

# FEDERATION UNIVERSITY

**Rimini Street**

Australian university modernises the student experience by partnering with Rimini Street to reduce the complexity associated with supporting their Oracle products



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— **Andrew Matheson, Manager,**  
Head of Operations and Automation,  
Federation University



ELIMINATED MULTI-VENDOR  
SUPPORT COMPLEXITY BY  
CONSOLIDATING ORACLE  
APPLICATION AND  
DATABASE SUPPORT WITH  
ONE TRUSTED PROVIDER



REALLOCATED RESOURCES  
TO FOCUS ON INNOVATION  
INITIATIVES SUCH AS THE  
IMPLEMENTATION OF MS  
DYNAMICS 365



## COMPANY OVERVIEW:

Federation University Australia is a public, dual-sector university based in Victoria, Australia. It is the fourth-oldest tertiary institution in Australia, having begun under predecessor institutions in 1870. The university supports around 23,000 higher education, vocational education, and training students a year.



**VERTICAL/COUNTRY:**  
EDUCATION,  
AUSTRALIA



**SOFTWARE:**  
ORACLE TECHNOLOGY  
ORACLE DATABASE



# Federation University expands partnership with Rimini Street to modernise the student experience

Federation University is regional Victoria's largest education institution. As a university and TAFE provider, it has campuses across Victoria offering a range of courses aligned with workforce needs serving a diverse student community.

Federation offers modern and innovative teaching methods, industry-connected courses via its co-operative learning model, which has earned its reputation as one of Australia's leading regional universities with 95 per cent of their postgraduate students finding full-time employment.

Andrew Matheson, Head of Operations and Automation at Federation University, has been a mainstay and IT career success story, serving the growing needs of the university's IT department for over two decades.

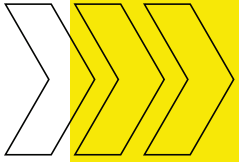
After graduating, he began working for the school as a programmer. Today, he leads four teams across infrastructure, digital e-learning, enterprise data and automation.

"It's been a long time, and I've enjoyed every moment. I've probably touched most of the technology that the university runs in some way, shape or form over the years in my different varied roles," Matheson said. Federation recently honoured his contributions with a service milestone award to mark his 20 years at the university.

## **Addressing the complexities of IT for educational institutions with Rimini Support™**

The university's student management system and finance management systems run on Oracle software, including Database. These critical systems manage the entire student experience spanning applications, admissions, matriculation, enrolment, graduation certification, and alumni relations.

In 2018, facing an aggressive regulatory timeline to comply with a new government reporting requirement called Tertiary Collection of Student Information (TCSI), Matheson engaged Rimini Street for the Oracle expertise and bandwidth needed to quickly satisfy the requirements of the new regulations.



With the help of [\*\*Rimini Street's Tax, Legal and Regulatory \(TLR\) team, the university not only met the deadline but was highlighted by the government as the first institution to go live\*\*](#) with the TCSI update.

Since then, the relationship has bloomed as the university continued to modernise and innovate its IT landscape to accommodate the evolving needs of student and staff.

"Our internal support staff is really engaged in the Rimini Street support ecosystem. We've also experienced a few reorganisations in the university over the years, and Rimini Street was there to help see us through the changes," Matheson said.

Matheson's experience with the Rimini Street support model is a stark contrast to what was previously experienced with Oracle support. "Rimini Street delivers a premium support experience. It doesn't matter where the issue is in the stack – our Rimini Street team can help us, and they truly understand our environment including our customisations and modifications. Rimini Street's engineering team can replicate the exact problems we face, and that's something we never got from Oracle," Matheson said.

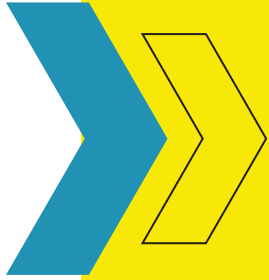
"With Oracle, if we couldn't replicate an issue in a vanilla, out-of-the-box demo environment, they'd just say, 'Oh, that must be a customisation – you need to support that yourself'. But with Rimini Street, it's different. They help us solve the problem, whatever it is." To serve the needs of both its higher education and TAFE students, the university previously had two student management systems to serve each sector.

"We eventually consolidated them into a single campus solutions system, but because TAFE is far more regulated than higher ed, our system required extensive customisations to serve both populations. Having Rimini Street support our customisations for an important value stream in a highly regulated environment has been invaluable."

#### **Accessing project-specific expertise for business-critical projects with Rimini Consult™**

To further improve student curriculum planning, Matheson prepared to implement a new curriculum management system to be the front-facing platform to the current student management system. The project would allow students to use the new system to easily configure class schedules and combinations based on graduation needs and automatically integrate the data into the student management system.

As they began the project, Matheson found it difficult to recruit the talent needed to execute the complexities.



“We needed to do a great deal of analysis and data-mapping between the two systems and then transform the data to suit each system. We also needed to align protocols in between making sure that it’s secure, know what protocols we can work with on either side, time it when to do a sync versus a push-pull, all those standard integration items that one must think about and implement from start to finish,” he said.

“At the time, it was very difficult to find engineers with the right combination of knowledge and skill set, so being able to reach out to Rimini Street’s [professional services team](#) and hear, ‘We’ll go on the journey with you. We’ll support you,’ accelerated our ability to get started and get to the finish line. Otherwise, the project would have stalled while we searched for specialists to help us.”

### **Securing and modernising with Rimini Protect™ and Rimini Connect™**

Like many organisations, Federation University carries cybersecurity insurance to protect against major security incidents. The university’s insurance rates are based on several factors represented on a security scorecard. One of those factors pointed to the operation system (OS) that they are running on.

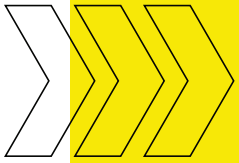
Older OS platforms are often full of vulnerabilities hackers can easily exploit. To increase protection for the sensitive data in their Oracle systems that no longer received security patches, Matheson sought additional security measures.

“When we engaged with Rimini Street, they explained how Rimini Street’s proactive security services can provide an extra line of defence to improve our security posture,” he said.

While [Rimini Protect™](#) provides protection for their application, middleware, and databases, Matheson utilises [Rimini Connect™](#), Rimini Street proprietary solutions that address interoperability needs without costly, disruptive upgrades.

With Rimini Connect, he is able to update the OS while keeping his existing versions of enterprise software running smoothly.

“We didn’t want to be put into a vulnerable state by running on versions of Red Hat and Windows Server that were not compatible with our systems. We wanted to get those up to date as part of our overall IT and security strategy. Through the partnership and unique solution combinations of Rimini Street, we were able to lower that security scorecard, and our last insurance was cheaper than the previous period.”



Recently, when Oracle announced [changes to Java licensing](#), Matheson turned to his contacts at Rimini Street for clarity and was connected with the License Advisory Team.

“I was in a heightened-stress moment. What’s going to happen here? We didn’t see this coming. We couldn’t ask for more budgets. We reached out to our Rimini Street team, and they jumped in with advice on what we should do and which versions the changes were applicable, and gave us a better understanding of the situation,” he said. “They really helped us navigate and respond to the confusion of the emails.”

As a result, the university was able to ensure the versions of Java running on their desktops and servers weren’t affected.

### **Less time managing vendors, more focus on enhancing the student experience**

For Federation University, digging deeper into their partnership with Rimini Street was a logical decision.

“We already had an existing support arrangement, and it made sense to expand services with a trusted partner with a strong track record of delivering success to us,” Matheson said. “With Rimini Street, it doesn’t matter if we have a problem at the operating system layer, the database layer, or the application layer – we have one place to go to fix all of our Oracle system needs.”

Consuming multiple services under one roof with one trusted provider not only simplifies problem resolution but also significantly lowers internal risk.

“In the past, when working with multiple providers, we’ve seen them play off each other – one pointing a finger at the other. It was frustrating to just get a support ticket resolved. Rimini Street eliminates that challenge, and our team can now focus on proactive IT improvements instead of mediating multiple providers.”

Matheson is also able to reduce the staff needed for Oracle support while expanding development and support in other business critical areas. “With customisations and comprehensive support and services Rimini Street provides, we can shift our team’s focus toward investing in Microsoft Dynamics 365 to improve our customer relationship management landscape,” Matheson said.

By optimising support and rebalancing resources toward emerging technologies, the institution is not just keeping pace with digital change – they’re embracing it.

### Single-provider solution creates a stress-free environment

Another key benefit to the partnership has been the reduction in internal noise.

"I'm not hearing constant concerns from business clients like we used to. It used to be a noisy, high-stress support environment, both from our internal client teams to us, and from our own support staff up to management. That's just not the case anymore. It's a massive win. In the past, stakeholder communication around these products was consuming a lot of management time. Now, there's a sense of calm."

Beyond technical expertise, Rimini Street has built a strong relationship with the team, Matheson said, "The partnership has been fantastic. It doesn't matter when we need help; I can reach out to my Rimini Street team, and they rally the troops to come to our aid. That's what stands out for me about Rimini Street: The level of customer engagement and understanding of our pain points."

With Rimini Street, the organisation has not only gained a trusted partner, but also a more stable IT landscape. "It's been stress-free," Mr Matheson said. "I can go home without worrying about whether my staff will be able to handle ongoing support. When we need support, I know we can rely on Rimini Street."

## Rimini Street®

riministreet.com  
info@riministreet.com  
twitter.com/riministreet  
linkedin.com/company/rimini-street

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