



GEISINGER HEALTH SYSTEM

Geisinger Health System is one of the foremost rural healthcare providers in the United States.

Industry: Healthcare

Geography: United States

Deployment Summary

- TIBCO's BPM software supports an enterprise-wide document imaging management system (DIMS) to automate and streamline the processing of patient information.
- Geisinger is using TIBCO's software to workflow-enable aspects of the customer service and support function for the health insurance component of their HMO.
- Geisinger replaced a manual processing environment in its accounts payable (AP) department with a TIBCO-based system that creates electronic versions of every invoice, stores them in DIMS, and makes them available enterprise-wide.

Benefits

- The TIBCO-based document management system has eliminated backlogs of patient information documents and makes them available within 24 hours as part of a patient's electronic medical record.
- Time to resolve case appeals has dropped from 24 to 8 hours.
- Average processing time for invoices received has dropped from 13 days to 1.8 days. AP now processes all invoices in time to take advantage of 100 percent of discounts offered by vendors for timely payment.



"Every day, patients walk into our approximately 50 clinics with documents relating to diagnosis or general treatment. Our TIBCO-based Document Imaging Management System now makes it possible for us to prioritize that information and, once it has been scanned, to store it and make it available enterprise-wide within 24 hours."

Crystal Cameron, Director of IT, Geisinger Health System

Geisinger Reduces Processing Time and Expenses with Document Management and Workflow Solutions

Founded in 1915, Geisinger Health System has evolved into one of the nation's leading fully integrated healthcare systems. Serving more than two million residents throughout central and northeastern Pennsylvania, the physician-led organization is at the forefront of the country's rapidly emerging electronic health records movement. With 3 medical centers and a 650-member group practice, the system is home to the industry's preeminent not-for-profit rural HMO and the Center for Health Research dedicated to creating innovative new models for patient care, satisfaction, and clinical outcomes.

Given the increasing volume and critical nature of the healthcare documents associated with serving a population of more than two million residents, information managers at Geisinger Health System knew they needed to upgrade their document storage and retrieval system. The goal was to build an enterprise-level system that would enable Geisinger to keep pace with the inflow of documents and make them available within 48 hours of receipt to physicians and other staff at any of the company's approximately 50 clinics. In addition, Geisinger saw an opportunity to improve workflow in the health insurance component of its HMO

customer service unit, as well as the turnaround time in its accounts payable department. Deploying a TIBCO-based solution for business process management (BPM) has enabled the company to meet all those objectives by enhancing processes throughout the enterprise, which has reduced expenses, increased efficiency, and improved customer service.

Improving the Process of Managing Patient Information

As Geisinger's patient base and number of facilities continued to grow, the company's IT management recognized that its current document storage and retrieval system could not handle the increasing volume, nor could it scale to be an effective enterprise solution. To solve that problem, and meet the need to automate other business processes, the company evaluated document management, workflow, and BPM solutions from leading vendors. In consultation with a reseller, Geisinger determined that TIBCO's software and TIBCO as a company best met its requirements. "In terms of functionality, tools, interfaces, and other technical criteria, TIBCO clearly had the best product," says Dave Partsch, Geisinger's Program Director for Enterprise Imaging and Content Management. "The architecture, the

inherent capability to program in .NET, and the overall, well-established product line decided us in their favor.”

Geisinger began using TIBCO’s software as the foundation for its Document Imaging Management System (DIMS), which manages the intake, scanning, storage, and distribution of patient information in digital form. Before automating this process, the company used a manual system, which had accumulated a 15-million-page backlog of hard-copy documents. “We set up DIMS based on TIBCO software so that, based on our prioritizing of the documents, it now manages the intake of documents into a central scanning area, assigns a control number, and tracks the document through the process,” says Partsch. “We’ve met our goal of ensuring that documents reach the scanning center from the remote clinic within 24 hours, and are made available in our electronic medical record within another 24 hours. And because of the tracking function, we know where every document is all the time.”

Workflow-Enabling the Appeals Process

As do all insurers, the insurance HMO business within the Geisinger Health Plan has an appeal process for patients who have a customer service issue. In the past, the company tracked appeals using a log file in their legacy claim system, 13 different spreadsheets, and 2 databases. To replace that, Geisinger IT built a TIBCO-based system that automates the tracking process, including keeping track of escalations and automating communications inside and outside the company – even when the appeal involves such outside entities as the Department of Health and Medicare.

“The new workflow makes tracking more accurate, improves the speed of

communication, and enables us to respond more quickly to customers,” says Partsch. “Best of all, it has reduced the average time to process an appeal from start to finish from 24 hours to 8,” says Partsch.

Document Management Improvements Reduce Expenses

When Geisinger examined internal processes to find ones where better document management could save the company money – as part of an enterprise-wide project named Total Document Management – it identified accounts payable (AP) as a significant opportunity. “AP was using manual processes to open and sort paper mail and write transactions into our financial and AP systems,” says Cameron. “It was an area that just screamed for BPM and workflow automation.”

Geisinger IT used TIBCO’s software to build a solution that turns a paper-based process into an automated, electronic one. Invoices are now sent to the corporate imaging scanning department where they are scanned, enabling processors from that point on to work with digital files. Processors identify vendors and service terms, which, in turn, set priorities and queuing within the workflow. Prioritizing invoices ensures Geisinger takes advantage of discount terms for paying invoices within specified timeframes. AP now accesses the invoice images via a custom interface that is part of the workflow system.

“AP has struggled in the past to take advantage of discounts,” says Partsch. “Before we deployed the workflow system, the average time required to process an invoice was 12 to 13 days. After the first week of operation, it was down to 3.8 days. By the second week, it fell to 1.8 days. And what makes those figures even

more remarkable is that AP was missing 2 analysts during that period.”

The cost savings to Geisinger are significant: The company now processes invoices within 2 days and takes advantage of 100 percent of the discounts for timely payment that suppliers offer. Other advantages include reduced physical storage costs resulting from the transition from paper to electronic documents and remote access by clinics to digital documents stored in the document management system.

Geisinger’s BPM and workflow initiatives have been recognized by IT organizations on several occasions. The company was included on the 2006 national list of “100 Most Wired Hospitals and Health Systems,” published by Hospitals & Health Networks magazine. This is the fourth year Geisinger has made the list. In addition, Geisinger received the Association for Information and Image Management (AIIM) Best Practices Award in 2004 for its comprehensive, HIPAA-compliant medical records system and again in 2006 for development of an Enterprise Information Management solution in a clinical environment. Geisinger has also received multiple awards from the Kinetic Information/Immerge Consulting consortium (2003 Process Innovation, 2006 Process Innovation, and 2006 Vision), which honor technology initiatives that exhibit the greatest potential for transforming a business or social process.



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