



## Overview

### INSTITUTION:

BLACKHAWK TECHNICAL COLLEGE

### PROFILE:

Blackhawk Technical College had a strong student outcome assessment plan, with a significant amount of paper-based data.

### CHALLENGE:

Improve the overall planning process by systematizing the collection, analysis, interpretation and reporting of data.

### SOLUTION:

Blackhawk selected TracDat for both institutional planning and to document changes in curriculum for continuous improvement.

### BENEFITS:

- ✓ Systematic approach establishes a common understanding and language
- ✓ Define and align goals among all levels of the institution
- ✓ Develop, review and revise assessment plan from any Web browser
- ✓ Robust reporting
- ✓ Real time visibility into the assessment process
- ✓ Supporting documents and evidence linked to the plan
- ✓ Propose strategies for continuous improvement
- ✓ Monitor and report on progress

## Blackhawk Technical College Uses TracDat for Strategic Planning and Superior Student Outcomes Assessment

*“Nuventive really listened to the customers when developing TracDat.”*

MIKE GAGNER, INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT DATA COORDINATOR

In March 2000, Blackhawk Technical College in Janesville, Wisconsin, completed an extended self-study process to renew its accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). When the HLC asked Blackhawk to submit a progress report in July, the task went to Jeanne Williams, Coordinator, Learning Services at Blackhawk, and her colleagues. Blackhawk had a strong student outcome assessment plan and had collected more than enough data for the progress report. However, the information was in the form of stacks of paper, which made it difficult to sort through and analyze.

Kaylen Betzig, Vice President of Learning Support, and Mike Gagner, Institutional Advancement Data Coordinator, remembered speaking to Nuventive at a conference the year before. Nuventive is the creator of TracDat, a software solution for managing an institution’s comprehensive assessment process — including planning, data storage, data analysis, data utilization, and follow-up.

According to Gagner, no other system available rivaled TracDat in terms of meeting Blackhawk’s needs. “We had seen a couple of presentations of other vendors’ systems,” he said. “They had less functionality, and TracDat was a lot easier to use.” So, in early 2002, Blackhawk’s Vice President of Learning followed the recommendation of his team and purchased TracDat .

*“TracDat makes it easier to pinpoint whether students are meeting standards and to change the curriculum in progress”*

KAYLEN BETZIG, VP OF LEARNING SUPPORT

*“TracDat is not just for compliance. It does make the accreditation process much easier, but you have to think of student outcomes assessment in terms of continuous improvement. TracDat helps you look at your institution and your program and your learning. If you’re just using it for compliance, you’re missing the point.”*

KAYEN BETZIG, VP OF LEARNING SUPPORT

*“We look forward to linking information in Banner directly to TracDat. It will be very powerful.”*

JEANNE WILLIAMS, COORDINATOR,  
LEARNING SERVICES

## **Leading the Way**

Blackhawk is using TracDat for assessment and plans to utilize the system for strategic planning for the entire institution. The system helps them use data to make ongoing changes in the curriculum for continuous improvement. “TracDat makes it easier to pinpoint whether students are meeting standards and to change the curriculum in progress,” Betzig said. TracDat enables Blackhawk to run reports on demand to find out what each program is doing. Twice a year, the college gives its faculty in-service days to reflect upon this data, input additional relevant data, and discuss their findings with their peers. Ultimately, TracDat and the processes Blackhawk is building around it will make data a tool for faculty, instead of a burden. Said Gagner, “We are now getting better reports of results and have benchmarks to work toward in the future.”

TracDat has demonstrated to the HLC that Blackhawk is serious about student outcomes assessment. In addition, the software will do much more for Blackhawk than make it easier for them to renew their accreditation. “TracDat is not just for compliance,” Betzig said. “It does make the accreditation process much easier, but you have to think of student outcomes assessment in terms of continuous improvement. TracDat helps you look at your institution and your program and your learning. If you’re just using it for compliance, you’re missing the point.”

## **Better, Faster**

“Nuventive really listened to the customers when developing TracDat,” said Gagner. For instance, Blackhawk has benefited significantly from the addition of dynamic labeling. This feature allows institutions to substitute their own accepted terminology for the system’s default terminology. The changes are easy to make and do not require any programming skills. Williams believes that the current version is an even more effective tool for continuous process improvement. “With this version, we’re able to use the data more synergistically, rather than keeping it in silos,” she said. Integration between TracDat and Blackhawk’s SCT Banner® administrative solution will allow Blackhawk to achieve even greater synergy. “We look forward to linking information in Banner directly to TracDat,” Williams said. “It will be very powerful.”

Nuventive  
9800 B McKnight Road  
Suite 255  
Pittsburgh, PA 15237

Phone: +1 412 847 0280  
Toll Free: 1 877 366 8700  
Fax: +1 412 847 0285  
Email: [info@nuventive.com](mailto:info@nuventive.com)

