

Case Study

Dorset Software: driving compliance and process management across the finance sector

National Health Service Resolution



Established in 1995, the NHS Resolution is responsible for handling negligence claims made against NHS bodies in England. The NHS Resolution indemnifies NHS Trusts against all negligence claims.

Solution Snapshot

Developed using Microsoft technologies the solution consists of an intranet, extranet, a public website and an integrated web-based Claims Management System. Utilised technologies include C#, ASP.NET, SQL Server and Microsoft Content Management Server.

Key Benefits

- Improved communication greatly enhances the efficiency of the claims handling process
- The need for data duplication is removed, reducing error risk
- Extensive capacity and superior performance is offered
- A flexible working environment is fostered
- Extensive management tools provide improved visibility over the organisation
- Leading development technologies ensure long-term compatibility

"The solution was delivered on time, to budget, met our expectations and has delivered benefits that we didn't even realise we needed."

Tom Fothergill, Director of Finance, NHS Resolution

The Challenge

Following a period of rapid expansion in the size and scope of the responsibilities of the NHS Resolution, its Board of Directors realised that they needed to make a change. In order to continue offering a high level of service to all stakeholders, it needed to replace its ageing claims management system.

The current system was reaching its capacity in terms of concurrent users; performance was deteriorating and the risk of a system failure was increasing. Additionally, the NHS Resolution wanted to ensure compatibility with its financial software; to enhance communications with external agencies and to improve its internal business processes.

The Solution

Based on its suggested solution, which very closely matched the NHS Resolution's requirements, its price, its capabilities and its expertise, Dorset Software was awarded the contract to develop a Claims Management Solution, an intranet, an extranet, a public website and 3 years' operational support, worth approximately £1.4 million.

Dorset Software worked closely with the NHS Resolution to undertake the complete analysis and re-design of the organisation's business processes. These processes were incorporated into the workflow of the Claims Management System, which now manages the litigation procedure for all of the outstanding claims against NHS bodies.

The Benefits

The flexible and scalable solution delivered by Dorset Software offers extensive capacity, superior performance and uses leading development technologies. The NHS Resolution believes that the solution has absolutely met its expectations and has brought other, unexpected benefits as by-products of the deployment of the new solution.

Extensive management tools for reporting and analysis are offering improved visibility over the organisation, the staff and their activities. Transparency of business processes and protocols allow for continuing improvements. Finally, a flexible working environment allows employees to access the systems from anywhere, even home.



DORSET SOFTWARE

Introduction

The NHS Resolution is a Special Health Authority and part of the NHS. It has an active risk management programme to help raise standards of care in the NHS and hence reduce the number of incidents leading to claims.

The Challenge

The Board of Directors of the NHS Resolution realised that to be able to continue offering a high level of service to hospital Trusts, the general public, solicitors, expert witnesses and other external agencies, it needed to replace its ageing claims management system.

A team comprising the Director of Finance, the IT Manager and an external IT procurement advisor drew up a detailed specification of the capabilities, functionality, capacity and performance that the NHS Resolution required from a new claims management system.

As part of the public sector, the NHS Resolution has to follow strict rules on public procurement. Subsequently a tender was issued detailing the organisation's requirements. Tom Fothergill comments "We were fairly clear about what we wanted from a new solution and we expected our current supplier to win the contract, based on their experience of working with us. However, we wanted to see what was available in the market and have to follow the legal requirement of issuing a tender and making a decision based on price and capability to meet our requirements."

"Dorset Software understands client liaison and has worked in partnership with us to deliver a solution that exceeds expectations."

Tom Fothergill, Director of Finance, NHS Resolution

The Solution

Following a thorough tendering process involving interviews, reference site visits and extensive discussions, from approximately 80 companies that expressed an interest in tendering for the contract, the NHS Resolution selected Dorset Software. A project team was put together including the Director of Finance, the IT Manager, the Operations Director, some users responsible for the claims work and additional staff from the Finance department.



The NHS Resolution extranet allows relevant documents to be submitted efficiently and remotely.

To determine the exact solution required by the NHS Resolution, Dorset Software worked closely with the project team. The first stage involved the NHS Resolution project team meeting with a team from Dorset Software to discuss the organisation's requirements in a number of design sessions. In these sessions a prototype of the solution based on the specification was outlined. In-depth discussion followed where alternatives and options for a solution were presented. Additionally, a demonstration website was set up during the design process to enable geographically disparate users to submit feedback and comments.

Tom was very happy with the process used by Dorset Software and notes "We found it very useful to flesh out what is truly needed and wanted. It allowed us to come to an acceptable final solution design."

The final solution, which was delivered by Dorset Software on time and within budget, is a Claims Management System (CMS) which now manages the litigation procedure for all of the outstanding claims against NHS bodies. The CMS is a secure web-based application that interfaces completely with the organisation's financial system: Open Accounts.

The solution includes cutting edge digital scanning and document archiving technology. In addition, an organisation-wide intranet solution was developed to improve and manage internal communications and an extranet was developed to allow external access to claims information by third parties.

A public website for the NHS Resolution was also developed by Dorset Software. The website is administered by NHS Resolution staff using a content management system. A training course was designed and delivered by Dorset Software to 120 organisation users to ensure their competency when the system went live.

Technology Snapshot

Developed using Microsoft Technologies, the solution consists of an intranet and an integrated web-based Claims Management System.

Visual Studio.NET, C# and ASP.NET were used for the user interface and SQL Server and EMC Content Addressable Storage for data storage. Microsoft Content Management Server was used to develop and manage the public website.

The Benefits

Integration between the CMS and the financial application removes the need for data duplication and decreases the risk of errors, whilst achieving improved business efficiencies.

Using web security and authentication measures, the extranet can be accessed by authorised third party users. This has resulted in improved communication, a reduction in paper traffic and has greatly improved the efficiency of the claims handling process. Tom Fothergill explains "We now have extensive management tools for reporting and analysis which are offering improved visibility over the organisation, the staff and their activities. Our business processes and protocols are now more transparent allowing us to make continuous improvements. We are streamlining our departments and systems. We have even realised that having a web-based application will now foster a flexible working environment, allowing our employees to access the systems from anywhere, even home."

The systems delivered by Dorset Software are proving flexible and organic, meeting all current requirements. They can also change and grow as and when needs dictate.

Tom summarises the project: "The solution was delivered on time, to budget, met our expectations and has delivered benefits that we didn't even realise we needed." He adds his thoughts on Dorset Software. "We are more than happy with the service and support we have received from Dorset Software. They understand client liaison and have worked in partnership with us to deliver a solution which exceeds expectations."