



# The Computerworld Honors Program

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## Final Copy of Case Study

**Status:**

Laureate

**Year:**

2013

**Organization Name:**

IBM

**Organization URL:**

<http://www.ibm.com>

**Project Name:**

School District of Palm Beach, Florida

**Please select the category in which you are submitting your entry:**

Sustainability

**Please provide an overview of the nominated project. Describe the problem it was intended to solve, the technology or approach used, how it was innovative and any technical or other challenges that had to be overcome for successful implementation and adoption. (In 300 words or less.)**

The School District of Palm Beach County Florida (SDPBC) is the 5th largest school district in Florida and the 11th largest in the country. The school district serves more than 170,000 students and the SDPBC Facilities Management Division is responsible for managing approximately 29 million square feet of space spread throughout 200 campuses and encompassing more than 4,500 acres of land. SDPBC is constantly looking for creative ways to reduce costs and increase revenues. Through research and analysis of its facilities, Palm Beach realized that its large portfolio presented many opportunities for them. As with many school districts, Palm Beach's facilities were often vacant during non-school hours. In fall of 2000, the Community Leasing of School Facilities Program

was launched in an effort to raise additional revenues for the district. Under the Community Leasing Program, schools can lease their facilities to commercial and non-profit groups during non-school hours. Over the last ten years, school facilities have been rented for everything from tutoring services to weddings. During the 2008-09 school year alone, the Community Leasing Program added \$2.6 million in revenue. While a success, the Community Leasing Program looked for ways to improve on the program by reducing the paper trail necessary to create and manage leases and building a centralized system to manage and oversee lease agreements. In 2005, the school district began investigating Integrated Workplace Management Systems (IWMS) to implement better processes and controls. Palm Beach selected IBM TRIRIGA to create a centralized system to manage the entire leasing program. With IBM TRIRIGA, the school districts eliminated incompatible legacy systems and seamlessly move data between different groups within SDPBC.

**When was this project implemented or last updated? (Please specify month and year.) Has it incorporated new technologies and/or other innovations since its initial deployment? (In 300 words or less.)**

Beginning with a pilot implementation to five schools within the district in April 2010, the IBM TRIRIGA solution was fully implemented across all 180 school centers by August 2010. Palm Beach schools have now been reserving spaces and creating leases online for more than two years. Completed leases are electronically submitted by the school leases coordinator to the Real Estate Services Department, reducing the paper trail previously needed for auditing.

**Is implementation of the project complete? If no, please describe the project's phases and which phase the project is now in. (In 300 words or less.)**

The School District of Palm Beach County Florida completed implementation in August of 2010. As stated above, the school district has been using the solution successfully for two years. There are no additional phases planned.

**Please provide at least one example of how the technology project has benefited a specific individual or organization. Feel free to include personal quotes from individuals who have directly benefited from the work. (In 300 words or less.)**

The district has generated millions of dollars in extra revenue from rental fees by centralizing and automating many of the tasks associated with leasing out SDPBC's facilities. Rental fees are split between the school and the district. Schools can use the additional revenue to fill any number of budget gaps, from purchasing textbooks and education software, to buying gymnasium equipment.



**Would this project be considered an innovation, a best practice or other notable advancement that could be adopted by or tailored for other organizations and uses? If yes, please describe that here. (In 300 words or less.)**

By renting out facilities that typically sit empty during non-school hours, SDPBC has created an innovative way to help schools overcome budget gaps. While the project has always been profitable and successful, IBM helped the school district create a centralized way to manage the leasing program while also reducing the district's carbon footprint. Once trained on the new system, School Leasing Coordinators require significantly less time and effort to effectively administer leases when compared to the level of effort required completing paper forms by hand and faxing those forms to the Real Estate Services Department for review. Now, leases are approved in a matter of hours rather than a matter of weeks, since all of the data for the approval process can be immediately retrieved from IBM TRIRIGA. Additionally, queries regarding leasing costs, lessee organizations and total leasing dollars by facility can be exported to an Excel spreadsheet or developed into a more formal management report. Finally, IBM TRIRIGA's document management capability, which allows documents to be uploaded and attached to specific lessee records, has also helped to mitigate a serious audit finding regarding required documents (e.g., liability insurance) found to be missing from Lease agreements.