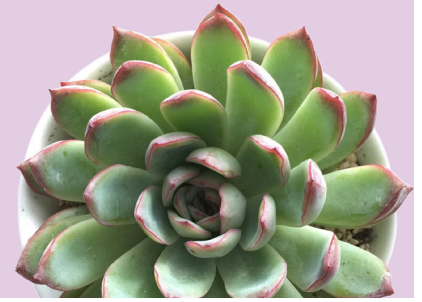


The NWMO builds for the future with Unit4



Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO)



An agile, adaptive, and intuitive Unit4 Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) platform is spearheading the NWMO’s plan for long-term strategic growth.

A single, shared version of the truth across finance, HR, procurement, and other services is modernizing the NWMO, enabling it to pivot at speed and adapt to the intergenerational changes in the management of spent nuclear fuel.

Key benefits include:

- Seamless scalability in response to upcoming nuclear fuel management growth
- Streamlined financial management: year-end close time reduced from one month to two days
- Redeployment of two finance staff to other, higher value tasks

Preparing for tomorrow’s challenges

The NWMO is responsible for implementing Canada’s plan for the safe, long-term management of used nuclear fuel. The plan, known as Adaptive Phased Management (APM), requires used fuel to be contained and isolated in a deep geological repository.

The NWMO is ready for the challenges of tomorrow. The care of Canada’s used nuclear fuel is an intergenerational project, with site selection anticipated by 2023. Following this, work will begin with the host communities to implement partnership agreements, develop the Centre of Expertise, finalize the safety case, and prepare for the regulatory processes prior to construction and operations.

The NWMO is now modernizing for this next phase of growth. As the APM plan scales, more people will be recruited, more and more projects will be initiated, contracts will be developed, and rigorous finance visibility and control will become more important than ever. To this end, the Organization needed to move away from manual, paper-based processes that supported earlier operations towards agile and adaptive systems geared to managing growth.

“As we enter our new chapter of growth, we need to create a better way to work, replacing manual processes with adaptive, self-service systems that deliver better regulatory oversight,” explains Jennifer Noronha, Strategic Initiative Director. “By innovating modern operational processes, the NWMO’s Centralized Services function will be positioned to deliver significant additional value to our organization.”

Industry
Nonprofit

Location
Toronto, Canada


Size
Over 200 employees

Product
Unit4 Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)

Challenges

Support the NWMO as it moves to its next phase of growth, eliminate manual processes, and create greater agility.

Key metrics



Year-end close time significantly reduced

Pivot at speed

Increased agility and adaptiveness

“Unit4 is absolutely essential to the NWMO’s future growth. It enables our organization to standardize operational processes, boost people satisfaction, and forecast future change. I don’t know where we would be without Unit4.”

Jennifer Noronha

Strategic Initiative Director, NWMO

Six partners were shortlisted to deliver an agile, unified ERP system. “The Unit4 team very quickly understood our business and technical goals. We were all talking the same language,” says Jennifer. “This expert knowledge, coupled with the proven functionality of the connected finance and HR platform, made Unit4 the ideal partner to support the NWMO into the future.”

One version of the truth across finance and HR

In the first phase, the NWMO deployed the Unit4 Core Finance, Project Planning, and Procurement modules. This was followed in Phase two by Core HR and Payroll. The system frees staff from mundane, everyday tasks, enabling them to be more productive and focus on strategic tasks. “We now have one version of the truth across finance and HR,” Jennifer explains. “By connecting data, the NWMO is building a foundation for future growth.”

In finance, for example, the NWMO now has real-time visibility and control over every stage of the record-to-report cycle, while simultaneously streamlining budget planning and analysis. By automating the finance process, the NWMO has been able to reduce the time needed to process the year end from one month to two days. This subsequently enabled the Organization to redeploy two staff to other, higher value tasks.

Jennifer cites an example of the difference Unit4 is making. “Our staff travel a lot, engaging with the many communities, groups, and people

interested in learning more about our project. In the past, they completed and submitted a paper-based expense report to finance. Our team then needed to manually review the expenses and manage approvals. Now, with Unit4, staff simply take a photo of their expenses, upload them to the portal, and automated workflow takes care of the approvals and payment. Managers can approve the claim through the app.”

Purchasing is being similarly transformed. Jennifer continues, “A director may have as many as 50 contracts under management — an impossible volume to manage manually. Using the Unit4 centralized, data-driven solution, that person now has complete visibility into contracts and budgets. They can use that control to negotiate better terms and pricing, speed up approvals, and understand how much budget is left over.

The single, integrated view is also helping to tighten alignment across the NWMO. “As the NWMO grows, it’s important we are all focused on common goals and talk the same language. Thanks to Unit4, we all share the same view of the data. It’s accurate, timely, and available to everyone — even if they’re working in a remote region of Canada. We no longer waste time on low-grade, manual tasks or chasing approvals. It’s all automated,” she says.

This modern way of working proved particularly useful during the Covid-19 pandemic. Staff were able to access systems while working from home, ensuring minimal interruption to operations.

As the locations for the safe, long-term management of used nuclear fuel are evaluated and the NWMO expands, it will look at opportunities to further automate routine and evaluate business intelligence, data analytics, and better data control architecture.

Jennifer concludes, “Unit4 is absolutely essential to the NWMO’s future growth. It enables the Organization to standardize operational processes, boost people’s satisfaction, and forecast future change. I don’t know where we would be without Unit4.”

