that the solution is capable of evolving in line with our situation. We deliberately chose a tool that doesn’t limit us in any way but is highly scalable and, therefore, future-proof. The system is our single source of truth. Due to Unit4’s flexibility and the possibility to integrate different data sources, we all get the same clear and consistent picture. Ultimately, it’s all about key figures, about linking financial and quantitative KPIs. We’re also much better prepared to make fast strategic decisions. We’ve made a huge step forward in the past seven years.”

### “Growth is our biggest issue”

The education sector’s market environment has changed considerably over the last 10 years, and competition has become fiercer.

**Horst Rode:** “Just 20 years ago, we had one degree program and 30 students. Today, growth is our biggest issue. If

we plan intelligently, we benefit from economies of scale. And if we scale, we’re doing well. In other words: higher throughput rates, more students, more processes – and all that with reasonable personnel resources.

The number of employees involved in planning and resource allocation is still the same today as it was 7 years ago, even though we have considerably more students, more degree programs and more organizational units.”

With Unit4’s self-service approach, budget managers can carry out their planning, analysis and reporting more efficiently based on reliable data. They get detailed insights fast. And the central finance and accounting department can quickly generate the overall budget. While plans, reports and analysis can be created in just a few steps.

**Horst Rode says:** “The solution retrieves the actual figures from our accounting software. It can be customized and offers many modular functions with which we can gradually expand the scope of application. We use it for activities such as cost center accounting and cost allocations. In addition, it provides us with a comprehensive reporting tool, a broad range of analysis functions and an integrated database solution.”

### “I’m not a fan of extensive training requirements”

FH Campus Wien made sure that the solution would provide a very high level of user-friendliness right from the start of the selection process. After all, it’s not only the budget managers who enter figures but also their representatives (e.g. assistants). Unit4 FP&A is currently used by about 100 people. Horst Rode deliberately distinguishes between three power users and other, non-frequent users.

The latter use the system only occasionally, for example, to plan their own budgets.

**Horst Rode:** “Some of the non-frequent users only use the system once a year to plan their budget.

Nevertheless, they don’t have any problems or issues. This is not a given for people who only use a system sporadically. But it works.”

User acceptance is extremely high.

**Horst Rode:** “We’ve registered a very high level of satisfaction among our users. We don’t need any additional training. It is important that everyone can find their way around the system immediately. The smooth transition to the new system was a great success and continues to work very well. We also benefit from the fact that we can make changes very quickly and easily. Acceptance is a great advantage in our situation, as is scalability. With Unit4, we are doing very well in this respect.”

### “Unit4 ensures a secure future for us”

A target/actual comparison is created monthly now. Before Unit4 FP&A, this was only possible once a quarter. Over the years, additional divisions and modules were added.

**Horst Rode:** “In addition to financial controlling and accounting, we’ve added a research service to manage funded projects, and now we’ve also included strategic project performance management and project administration. For me, the biggest advantages of Unit4 FP&A are its high usability, the fast creation of budgets, the reliable database, the short decision processes as well as the fact that we have all important key figures available at a glance and get new insights for strategic considerations in real-time. Unit4 ensures a secure future for us.”