Business World User Group Winter Newsletter 2023

Chairman's Report

Rather than the normal festive message I thought I would focus my words this year on the recent communication from Unit4 on the commitment needed from customers to migrate to a new SaaS product.

Since the communication landed we have as a Council engaged with the senior UK team at Unit4 to represent your views both verbally and in writing. Our main issues are the timing, potential costs and lack of options . We submitted a list of your questions in early November and are still awaiting a formal response. I can see my inbox today that UCISA (A membership organisation that represents UK Universities) have sent a letter to Mike Ettling asking a long list of questions with much commonality. The themes are similar and revolve around:

• Timings
• Commercial Terms
• Inconsistent messaging from Unit4 staff

Regarding the last point, I cannot as of today give you any firm responses, but three strands will roll forward:

• We are working hard to represent your views & discussed the topic at length with Unit4 at our last council meeting, which was a challenging meeting.
• We will make this topic a theme for our work in 2024.
• Please engage and work through issues with your account manager. as we all have individual contracts and positions, but escalate if needed.

Finally, I would like to turn to a more positive topic. As I mentioned in our last Newsletter Maureen Potter will retire at Christmas and step down from the Council after more than 12 years. We wish her well with her future endeavours which will include: spending time with the Family, Playing Golf, Cooking and Rock Choir. She really will be missed by us all.

Please enjoy your Christmas and New Year break and return afresh for the challenging year that will be 2024 for many Unit4 Customers as we assess our options.

Andrew Grice

AUKUG Chairman

A.S.Grice@reading.ac.uk

University of Reading - Director of Finance

2024 User Group Membership
Its time to renew

It's now time to renew your User Group membership, the User Group membership year runs from the 1st January – 31st December and membership **needs to be** renewed by you annually, this is not an automatic process. We cannot automatically invoice because of the need for Purchase orders.

Reminders will be sent to key contacts along with Membership forms and updated Bank details for completion. Please check your key contacts within your organisation in case I have missed anyone, if you would like to add additional people to your contact list please send their details to caroline.batten@unit4.com.

Throughout 2024 we will be running a mixture of workshops and Webinars and will cover different areas of the Unit4 Business World products and services, day events typically consists of case study presentations from users, along with product demonstrations and hints and tips from Unit4 and Partners. We also hope to reinstate a two day event , more details to follow.

The Membership fee for 2024 has been reduced and is now £400.00 excluding vat. This is a one hundred pound reduction due to a healthy User Group bank balances incurred through there being no in person events during the pandemic.
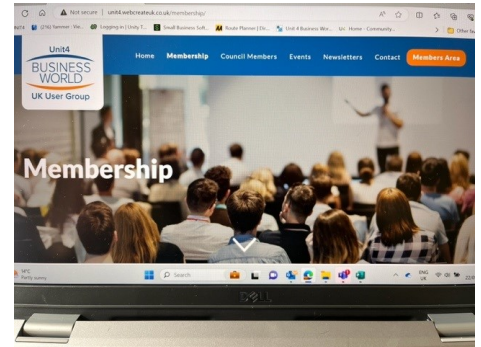
New Website refresh for 2024

http://www.u4bwug.co.uk

Unit4 BUSINESS WORLD UK User Group

We have updated our Business World Website, the old version has been offline whilst we switch the host provider and rebuilt as it was out of date and hard to administer. The new site is a little more interactive.

We now have a membership form which you can complete in the site and forward to us, A get to know your Council Members, Latest Newsletters, and a contact page which we hope to use so you can send questions for Council meetings etc.as well as allowing possible new members to get in touch. http://www.u4bwug.co.uk

Unit4 Customer Reference Program - can you help?

Dear UKI User Group members,

Having worked with you for a longer period of time, we believe that many of you could provide prospects and other decision-makers faced with similar challenges as you with specific information about Unit4's services and products.
Thus, we think that many of you and your organizations would be fantastic candidates for our Customer Reference Program.

The Unit4 Customer Reference Program is specifically designed for all our customer advocates who want to make an impact, be proud of their achievements and share their story with their peers and us.
If you see the benefits and the business success that our ERP, FP&A, HCM, Source-to-Contract, Financials and PSA cloud solutions bring to you and if you would like to be recognized as a trailblazer for innovation in your industry, this is the right program 4U.

We really would like to hear your story and share your success with others. And Unit4 also wants to help you to

- gain recognition for your achievements
- demonstrate thought leadership in your industry
- promote your brand and increase your visibility as an innovator

continue to enjoy a close relationship with us
If this sounds interesting to you, please feel free to contact katja.kramer@unit4.com. She is more than happy to get in touch with you.
And if you would like to get some inspiration on how your customer story could look like, please have a look at Our Customers | Unit4 as well as at our Customer Testimonial playlist on YouTube to see some video examples.

Would you like to see one of the latest examples in UKI?
Then please watch the University of Salford's cloud journey with Unit4 to become more agile and inclusive and read their story on our website to find out more about how the University of Salford is working to improve inclusion and promote a digital-friendly environment.

If you choose to be part of our Customer Reference Program, we will thank you for reference requests by giving you a chance to plant a tree in our Unit4 Customer Reference Forest. It's a way for us to express our gratitude while aiding communities across the world through agroforestry projects.

Kind regards,
Katja

Katja Kramer
Global Customer Reference Program Manager katja.kramer@unit4.com

Unit4 Business World UK User Group, Tel: 01275 377340 E-mail: caroline.batten@unit4.com

2023 BWUG activities round up

Well 2023 was a busy year, we held a mixture of Webinars and in person events and council meetings spread throughout the year.
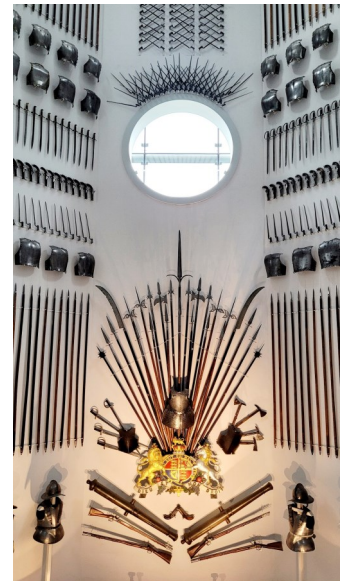
We have also undertaken surveys looking at how the group wants to move forward, event feedback, future planning, and recently members thoughts on the recent Cloud Announcements, the content was collated and forwarded to Unit4 for response. Thank you to all who took time to fill these in, it really is useful when planning future events and programs.

We held webinars to give members overviews on Community4U a guide for the UK User Group , Knowledge sharing with University4U, A look at the UK's footprint in Community4U

Our Live events were held in London, Originally scheduled to be held at the British Museum but due to strike action by security staff we moved across the Road to the Montague on the Gardens Hotel where we held a Finance Systems update along with our AGM, We then travelled to Edinburgh for a General Systems Update and last but not least a trip the Royal Armouries Leeds for an update on the HCM System. All these events were well received and the attendees very much enjoyed learning, via presentations from Unit4, Partners and most importantly meeting and spending time with other User Group members whilst also having the opportunity to network with other members and Unit4 staff.

Surveys are conducted after every event, we have also sought feedback from the members about ideas and content for 2024 events and their formats along with Ideas surrounding the name of the Business World User Group going forwards.

Feedback from these surveys is being used to arrange the 2024 calendar of events. We will send out the Agenda for 2024 in the New Year

The User Group Council met up four time during this Year either via Teams or in person, these meetings includes Unit4 UK Senior staff who update us on What is happening in the UK and Globally. We have regular updates from UK Support and Community4U Managers along with any other topics relevant at the time. If you have any issues you would like raised at these meetings please send them to Caroline.batten@unit4.com or one of the Council Members listed on the last page of this Newsletter.

We will announce the 2024 Program of events early in the new Year. Again we will be a mixture of Webinars and in person events. We hope to see as many of you as possible at these Events, it is very important to build communities and take part in them. Members who do attend the in person events enjoy the opportunity to meet other users from different organisations and are able to exchange knowledge share good food and also meet and spend time with Unit4 Staff and Partners.

Unit4 Business World UK User Group, Tel: 01275 377340   E-mail: caroline.batten@unit4.com

Meet Ashik Patel, Our newest
BW User Group Council Member

I am excited to have joined as a council member and I look forward to supporting the community in any way I can.

Currently I am the Finance Systems Manager at the National Foundation of Educational Research. NFER is an educational research organisation which gathers evidence and research to inform educational policy and school services. We are currently on ERP 7.8 and make use of all the core modules with our user base more focused on PCB. I am currently working on integrations with our feeder systems by utilising the use of API's but also streamlining the current processes that are being undertaken by Finance, HR, and the wider organisation.

I started my Finance Systems journey while on the Unit4 implementation project at the National Trust, where I later became the Finance Systems Development Lead. The project was very challenging but something I really enjoyed, and it provided me with some of the skills and knowledge that I continue to utilise every day. In my various roles I always look to develop Unit4 or any other software to help improve users use of a system but also look for ways to give time back. It's always amazing to see how the littles things can help users in their everyday job. I am also particularly interested in finding different approaches in Unit4 that move away from our thinking to fix issues or solve problems by using AG16's and hopefully I can share this thinking with everyone.

A few things people might not know about me, I enjoy listening to music and oddly I love disco and nu-disco to start my day off. I've been to quite a few festivals, and I've been to Glastonbury Festival 5 times and I'm itching to go again. I do like to be active, and I particularly enjoy walking the southwest coastal path. I do attend a local outdoor bootcamp fitness group which gets me out of house as I am a remote worker. Lastly, although by day I am a Finance Systems Manager, by night I am graphic designer, not quite a superhero but something that is very different! I create logos, brand identity, websites, and social media graphics and content to big and small companies.
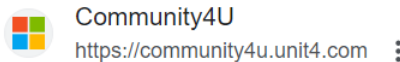I look forward to meeting you all at future events so do come and say hi if you see me.

Why Community4 you and how can it benefit you?

Community4U is our digital one-stop platform that enables our Customers to maximize their Unit4 Product Experience.
From the peer-to-peer area in My Community where you can discuss how-to product related questions or suggest product enhancements, to My Solutions area where you can access Product News, Software and Documentation.
 You can even access training from University4U and easily interact with Customer Support. In Community4U you can expand your knowledge and help other users, because when we're all interacting, we're all benefiting.

Community4U
https://community4u.unit4.com

Mutual support
Engage with other customers and partners as well with Unit4 People.
Ask questions, share tips and best practices.
Suggest product enhancements and vote on other users' suggestions.

Access a wealth of specialized knowledge
Explore product news, documentation, software and an extensive knowledge base.
Surround yourself with professionals who know your market, products and services.

Build your network
Engage with peers, meet people with common interests (e.g., organization in same industry and build your professional network)

Professional growth
Learn from each other.
Find mentors and inspiration that can help drive you and others forward.

Leadership opportunities
Get a chance to step forward and distinguish yourself as a thought leader.
You can help others, teach them, guide them to achieve more with the help of your unique experience.

We need you … Could you be the next User Group Council member?

The User Group Council would like to welcome people who are enthusiastic about Unit4 products to join the council, to help ensure that there is customer representation for all Business World sectors and to give a balanced user's view to UNIT4 senior staff.

If you think you could help we would love to hear from you, we are especially interested to hear from people in the Emergency, Health and Charity sectors but we would welcome anyone who is keen to get involved and become an active member of the team.

What is involved in being a Council Member?

The User Group Council and key Unit4 UKI Staff meet on a Bi-monthly basis to discuss and review changes within UNIT4, its products and any issues raised by the members. Currently the meetings are a mixture of Teams and face to face meetings, which are held in Council members venues, you would be required to attend a minimum of 4 meetings a year.

We are looking for people who enjoy working with all area's of BW, its products and hearing future business plans through interacting directly with Unit4 represent the thoughts and views of the Business World UK customer base. The User Group will pay any travel expenses incurred whilst attending a council meeting.

Council members also help to find content for UG Workshops, offer to do Case Studies or compare at the User Group events. Others help with the Website and other projects run by the User Group and Unit4.

If you would like to know more about becoming a Council Member and what is involved, please contact the User Group Chairman or anyone one of the council members listed below either by email or at one of the events, they will be more than happy to tell you more about the role and its benefits.

Andrew Grice
UKUG Chairman
University of Reading
Director of Finance
a.s.grice@reading.ac.uk

Katrina Joost
UGUK Vice Chair
Renewi UK Services
Support & Development Manager
katrina.joost@renewi.com

Mary Kent
UKUG Treasurer
Magnox
Head of IT Programmes
mary.kent@magnoxsites.com

Ian Sibbald
Cranfield University
Director of Finance
i.sibbald@cranfield.ac.uk

Alan Hill
Institute of Cancer Research
Head of Procurement
alan.hill@icr.ac.uk

Vasi Vasikaran
Square Enix
Head of Business Systems
vasi@eu.square-enix.com

Mark Jeffries
Haymarket Media Group Ltd
Finance & HR Systems Manager
ml.jeffries@haymarket.com

Stephanie Cord
Edinburgh Napier University
Systems Accountant
s.cord@napier.ac.uk

Nathalie Niscastro
St James Place
Head of Business Systems
nathalie.nicastro@sjp.co.uk

Shaun Furness
National Nuclear Waste
BW Technical Co-ordinator
shaun.furness@nuclearwasteservices.uk

Lisa Laycock
National Trust
Financial Systems Development Lead
Lisa.laycock@nationaltrust.org.uk

Ashik Patel
Finance Systems Manager
National Foundation of
Educational Research (NEFR)
a.patel@nfer.ac.uk