

Healthcare Enterprise Automates Processes

Healthways Relies on Open Text Fax & Document Distribution Solutions to Speed Review Process, Comply with Regulations

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– Dr. William P. Dorney,
Vice President of Clinical Operations,
Healthways Inc.

Healthways Inc. is the largest provider of specialized, comprehensive health and care support services to health plans, their employer customers, members and physicians.

The Challenge

When physicians submit patient treatment plans, the Healthways Virginia-based Utilization Management (UM) team has one business day to ensure that recommendations meet standards for appropriate patient care and that the situations warrant healthcare resources. Unfortunately, controlling the use of healthcare resources consume a fair share of corporate resources. Processing close to 2,000 pages every day involved MFPs, stacks of paper, outdated legacy systems, and hours

of administrative work for UM employees and the doctors who act as peer reviewers. "From beginning to end, processing a batch of request took at least three hours," said Dayna Carney, Utilization Management supervisor with Healthways. "That included manually separating the cover sheets, entering information into the database, then scanning, naming and filing PDF copies that were then sent to reviewers."

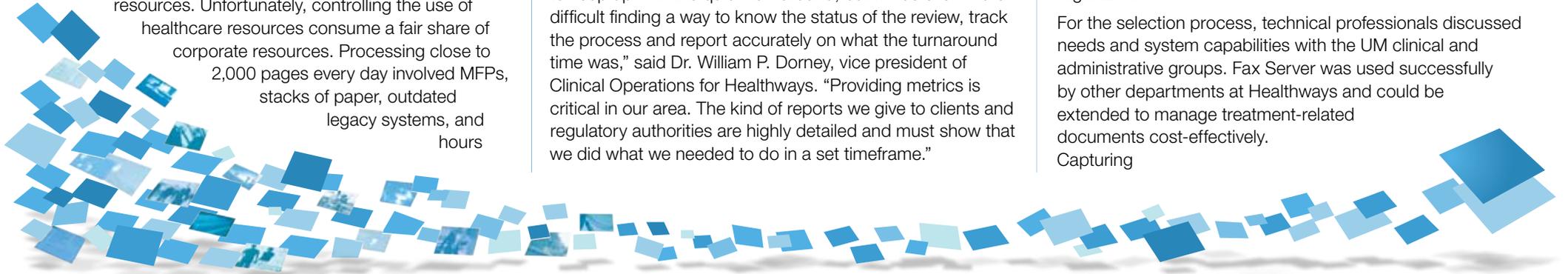
Some situations prompt in-depth review. In these cases, providers send patient records and other documents. Reviewers analyze the files before rendering a decision and returning faxes within notification of acceptance or denial with explanation. To allow enough time for manually processing files, the UM team had to cut off submissions by 3 p.m. It was difficult to deliver files to doctors in a timely manner. "Reviewers didn't get work until late in the day," Carney said. "That was an issue to make sure we complied with regulations." While requirements vary from state to state, they all govern turnaround time and are joined by federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) guidelines for privacy and security. "It was difficult to keep up with the quick turnaround, but it was even more difficult finding a way to know the status of the review, track the process and report accurately on what the turnaround time was," said Dr. William P. Dorney, vice president of Clinical Operations for Healthways. "Providing metrics is critical in our area. The kind of reports we give to clients and regulatory authorities are highly detailed and must show that we did what we needed to do in a set timeframe."

Other regulations control document storage; some records must be maintained for 10 years. Each month, Healthways stored thousands of files until the scanned copies were backed-up. Then, they had the task of shredding the sensitive documentation. When clinical reviewers wanted details from past records, locating PDFs was possible, but far from efficient.

The Solution

Healthways needed to replace complex, manual administrative work with automated, digital document sharing and management. After investigating several options, it installed Open Text Fax Server, RightFax Edition, Open Text Document Server, Alchemy Edition and Open Text Workflow Server, .NET Edition. Critical documentation is now captured and delivered as electronic faxes via Fax Server. Reviews are processed in real-time with Workflow Server. And, records are conveniently stored in digital archives with Document Server. As an integrated solution, Open Text has changed the way Healthways manages documents while maintaining compliance with industry regulations.

For the selection process, technical professionals discussed needs and system capabilities with the UM clinical and administrative groups. Fax Server was used successfully by other departments at Healthways and could be extended to manage treatment-related documents cost-effectively. Capturing



documents electronically from the outset was the first step. It supported real-time processing to make information accessible in a shorter timeframe, even during busy periods. In fact, high volumes of documents are only going to get higher. “We’re ramping up for significant growth,” Dorney explained. Recent acquisition impacted workload and more of the same is expected.

In addition to potential scalability, the Open Text Fax and Document Distribution solutions provide flexibility for customized processes. The organization wanted more visibility into review status along with automated processing and reminders based on pre-set guidelines. “Open Text Workflow Server was more flexible and rules-based than other products,” Dorney said. Healthways technical personnel appreciate its integration with Microsoft Visual Studio and common programming language compared with other solutions based in a “more esoteric programming environment”, according to David Burner, senior programmer with Healthways. “When we saw the Open Text Workflow Server demo we had an eye on coding the UM project, but also looking at other areas like network support, credentialing and claims processing. We could do what we needed in UM, then other departments could use the same powerful workflow tool.”

Submissions used to be limited to an IVR telephone interface; providers called in and filled out treatment templates via phone prompts. Now, providers can send in authorization requests via phone or the web. If the request is approved, Workflow Server automatically faxes an approval letter to the provider via Fax Server. If additional clinical documentation needs to be reviewed by the UM department, it sends a bar-coded cover sheet to the provider who returns clinical records. The fax arrives as an electronic file in Fax Server where Workflow Server automatically reads the bar code and attaches the file to the authorization request. “So, records come back already attached to the proper location and patient file, no human intervention is required,” Dorney said. An email notification alerts UM employees that a

Customer

Healthways Inc.

Industry

Healthcare

Business Solution

- Open Text Fax Server, RightFax Edition
- Open Text Document Server, Alchemy Edition
- Open Text Workflow Server, .NET Edition

Business Challenges

- Utilization management processes were labor-intensive and hard to track;
- Delayed, inconvenient access to files made it difficult to meet compliance requirements

Business Benefits

- Improved security and productivity
- Better customer service

document is ready for action. When completed, files are automatically indexed and stored within Document Server for quick and convenient reviewer access. At any time thereafter - whether hours or months later - reviewers, even those with remote access, may reference the material through a few clicks via computer. “Before Document Server, they were going to folders on the server to pick and find files. A lot of the reviewers found that to be very inefficient,” Dorney said.

Healthways is incorporating a separate appeals process to handle requests for second opinions from providers or patients. Requests still arrive via Fax Server then users manually index the files in Document Server to link them to the system. The company works with Informa, a Florida-based provider of business productivity solutions, to

complete integration and assist as needed in ongoing maintenance along with Eric Carlson, Healthways programmer analyst. Together, the groups resolve issues and refine the system.

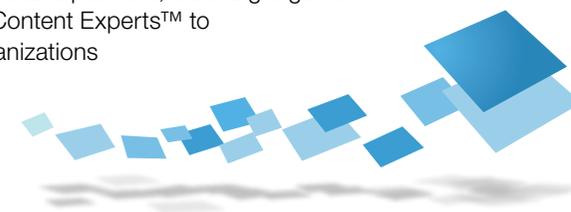
The Results

UM employees save at least two manhours for each batch of authorization request that are now processed with a high level of automation and efficiency via Open Text technologies. A quarter of employees are freed up to focus on other responsibilities such as reporting, according to the UM manager. “It’s more efficient, but we’ll also be able to show better metrics and reporting. With Workflow Server, we can know where documents stand at all times, taking out the guesswork,” Dorney added.

Faster turnaround supports compliance with regulations as well as customer satisfaction and the ability to consistently meet performance standards. Dorney noted, “When a provider gets a response back quickly - even if they don’t like the decision - they won’t be frustrated over the process.” Finding electronic fax, workflow and digital document archive technologies in one vendor eased the process of integration for Healthways. “We’re not just putting three products together and hoping that they sync,” Dorney said. “They were designed to work together.”

For More Information

Open Text, an enterprise software company and leader in enterprise content management, helps organizations manage and gain the true value of their business content. Open Text brings two decades of expertise supporting 50 million users in 114 countries. Working with our customers and partners, we bring together leading Content Experts™ to help organizations



capture and preserve corporate memory, increase brand equity, automate processes, mitigate risk, manage compliance and improve competitiveness.

Informa Software, an Open Text Fax and Document Distribution Group Partner, is a leading provider of business productivity solutions. Its customers include small to medium business; corporate entities; state, local and federal governments and educational institutions throughout the United States.

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