

Case Study:

Steering Research into the Next Era of Growth—City University of Hong Kong



Research Intelligence

Pure

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Make confident program decisions, streamline funding analysis and forge new partnerships with complete, correct, current and connected information around research activities.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

City University of Hong Kong (CityU) is an ambitious, high-reaching university in the greater China region. Rising up in international rankings with a growing portfolio of innovative research, it also aspires to be a regional leader in research management practices. To this end, it chose to migrate its research management solutions onto Elsevier's Pure, to create a single, trusted source of research metadata and researcher profiles, and to make reporting and showcasing easier.

City University of Hong Kong (CityU) needed a comprehensive solution to streamline its research management processes and support its global research growth plans.

Profile

Increasingly recognized as a global leader in higher learning and research, CityU is focused on cutting-edge, problem-based research activities, aimed at interdisciplinary challenges.

Established in 1994, CityU is an emerging research leader, one of Asia's top ten young universities in QS World University Rankings 2017-18, and fourth in the world's top 50 universities under 50 years of age. To better promote its research, CityU sought to optimize over 1,000 researcher profiles linked to the university, for improved discovery and innovation.

Background

To accelerate research performance and ease researchers' administrative burden, CityU decided to standardize data formats and simplify reporting by consolidating research data on a central platform.

For research information to be consistently accessed for reliable reports, and for researchers to be correctly attributed to their profiles regardless of publication language, CityU needed a holistic transformation of the way it collected and analyzed institutional research data. However, this mandate

could not be met by its legacy systems, hence a revamp was in order.

Most pressing of its needs was to consolidate all research metadata silos, and streamline administrative processes to cut complexity, redundancy and errors. CityU wanted a user-friendly platform that could standardize data formats, ingest information from different campus systems such as HR and Finance, and interrelate the data to simplify reporting.

Pure was chosen among several options due to its:

- Balance of readiness "out-of-the-box" and configurability
- Tight integration with SciVal, combined with the ability to draw on other data sources
- Ability to answer the reporting needs of stakeholders inside and outside the university
- Implementation cycle, which enabled the delivery of a customized data tracking, analysis, and reporting solution in under 18 months

While costs have to be considered for any investment, they were not the deciding factor here. Pure was neither the least nor the most expensive option. However, Pure gave us confidence that we would be able to address all key stakeholder needs within one solution.



“We now have a quick way of knowing what other researchers are doing, which helps to identify internal partners for research and enable better collaboration. For example, I have recently started a crossdisciplinary research project with another department, through searching in the CityU Scholars system.”

Prof. Richard Walker, Chair Professor/Associate Dean
(Research and Postgraduate Studies) College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences

As CityU’s research performance and publication output grew, a single source for tracking scholarly output was necessary, hence the implementation of Elsevier’s Pure.

Another challenge the university faced was in convincing its researchers to switch over to Pure, which it did by highlighting the benefits directly related to their interests, such as:

- Ensuring all academic staff profiles are clear and complete
- Standardizing profiles on ORCID persistent digital identifier with a researcher profile tool
- Presenting comprehensive overview of all staff and their research outputs in real time
- Making data reusable for different purposes, to limit administrative burden

prebuilt profile sped up implementation, as they ensured researchers receive proper accreditation for their full body of work, whether they publish under a Chinese or an English name.

CityU extended the implementation to include the building of a searchable web portal, which uses Pure web service to pull clean, trusted data from the Pure backend. This portal showcases the university’s researchers, publications, projects, patents, and other research achievements on the open web, and features the university-branded, CityU Scholars, on a customized interface.

- All these and more were executed on an accelerated timeline, and they culminated to coincide with the mid-2017 launch of the university’s new CityU Scholars portal:
<https://scholars.cityu.edu.hk>

Challenges

Pure was chosen to replace a variety of legacy systems on campus, as a single, unified research database for data aggregation and reporting.

Prior to the move, a massive data migration from multiple sources across the campus had to be conducted. In addition, data cleaning and standardization had to be done to optimize the data for advance reporting.

Challenges also came from unique local requirements, such as Hong Kong’s practice of publishing content in English and two types of Chinese characters. This often resulted in researchers having profiles in both languages, which splintered their academic achievements and caused their citation counts and h-indices to become artificially low.

Solution

The implementation of Pure was carried out by an assembled, cross-functional team—comprising the research office, the library and the IT department. The team was tasked to aggregate research and researcher information across the campus, and to import this into Pure with minimal data entry. Additional outreach to former staff members was also conducted to verify historic data and bridge data gaps, to ensure accurate reporting and complete researcher profiles for advanced analytics.

As part of the initial contract, CityU purchased Profile Refinement Services (PRS) to disambiguate researcher profiles based on Scopus data. Having this

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Conclusion

Having a central source of research output metadata provided CityU with better reporting and international research tracking. Its investment in Pure significantly improved its research information management processes, to support internal strategy decisions and reporting capabilities for campus research activities.

Data is no longer siloed or captured in disparate formats, while research meta data content and quality can be kept consistent. Data only needs to be entered once to be easily retrieved for use across the campus.



Thoughts from the team

Prof. Jian Lu
Vice President
(Research & Technology)

Each academic staff member can save at least one-person day a year using Pure. Because they don't need to input the same data into multiple systems, over 1,000 person-days can be saved each year. But while the saving is important, the quality of data we achieved is even more so.

Prof. Christian Wagner
Chief Information Officer
Associate Provost (Quality Assurance)
Chair Professor of Social Media

We needed a comprehensive and scalable system to keep up with our increasingly complex research work involving collaborations across sectors and multiple stakeholders. Pure's offerings showed us we could achieve even more than this.

Mrs. Linda Cheng
Director
(Research Grants and Contracts Office)

Pure has gone a long way in enhancing our processes, and more importantly, identifying the true impact of our research work. Knowing our full range of activities opens to more collaboration and funding opportunities.



With Pure, CityU is better positioned to draw insights from data to make informed organizational decisions.

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“Our key stakeholders in the university have seen benefits on many levels: less data input and validation effort, more accurate capture of our research performance, more visibility and transparency of research outcomes.

The benefits are equally felt by faculty, line managers, and the university administration. Plus we have been able to re-capture research performance that was previously attributed to other universities.

Hence, Pure has been able to communicate our rapid progress towards becoming a leading global university.”

**Prof. Christian Wagner, Chief Information Officer,
Associate Provost (Quality Assurance)**



Comprehensive toolkit

Pure supports organizations by giving them tools to create customized reports and research project progress monitoring. It provides comprehensive and reliable information in real-time from a single trusted database, which also helps uncover potential collaborators and funding opportunities.

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The world's leading research information management system that enables evidence-based decisions, simplifies research administration and optimizes impact, reporting, and compliance.

For more information about Pure,
visit elsevier.com/solutions/pure

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