



## Exploring AI With the University of New Haven

### What You Can Learn from Two Real Projects

*Sometimes the best way to understand what AI can do for your business is to look at how another company took the first step. This white paper walks you through two real AI pilot projects completed with the University of New Haven so you can imagine what similar collaborations might look like for you.*

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### Why Companies Are Turning to the University of New Haven for AI Pilots

Many organizations know they *should* be doing more with AI, but face the same hurdles:

- Too many ideas, not enough clarity
- Limited internal bandwidth
- Disconnected systems
- Data that lives everywhere but nowhere
- And most of all: *“We don’t want to waste time or money learning the hard way.”*

That’s exactly why companies have begun partnering with the University of New Haven’s Artificial Intelligence, Computer Science, and Data Science programs. These collaborations are structured, low-risk, short-term projects designed to help companies answer one big question:

**“What would AI actually look like inside *our* business?”**

Two recent real-world projects—conducted over a single academic semester—offer a clear picture of what’s possible.

### Project Example #1: Using AI to Make Better, Faster Decisions on Incoming Opportunities

One company came to UNH with a simple but overwhelming problem: **they were swimming in incoming opportunities—emails, PDFs, bid invites, web portals—and had no consistent way to quickly decide which were worth pursuing.** Reviewing every single one was eating up valuable time from their project managers, and even then, promising opportunities sometimes slipped by unnoticed.



## The idea behind the project

Instead of relying on humans to read every document manually, the company worked with UNH to build an **AI-powered “first pass” screening tool**. The system pulled in opportunities from multiple sources, extracted the important details, and automatically scored each one using a custom rubric the company helped design.

Here’s what it looked like in practice:

- AI read PDFs, emails, and online postings
- It pulled out things like project value, location, complexity, required capabilities
- It scored each opportunity based on strategic fit
- The team instantly saw a ranked list of highest-value opportunities

## Why this mattered

Before the pilot, project managers could easily lose hours per week reviewing low-value opportunities. After the pilot, the company targeted a **60% reduction** in review time with **greater consistency and far fewer missed high-value opportunities**.

And through the prototyping phase, it gave the company a safe way to test ideas, tweak scoring criteria, and clarify requirements before moving to a full-scale solution.

## Project Example #2: Creating Real-Time Visibility by Connecting Disconnected Systems

The same company faced a challenge that many organizations can relate to: **their operational data was scattered across multiple systems that didn’t talk to each other**.

Production lived in one platform, financials in another, shop-floor data on iPads, and additional information in spreadsheets.



Because of that fragmentation, leaders lacked real-time visibility into:

- Project status
- Actual vs. budgeted costs
- Material progress
- Work-in-progress milestones
- Early warning signs of delays or overruns

Instead, they were relying on monthly meetings to understand performance—long after issues had already developed.

## **The idea behind the pilot**

Working with UNH, the company set out to build a **unified operational dashboard** backed by a **newly created cloud data warehouse**.

The prototype included:

- Data connectors to systems like Tekla PowerFab and Sage
- ETL pipelines to clean and synchronize incoming data
- A warehouse to store everything in one place
- Dashboards showing real-time project, cost, and production metrics

## **Why this mattered**

By the end of the semester, the company had a working prototype capable of pulling data from multiple systems and showing real operational metrics—not in spreadsheets, not in monthly meetings, but anytime.

This answered critical questions:

- **Is real-time visibility possible with our existing systems?**
- **How clean is our data, really?**
- **What's the right architecture for a scalable production platform?**
- **What would Phase 2 look like?**

It also gave leadership the confidence to plan for a full production deployment with clear expectations, architecture, and cost estimates.



## What These Projects Reveal About Successful AI Adoption

Both companies ended up with very different prototypes, but their **AI journeys followed the same pattern**:

### ★ Start with a specific, meaningful problem

Not vague AI exploration—real bottlenecks costing time, money, or missed opportunities.

### ★ Run a time-boxed, low-risk pilot

Each project ran for 15 weeks and was scoped to answer core feasibility questions, not boil the ocean.

### ★ Collaborate closely—AI is a team sport

Company leaders, PMs, IT, and UNH students/faculty shaped requirements together, including the scoring rubric and data model.

### ★ Expect clarity, not perfection

These weren't production systems. They were designed to:

- test assumptions
- validate feasibility
- measure business impact
- uncover hidden challenges
- inform a roadmap

### ★ End with a clear Phase 2 plan

Both projects received detailed recommendations, architecture, and cost projections for taking the prototype into production.



## What this means for your Organization.

If you're considering a partnership with the University of New Haven, here's what you can expect:

- A collaborative, hands-on team dedicated to your problem
- A practical pilot grounded in real business needs
- Modern AI and data engineering approaches
- A structured timeline and predictable cost
- Real deliverables: dashboards, models, code, documentation
- A clear roadmap to full-scale deployment

Most importantly, you get **proof of value** without “bet-the-company” risk.

## Closing Thoughts: Your AI Story Starts with a Single Pilot

These examples show that AI doesn't have to start with massive investments or sweeping digital transformations. It can start with one focused, meaningful pilot that helps you learn quickly, validate assumptions, and build organizational momentum.

If you're exploring how AI could fit into your operations, a structured pilot with the University of New Haven is one of the most practical—and least risky—ways to begin.

For more information, please contact.

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