

# Case Management in the Community Based LBS Sector

**Results of Phase 1 - Orbund Pilot**  
March 27, 2019



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# 1. Introduction

In 2017 AlphaPlus conducted an environmental scan of LBS programs to better understand what local systems were being used to support the management of the internal business information that was not supported within the EIOS-CaMS. Findings of the scan indicated that a number of different tools and processes were being used to track data across all three sectors, and while the tools worked, duplication and inefficient data sharing was a concern.

Earlier last year Sioux-Hudson, a community-based literacy program procured and implemented a student information system called Orbund, a SaaS application servicing small to medium-sized schools or learning institutions with client information management systems. This program has found that the system meets their needs for case management, and they have successfully customized it to align with ministry data requirements and their own internal needs.

The cost of Orbund is prohibitive for an individual program (min. of \$300/month) but is more manageable if individual programs were to share an enterprise license. AlphaPlus is currently in discussion with Orbund on how to allow for this.

AlphaPlus is committed to providing the license for 3 years (as a public private partnership with Orbund), to pilot programs who are willing and able to help identify gaps/issues and work with AlphaPlus and Orbund to work through these issues before rolling it out further to other programs.

Three community based LBS programs are currently part of the initial rollout and they have been working with AlphaPlus to implement and customize instances of Orbund for their use beginning April 1, 2019.



## 2. Overview

### Program Participation



3 community based programs



English only



250+ learners

### Key Themes

- Pilot programs were confident that Orbund would meet their case management needs and reduce case management administration
- Duplication of data entry in CaMS was a concern



# Overview

## Issues Identified

Over the years a number of programs have expressed a number of issues related to case management.

- MTCU has specific requirements and programs have other pieces of information that they want to be able to track in order to effectively manage clients.
- This has led to multiple systems/process within a single program to manage clients.
- This has also led to multiple systems/processes across the sectors.

## Impact

There is low satisfaction across the community based sector for the tools they are using and the ability for their current tools to meet their needs.

- Spreadsheets are the most commonly used tool used to track client data but 33% of community based programs still use paper.
- Sharing information across tutors, volunteers, and across sites is difficult with the current tools in place.
- Redundancy and duplication of effort where information needs to be entered in program tools and then to CaMS.



# Overview

All three pilot sites currently use tools outside of CaMS to track client data.

Spreadsheets

Word documents

Paper files

This is typical of tools used across the community based sector in Ontario for case management; as found in the 2017 Environmental Scan.



# 3. About Orbund

Orbund is a customizable, web-based education management platform offering a student information system (SIS) for training institutes, higher education, and universities.

## ONLINE APPLICATION PORTAL

The Online Application Portal helps streamline the application processing with configuration options

## INSTRUCTOR PORTAL

The instructor portal allows teaching staff to manage learners, classes and online learning materials

## ADMINISTRATION PORTAL

The administration portal is equipped with features and functions that empower administration staff to easily perform their tasks and duties

## STUDENT PORTAL

The student portal offers learners functionality to stay connected and engaged in their studies for better outcomes



## 4. Pilot Sites

3 out of 4 programs who originally expressed interest in participating in the Orbund pilot project continued with implementation.

### **Dixon Hall Neighbourhood Services**

The day-to-day operations of the LBS program at Dixon Hall, in terms of pedagogy and administration, is managed by two LBS Instructors. The program serves a minimum of 48 learners a year.

The challenges and opportunities of administering the LBS program at Dixon Hall revolve around learner progress monitoring and organizational performance management. The LBS Instructors currently track learner information in a number of separate spreadsheets which can lead to data duplication and issues with data errors and inconsistencies. The Instructors have identified a need for a single tool that is capable of managing the full scope of information that they need to capture about learners in one spot. An information system such as Orbund would allow the LBS Instructor to better monitor learners progress as they advance through the program and ensure that nothing falls through the cracks. This in turn would help the Instructors track Dixon Hall's organizational progress against MTCU requirements outside of CaMS. The new tool could act as a resource to support the Instructor to stay on top of reporting requirements and ensure MTCU targets are being met.





# Pilot Sites

## Prince Edward Learning Centre

Prince Edward Learning Centre provides LBS training plus a number of other training and academic upgrading programs, such as OESP, income tax clinic, and high school upgrading support. Programs and services are administered by an Executive Director, an Adult Literacy Coordinator and an Executive Assistant. In addition to the 120 LBS learners served annually, 500+ adults also access the Centre's other programs.

The challenges and opportunities of administering the LBS program at Prince Edward Centre for Learning are related to manual processes and workflow management. Learner data is managed following manual processes using a number of paper documents, checklists, and spreadsheets. The staff has identified a need to switch from paper based data management to an electronic system that enables automatic processes and better workflow management.

Implementing an information system such as Orbund would enable workflow automation and data management of all the Centre's programs and constituents in one place. Staff would have the ability to pull reports on learner data and have access to information without the need to resort to another staff member, as is the case now. Further, such a solution would allow staff to see at a glance if all of the requirements for MTCU are being met. It would also enable data analysis to identify gaps and determine if any action needs to be taken to improve service, which is an area of interest to the Executive Director.



# Pilot Sites

## Gateway Centre for Learning

The LBS program at Gateway Centre for Learning is administered by an Executive Director, an Adult Program Coordinator, and an Administrative Assistant. Trained volunteer tutors serve roughly 79 LBS learners annually. Aside from the LBS program, the Centre also runs a variety of other adult learning programs; funded through grants, the MTCU, and other partners; as well as fee-for-service programs for individuals who do not qualify for a funded program and small local businesses. The Centre serves over 150+ adult learners annually among its many programs.

The challenges and opportunities of administering the LBS program at Gateway Centre for Learning are related to manual processes and the need for business intelligence to fuel data driven-decision making. Currently, the program is administered following manual processes which depend on individuals to take initiative and remember to complete required tasks. These processes rely heavily on paper records which can lead to paper clutter, requires physical space to store, and can make information retrieval challenging. The Executive Director has identified a need for a software solution to automate manual processes. The Executive Director uses data to inform business decisions. Using a combination of data reports generated from CaMS and data stored in spreadsheets, the Executive Director performs data analysis to create statistics and visualizations to present to the organization's Board of Directors. The actionable information derived from such analysis is used to drive business planning and determine financial budgets, volunteer and staffing needs, and other important business decisions. Implementing a computerized information system such as Orbund would allow for learner data to be readily available for retrieval using search queries. Data could be used to generate reports for comprehensive analysis, thereby providing the Executive Director with meaningful information to drive decision-making.



# Pilot Sites

## Community Learning Alternatives

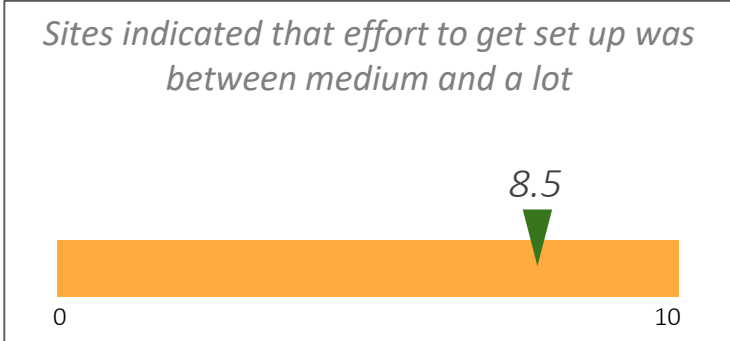
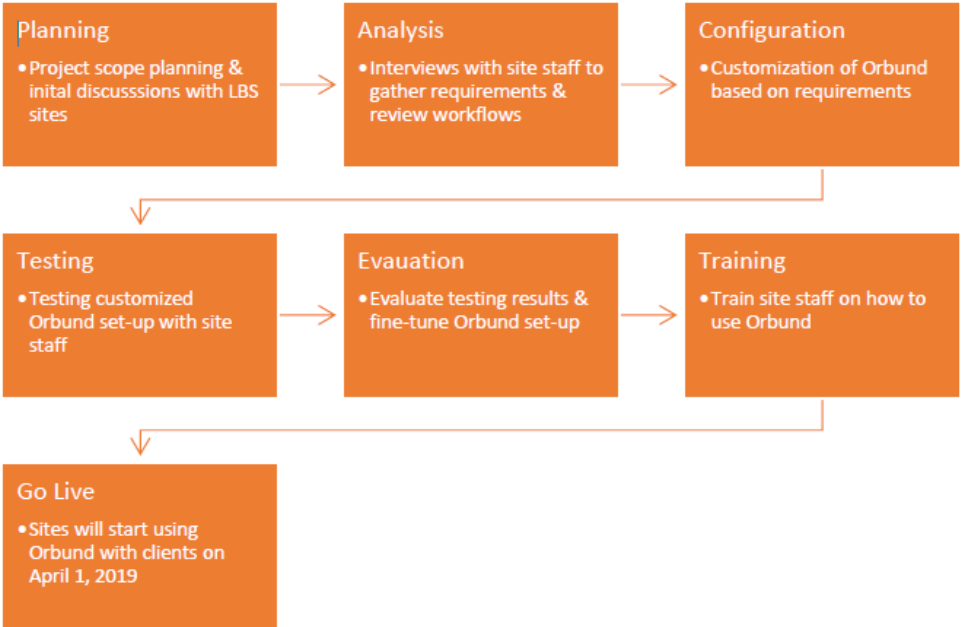
Community Learning Alternative (CLA) serves a great number of LBS learners across three physical locations. CLA originally expressed interest in learning more about the Orbund pilot project; meetings were therefore held between AlphaPlus and the full staff team at CLA for this purpose.

After these initial discussions, CLA decided not to move forward with the implementation of Orbund. The staff team at CLA has been through a number of organizational changes and disruptions since 2017. Thus, change management is of vital importance to the Executive Director and building teacher and staff buy-in would require extra care and time. The implementation of a system like Orbund would necessarily require changes in work processes and information management practices. Ultimately, the Executive Director decided to not introduce any further change into the organization at this time.



# 5. Implementation Process

A number of steps were taken to customize Orbund so that it would be useful for LBS case management and to effectively integrate the software into the workflows of each pilot site.



\*Two of the three site responses



# 6. System Requirements

Requirements for Orbund to be effective can be broken down by ministry requirements, program requirements and other external requirements.

## Program requirements

Staff shall be able to:

- Manage all pertinent learner information in one centralized place
- Generate comprehensive & customized reports on learner data
- Automatically populate the learner profile with data from the LBS Participant Registration Form
- Automatically fill out the LBS Exit and Follow-up form using learner data from Orbund
- Create classes and enroll learners

## CaMS Ministry tracking requirements

Staff shall be able to:

- Track client and learner referrals
- Track information and outreach sessions
- Track learner milestones and learning activities
- Track learner attendance
- Develop and print individualized learning plans
- Track training support disbursements made to learners
- Administer follow-up surveys online (exit, 3, 6, & 12 months)
- Track the results of learner assessment activities



# System Requirements

## Other Business Requirements

- Store all volunteer data centrally
- Track volunteer hours
- Track online/offline communications with learners
- Create digital forms
- Customize all fields and modules in the database as needed
- Use learning management capabilities to share digital content with learners deliver lessons online
- View calendars of learner and staff schedules
- Set-up an attendance kiosk so learners can mark their attendance automatically
- Communicate with learners via SMS (text message)

## System Configurations

- All paper forms converted to digital
- Online surveys implemented (exit & follow-up)
- Online registration process implemented
- Digital signatures enabled on forms
- Customized printing templates created
- General and site-specific reports created
- Staff access controls implemented for data privacy
- Communication templates implemented
- Separate portals set-up for staff, learners, & instructors



# System Requirements

## Un-met requirements

Orbund currently does not support the following requirements

### **Syncing Orbund calendars with Gmail/Office365 calendars**

Staff will continue to use Gmail/Office365 calendars for meetings & will use Orbund calendars for learner and LBS related items.

### **Administering intake assessments online**

Staff will continue to administer intake assessments with currently used tools (paper & digital).

### **Delivery of lessons online**

Staff will continue to deliver lessons with currently used tools (paper & digital).



# 7. Case management expectations

After receiving training, the pilot sites are quite confident that Orbund will be able to meet their case management needs.

The duplication of effort between Orbund and CaMS is still a concern for programs but they feel that Orbund captures information that is critical to their program needs



\*Two of the three site responses





# Case management expectations

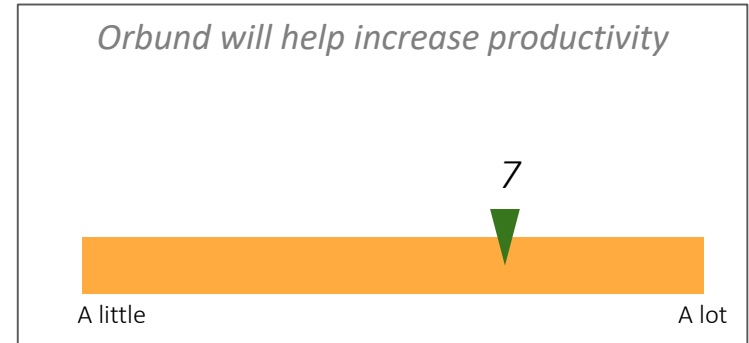
For programs, success means increased productivity, improved communication, reduced time and cost to administer case management. In general, programs felt that Orbund would contribute to their success.

## Increased productivity

The responses were mixed between somewhat and a lot.

They felt that Orbund would help reduce some duplication for non-MTCU case management but duplication between Orbund and CaMS would still be an issue.

Reporting on information that was not easily accessible was noted as aiding productivity



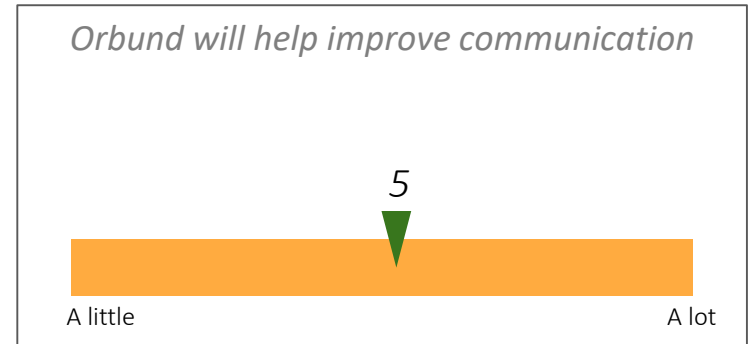
\*Two of the three site responses



# Case management expectations

## Improved communication

Programs felt that Orbund would improve communication only somewhat and that it would depend on staff and how they chose to embrace it.



\*Two of the three site responses

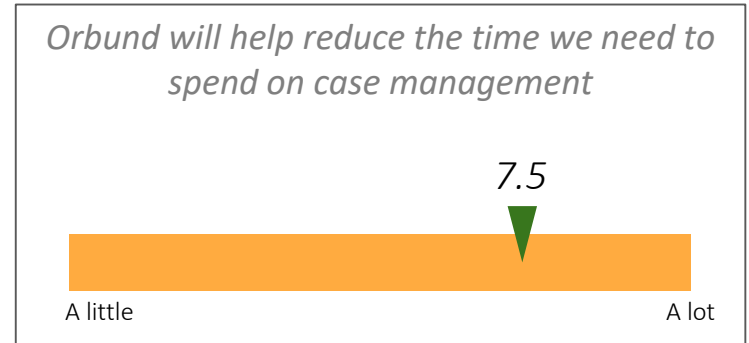


# Case management expectations

## Reduced time to administer case management

For non-MTCU funded case management, programs that that it would reduce time.

The time saved generating reports was also noted.



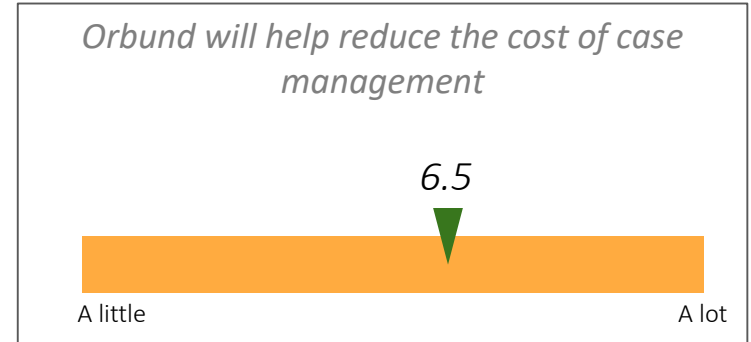
\*Two of the three site responses



# Case management expectations

## Reduced cost to administer case management

Reduction of paper and the associated printing cost was noted as contributing to the reduction of administrative cost.



\*Two of the three site responses

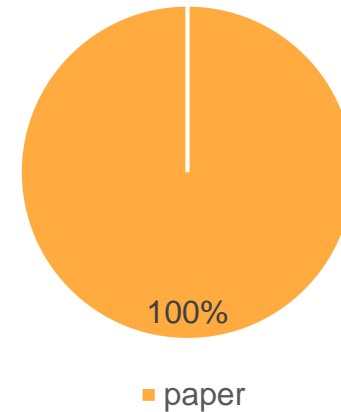


# Case management expectations

While programs anticipate success with Orbund, they do plan to continue to use additional tools such as spreadsheets, word documents and paper tracking to support case management.

All respondents felt that paper would continue to be used particularly as it was an MTCU requirement.

Spreadsheets and Word documents would initially be used but the hope is that they would be phased out as people became familiar with Orbund

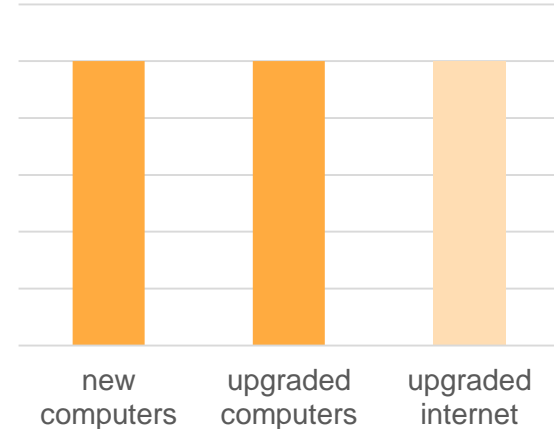


# 8. Program Requirements

Not all programs indicated that they would need to make infrastructure upgrades to support the use of Orbund.

Only one program identified that infrastructure upgrades were needed to support the use of Orbund. With more demand on computer use the program felt that they would need to replace 2 desktop computers and 1 laptop as well as purchase a new desktop for instructors to access onsite.

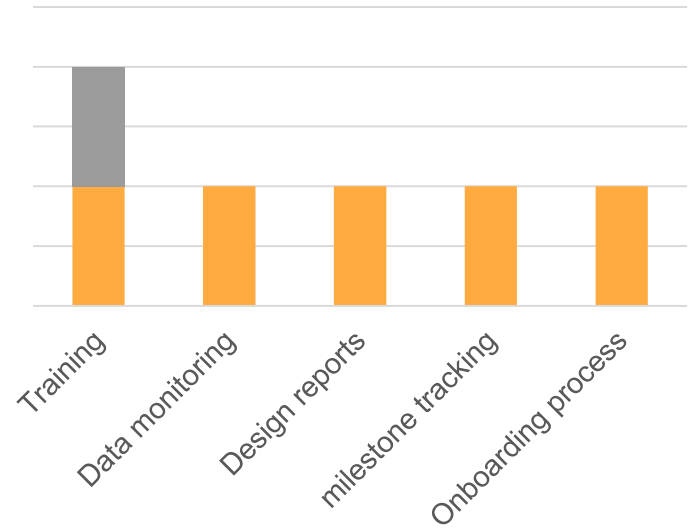
Internet connection was still to be determined but they will need to keep an eye on connection issues as Orbund is adopted and internet use goes up.



# Program Requirements

All respondents felt that they would need to make changes within their program to support the use of Orbund.

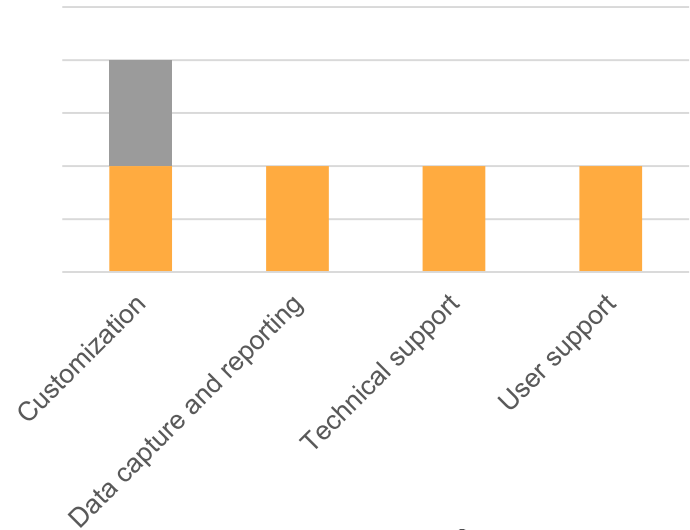
Staff and volunteer training was the most widely cited change they would need to make.



# Program Requirements

All programs felt that ongoing support from AlphaPlus would be needed.

Programs anticipated needing ongoing customization of Orbund to support their program needs or changes to program requirements.





# 9. Other Requirements

Support from Orbund will also be required for LBS programs to be successful beyond the pilot phase.

Currently, the cost of Orbund is prohibitive for an individual program. AlphaPlus is committed to working with Orbund to find a model that will be sustainable beyond the pilot phase. Orbund has expressed intentions to roll out a campus model which would allow individual programs to share an enterprise license thereby bringing down the cost to a reasonable level for LBS programs. AlphaPlus is currently in discussion with Orbund on how to allow for this and it would ideally be in place by the end of the 3 year pilot period.



# 10. Next steps

Further rollout of Orbund to other LBS programs will require a standardized process. Recommended tasks include:

1. Develop a readiness assessment tool that will help programs determine if they are in a position to incorporate Orbund. This would include information on the effort required for programs to join.
2. Document the process to onboard a new programs and validate it with current programs.
3. Identify and document processes that AlphaPlus would need to have in place to support current programs such as ongoing training and user support.
3. Identify and document processes that AlphaPlus would need to support new programs such as readiness assessment tools, training, and ongoing support.
4. Develop a plan for how to recruit new programs.
5. Develop a standard Orbund training program, including an administrative manual



# 11. Summary

Pilot programs are confident that Orbund will meet their case management needs and reduce case management administration.

With low satisfaction across the community based sector for the tools they are using and the ability for those tools to meet their case management needs, there is appetite for a tool that will help streamline and move online many of the administrative tasks that are currently spread across various application such as spreadsheets and documents.

Orbund will not replace all paper based functions nor consolidate all data in one place and it won't yet eliminate the duplication of data entry into CaMS. However, after seeing how Orbund can be set up for their program, pilot programs do feel that it will alleviate manual generation of reports and track and serve up information that isn't currently available and will be beneficial to case management administration.

As with any change, staff and volunteer adoption will be key to ensuring that good data is going in to Orbund. Ongoing support from AlphaPlus will be essential to ensure that there is adequate support in place for current set up and future customization so that programs are able to adapt as new features and functions become available on Orbund.

AlphaPlus is confident that with a new campus model, Orbund will be financially viable for programs and flexible enough to support increased productivity, improve communication and reduce time and cost to administer case management.

