



CERTIFICATION CASE STUDY



**UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY**

COMPANY:
University of Calgary

EMPLOYEES:
250

HEADQUARTERS:
Calgary, AB, Canada

The Metamorphosis: University of Calgary's Journey to CIMS-GB with Honours

At the University of Calgary, meeting expectations for cleanliness isn't enough. The school has a loftier goal for its janitorial maintenance team – to be the industry leader for facility management. After an initial assessment of its operations a few years ago, management recognized the need for change.

Located in Calgary, AB, the 9,960,000 sq. foot University launched a campaign to overhaul its operations to create welcoming, friendly, clean and healthy facilities conducive to high productivity for students and staff. As an integral part of that effort, the caretaking (facility management) department earned two key ISSA certifications – CIMS and CIMS-GB.

These certifications represent a standard of excellence and demonstrate a facility's commitment to operating at the highest level. And, thanks to independent verification, the University of Calgary's facility management department can be confident its operation now meets the highest standards for management and quality of service, as well as environmental responsibility.

THE CERTIFICATIONS

Based on universally accepted management principles, Cleaning Industry Management Standards (CIMS) is a third-party validation of the operations, processes and supply chain of cleaning operations. It consists of five sections of best practices – Quality Systems; Service Delivery; Human Resources; Health, Safety and Environmental Stewardship; and Management Commitment.

CIMS-GB (Green Buildings) adds a green-cleaning and sustainability aspect and can help an organization secure points under the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) for Existing Buildings: Operations and Maintenance (LEED EB: O&M) system.

The University of Calgary took its commitment to the CIMS process even further. Nine members of the management became ISSA Certification Experts (I.C.E.), which gave these staffers a deeper understanding of CIMS and CIMS-GB standards. The managers also underwent ISSA's Accredited Certification Trainer program to hone their training skills to become more effective leaders and supervisors.

"The benefit of moving in this direction is that all in-house training is delivered at a level consistent with best practice," said Samuel Whyte, MSc., facilities program manager, who helped spearhead the University's improvement campaign. "Now, post-training, we have a team that can professionally deliver training to frontline team members using tools and tactics that enable and enhance understanding and interaction."

THE ASSESSMENT

After establishing change-management goals, the University invited an external consultant to conduct a CIMS and CIMS-GB pre-assessment analysis. Whyte recognized the value of the gap analysis.

"(The gap analysis) is critical in pursuing the pieces of CIMS," he said. "With the mandatory pieces in place, the opportunity to achieve honors is more associated with a passion to set up a centre of excellence."

After the initial analysis, the University's in-house I.C.E. experts conducted their own gap analysis and prepared the necessary documentation for CIMS assessment, saving time for the university and the third-party assessor. With all these pieces in place, Whyte and director Michael Love decided to aim higher and aggressively pursue CIMS-GB with Honours.

University leadership provided its full support, giving the effort momentum and helping increase staff enthusiasm for the process.

"It was encouraging to see the commitment by the senior management team in the vision that was established by caretaking, and the resolve to allocate resources in people and equipment to improve the overall performance and outcomes of the caretaking department," said Kirk Draper, operations manager, caretaking and facilities management.

Although nervous, the University's caretaking team was optimistic. They knew all the administrative and practical requirements were in place for

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Facilities Program Manager

the assessments, which were conducted by Brent Bourne, a third-party assessor appointed by ISSA.

“As the assessor, I found it impressive that all the management, supervisory and frontline staff knew about and supported the CIMS standard,” Bourne said. “The cohesive structure positively influenced all the team results.”

THE OUTCOMES

Not only did the University of Calgary achieve a CIMS-GB certification with Honors, but also a COR™ (Certificate of Recognition) average of over 90 per cent for its safety program. COR is endorsed by the Infrastructure Health and Safety Association of Canada, and provides employers with an effective tool to assess and drive positive workplace behaviour and practices that lead to improved performance.

“The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standard recognizes CIMS-GB, and COR is the Alberta safety standard, which dovetails with CIMS’s safety goals,” Bourne said.

CIMS-GB ultimately integrated well with the other components of the University’s program. Similarities exist between COR for safety and LEED EB: O&M requirements, Quality Management System (QMS), performance Expectations (Systems and Processes), Training and Development, Green & Team Cleaning Program and Waste management initiatives.

“Each brought a little something different to the table and, ultimately, helped us prepare for the others,” Whyte said.

CIMS certification was also a major contributor to the University’s gold ranking within the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education’s (AASHE) Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS).

More than two years after setting out to become an industry leader for caretaking, the University of Calgary delivered on its goal.

“Our classrooms, theatres, offices, washrooms and common areas are noticeably cleaner, thanks to the improvements that our caretaking team has made,” said Guy Levy, executive director, Cumming School of Medicine. “The team is focused on attention to detail, adhering to standards and is receptive to feedback. They also put in extra effort to engage with client occupants to ensure CIMS standards are being met. All of this has resulted in consistent and impressive cleaning services, and a framework that will guarantee success.”

According to Bourne, the transformation is also evident to those outside the school system.

“We saw a highly positive change in the results being achieved – much cleaner buildings everywhere, happier workers, safer chemical use and reduced waste,” he said. “Regarding educational facilities, they are the best we have assessed so far. The University has seen the positive results and is continuing to fine-tune the program in the spirit of CIMS. Their pride in achieving Honors was amazing.”

The benefits of this journey go beyond recognition. The caretaking department delivered on contributions to the University’s institutional sustainability strategy and, more importantly, continues to provide a healthy school environment for students, faculty, staff and visitors. The University of Calgary plans to continue the I.C.E. professional certifications of its staff to maintain the CIMS-GB standards for which it worked so hard, and to help facilitate the biennial CIMS re-certifications.

“CIMS-GB generated significant focus and discipline while overhauling our caretaking programs,” Whyte said. “the world can now associate University of Calgary with having a strong commitment to environmental cleanliness and sustainability.”

ABOUT CIMS AND CIMS-GB

The Cleaning Industry Management Standard – or CIMS – was created “by the cleaning industry and for the cleaning industry,” and was developed specifically to apply to building service contractors, in-house cleaning service providers and residential service providers. As such, CIMS deals with the unique issues faced by the cleaning industry and focuses on compliance requirements that were determined by experts in the cleaning field.

“CIMS provides contract cleaning companies the parameters of the core components that make a business successful,” said Brant Insero, ISSA director of education, training, certifications and standards. “Achieving CIMS provides the opportunity for a company to prove their legitimacy to their potential client and dedication to running an effective operation.”

According to Insero, “While most programs in the cleaning industry measure knowledge or training, ensure products meet specific standards or require that technical cleaning procedures meet set criteria, CIMS applies to an entire organization and focuses on management systems and service delivery processes.”

“CIMS makes no product, equipment, procedure or system recommendations, and each organization retains the flexibility to choose how to best meet CIMS requirements,” he said.

According to Whyte, the most beneficial aspect of CIMS is “It brings to the fore a need to standardize systems, processes and procedures.”

“The process drives one into becoming conformant and generates traits related to continuous improvement through numerous self-evaluation iterations,” he said. “It activates sustainability, standardization, quality management and professionalism within an organization.”

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