



# University of Ottawa

*An Accruent Case Study*

## SOLUTION SUMMARY

### VFA Capital Planning Solution

- Enabled the University of Ottawa to report the campus-wide facility condition index to the Council of Ontario Universities, in order to justify financial impact to the Provincial Facilities Capital Renewal program
- Promoted data cleanliness and accuracy
- Helped change auditing methodologies to provide a more detailed understanding of the condition of its facilities
- Facilitated the identification of high-priority projects in support of a university-wide mission

## THE COMPANY

The University of Ottawa is a public research university in Ottawa, Ontario. It was first established as the College of Bytown in 1848 by the first bishop of the Catholic Archdiocese of Ottawa, Joseph-Bruno Guigues. It was renamed the College of Ottawa in 1861 and received university status five years later through royal charter. As of 2012, the university is the world's largest English-French bilingual university.

The University is consistently ranked as one of Canada's top universities. The University enrolls over 35,000 undergraduate and over 6,000 post-graduate students, and has more than 185,000 alumni. The main campus is located on 87 acres in the residential neighborhood of Sandy Hill. The University owns and manages properties throughout the city, stretching its total extent to 105 acres. Facilities vary in age, from its first building, 100 Laurier, built in 1893 to those built within the last three years.

## THE CHALLENGE

The University of Ottawa is partially funded by the Province of Ontario, Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities (MTCU). In order to be transparent and fully justify the proper allocation of funds, it is necessary to demonstrate how the allocation of funding impacts the improvement of its Capital Renewal Program.

In the past, the University's methods for auditing their facilities and determining their condition did not enable them to break it down into system-by-system components. Instead, they had to base their renewal projects based on basic information of the asset, such as its age. Information was also inconsistent across auditors, making it even more difficult to fully understand the condition of their assets.



*“We can better identify and forecast when to execute our priority projects. We can also present reports to our Executive Committee, which better demonstrates the need for additional funding required to deliver our mandate to the University body.”*

- Michael Sparling, Facilities Asset Manager, University of Ottawa

## THE SOLUTION

### VFA CAPITAL PLANNING

In order to facilitate the reporting requirements for funding usage across universities, the Council of Ontario Universities mandated that all universities would use VFA Facility to track how the funding received by the MTCU has a direct impact on each of the universities' Facility Condition Index (FCI). It is with VFA Facility that the University of Ottawa is able to demonstrate that the funding it has received has positively impacted the Capital Renewal Program.

Over the past two years, the University has changed its methodologies in how it executes building condition assessments. The University breaks assets down into system-by-system components with the help of VFA assessment services and VFA Facility. The University has established a cut off between regular operating and maintenance renewal and asset renewal. Previously, the University's determination of a building's Facility Condition Index (FCI) was based on the type of asset, the age of the asset, and a minimal assessment of space that was to be representative to the building as a whole. With the new assessments and VFA Facility, the University is able to break down the system-by-system components to help better identify the specific areas that need attention as opposed to identifying the condition of the asset overall. With VFA Facility, the University has also been able to implement rules around entering information to promote data cleanliness and accuracy.

## THE RESULTS

The University of Ottawa's operational goals are based on a mission called Destination 2020. Its core values include putting students at the center of their educational mission, and its goals feature providing a rich, inspiring student experience.

In support of the University's goals, its facilities department is focused on providing an environment that is safe to use and in good condition for the student experience. Some of its priorities include prioritizing projects based on health and safety, legislative and code compliance, and eliminating detrimental equipment failure. It also provides general improvements, which increase student experience. They have achieved their goals with the help of VFA Facility, which enabled them to identify where their money needs to be spent to address high-priority issues.

“We can better identify and forecast when to execute our priority projects” said Michael Sparling, Facilities Asset Manager, University of Ottawa. “We can also present reports to our Executive Committee, which better demonstrates the need for additional funding required to deliver our mandate to the University body.”



### About VFA

VFA helps organizations strategically manage their facility portfolios with Capital Planning and Management Solutions (CPMS™) that combine software, assessment services and business process consulting. Today, organizations use VFA solutions to manage over four billion square feet of real estate.