



Agile Healthcare Now: How HealthNow New York Now Ensures Rapid Access to New, Business Critical Data in Days, Not Months, with Informatica

Innovative data integration strategy transforms one of New York's leading healthcare companies into a more data-driven, agile, and responsive organization.

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— Rob Myers, Enterprise Data Warehouse Solution Architect/Manager, HealthNow New York

FAST FACTS

BUSINESS INITIATIVES

- Improve health outcomes of members to lower costs
- Shift business processes to comply with health insurance reform and mandates
- Increase operational efficiency and profitability
- Ensure information privacy and security requirements are met

TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY

Deployed the Informatica Platform, including Informatica Data Services, to manage access to customer and risk data spread across 16 legacy systems and thousands of local databases, and shorten development times down to days. HealthNow now has a much more flexible IT architecture that is helping the company quickly adapt to evolving healthcare legislation and trends.

Executive Summary

With healthcare reform and its uncertainties looming, HealthNow New York looked to implement a unified data integration environment that would support its huge range of data integration use cases and service oriented architecture (SOA) strategy. Simultaneously, the New York healthcare company needed to accelerate development, lower operational costs, and foster business involvement. Using the Informatica® Platform including Informatica Data Services, HealthNow can today develop new data services and provide access to customer and risk data on its legacy systems and thousands of local databases much faster than before. Today, up to 30,000 claims a day are already processed through the Informatica Platform. The company has developed approximately 4,000 workflows, and it will soon support nearly 10,000 unique requests. The performance more than meets the needs of the business. HealthNow is able to rapidly process more than 10 million rows from Sybase/SQL Server to cache 100,000 rows with a subsecond response time from Web services. HealthNow is also able to build-out a flexible IT architecture that is helping the company quickly adapt to evolving healthcare trends and legislation. Instead of taking six months to deploy new functionality, the healthcare company can now do it in days. This aggressive data integration strategy has transformed HealthNow into a more data-driven, agile, and responsive organization.

BENEFITS

- Rapidly delivered single, trusted view of data across diverse enterprise data sources
- Enabled business users to quickly access plan rate and claims information from a single service
- Shortened time to access new, critical data for pricing and risk analysis, from months to days
- Improved data governance and reduced compliance risk
- Accelerated analysis and certification of data quality for ensuring trusted data
- Helped the company quickly adapt to evolving healthcare trends and legislation

NUTS AND BOLTS

- Solution: Data integration to support operational business intelligence
- Products: Informatica PowerCenter (with Data Profiling Option, Partitioning Option™, Team-Based Development Option™, and Real Time Option), Informatica Data Services (with Data Profiling Option), Informatica PowerExchange®, and Informatica Data Explorer™
- Services: Informatica Professional Services
- Sources: Microsoft Access data marts, Teradata, Facets (benefits, products), product configuration manager (Microsoft SQL Server)
- Targets: IBM Cognos, IBM WebSphere Portal

Outstanding Healthcare and Innovative Technologies

For an industry that has remained fairly consistent in its business patterns over many years, the healthcare industry now faces with sweeping changes on the horizon. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act introduced fundamental concepts such as medical loss ratios, removals of exclusion clauses, and health insurance exchanges—all of which will radically reshape the health insurance business over the next several years. In addition, the looming ICD-10¹ mandate will force health insurers to change current business processes and perhaps the core administrative systems in order to handle the new medical procedure and diagnosis codes. Health insurers also want to manage and service their members more effectively to build loyalty and improve individual health outcomes, renewing interest in individual and small business products as well as comprehensive care management programs.

For an organization such as HealthNow to survive and thrive in this climate, it needs to be agile, efficient, and lean. The organization is one of New York's leading healthcare companies, but not one that simply pays bills. It's a proactive partner in health, providing access to outstanding healthcare, innovative technologies, and information and services that help people lead healthier lives every day. HealthNow serves more than 815,000 members, 13,000 client companies, and 2,100 employees. In 2008, company revenues grew to more than \$2.27 billion.

With an immense amount of diverse data spread throughout the organization and no unified data integration solution, HealthNow was struggling to adapt to the changing climate of the healthcare industry. At a business level, the organization needed to supply a single common framework for access to enterprise-wide healthcare data, including member information, drug claims, provider data, laboratory results, and encounter details. Data was spread across up to 16 enterprise databases—including DB2, Sybase, and SQL Server—and more than 30,000 Microsoft Access databases. It took HealthNow months to build critical new data extracts of customer and products data for pricing and risk analysis. And it required 1,700 hours to add a new product to the portfolio.

“HealthNow was at a crossroads,” explains Rob Myers, enterprise data warehouse solution architect/manager, HealthNow. “We required a solution that would speed up time to delivery of data, enable better business involvement for claims processing, and minimize the impact of change. All of this needed to be achieved against a backdrop of lower operational costs and reduced complexity. The processes HealthNow used to rely on, like creating custom data marts for one-off reporting requests, persisting the data that was needed by the business, connecting all legacy stores individually, and maintaining the integrations by hand, simply would not work any longer—the process was simply too painful.”

¹The International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems 10th Revision (ICD-10) is a coding of diseases and signs, symptoms, and external causes of diseases, as classified by the World Health Organization.

One Flexible Platform Optimized for Both Physical and Virtual Data Integration

Virtual data integration enables the on-demand integration of multiple and diverse data sources, without the need for physical data movement. Informatica Data Services delivers the next-generation data integration platform that combines both physical and virtual data integration, along with inline data profiling and real-time data quality for federated views. This makes it easier, quicker, and cheaper to apply both virtual and physical data integration capabilities to any data challenge you might encounter and also leverage existing skill sets and data integration logic.

Knowing that it wasn't practical to quickly change systems and business process, Myers and his team created a data management strategy that relied on data services. Three potential partners—Informatica, IBM, and Composite Software—were brought on-site to conduct a proof of concept, which required them to install and configure the software and then prove out various use cases. "By overwhelming consensus, the Informatica Platform was the best solution to solve the company's data integration challenges," says Myers "Specifically, the Informatica Data Services technology, which is a key component of the Informatica Platform, allows HealthNow to leverage existing skills and resources. It also means we have a single platform for both physical and virtual data integration. Meanwhile the model-driven data services development approach fits seamlessly with HealthNow's SOA strategy."

The other solutions HealthNow considered would have required multiple skill sets. With Informatica, HealthNow can do its end-to-end integration with one solution: the Informatica Platform. As Myers says, "I see Informatica Data Services as both an evolutionary and revolutionary capability for us; it looks and feels like the rest of the Informatica Platform and this is a skill set we already have; it is revolutionary for us in that I am actually creating data services for the organization."

Working in close partnership with experts from Informatica Professional ServicesSM, HealthNow has standardized enterprise-wide on two integrated components of the Informatica Platform: Informatica PowerCenter[®] and Informatica Data Services[™]. Informatica PowerCenter has been the enterprise data integration tool of choice for almost six years, ever since the enterprise data warehouse initiative started. It has been used in the traditional batch processing mode to populate the data warehouse, to develop various data marts, and to manage the extraction process to send data to various downstream systems and trading partners.

With Informatica Data Services, the Informatica Platform also delivers enterprise data services to satisfy recurring business demands for new and trusted information—information that is either not readily available in the data warehouse or that doesn't belong in the data warehouse. Moreover, there's no delay and overhead involved in designing, staging, and preprocessing data for in-depth analysis to get it into the data warehouse. "The Informatica solution delivers a trusted single view of enterprise data, reducing the complexity of analyzing underlying systems and joining together several disparate sources. Enterprise data services are a key part of the data integration layer for HealthNow's enterprise data reference architecture," says Myers.

HealthNow has been impressed with how seriously the Informatica team took the implementation and how closely Informatica worked with the company to reach a working solution. "The commitment and dedication of the Informatica team was extremely impressive. HealthNow had anytime access to a dedicated technical account manager for technical support on the Informatica technology," Myers says.

High Throughput, High Performance

On average, HealthNow processes 30,000 claims a day through the Informatica Platform. The company has developed approximately 4,000 workflows, and by the end of the year, HealthNow will support nearly 10,000 unique requests and will have up to 100 concurrent users. In terms of response time, HealthNow is able to rapidly process more than 10 million rows from Sybase/SQL Server to cache 100,000 rows with a subsecond response time for Web services.

By standardizing on the Informatica Platform and Informatica Data Services, HealthNow can furnish faster access to customer and risk data across more than 16 legacy systems and thousands of local databases. "HealthNow is also able to build-out a flexible IT architecture that is helping the company quickly adapt to evolving healthcare legislation and trends. Instead of it taking six months to deploy applications, HealthNow can do it in days, which is a huge win for the company," Myers says. "HealthNow can do profiling at each step in the data services process and that is impressive—no other tool can do that."

Reduced Time to Delivery of Business Critical Data from Months to Days

By standardizing on the Informatica Platform and leveraging Informatica Data Services, HealthNow has been able to meet various organizational objectives:

- **Increase responsiveness to business needs.** Where it previously took 1,700 hours to add a new product to the portfolio due to system and data complexity, HealthNow today can build a domain model around core areas such as claims so that the application layer can access data through data services. Instead of taking weeks to get the appropriate data feed ready, it can be done in hours.
- **Single version of the truth.** Previously, the business had to go to five different places to get claims information. With the Informatica Platform, HealthNow can have a data service for data feeds such as “paid claims” and “pending claims,” and business users only have to go to one place through a Web-based tool to access this data.
- **Reduction in ancillary data stores.** Lacking easy access to data, HealthNow business units created lots of custom Access databases; this customization led to inconsistent information and the risk of exposing personal health information. Informatica technology enables HealthNow to easily access data, analyze the data, and then quickly provision data services for any application.
- **Decoupling business from data in support for the SOA.** If a data source changes, HealthNow just changes which data source the data services abstraction layer points to without affecting the consuming application. Standards-based data abstraction has led to a threefold reduction in the costs associated with maintaining data feeds.

HealthNow is constantly examining other uses for the Informatica Platform and Informatica Data Services to help increase efficiency, reduce redundancy, shorten time to market and improve overall quality. To simplify testing in its data warehouse environment, for example, the company has federated the warehouse and the marts, allowing testers to easily compare data within a single environment, without having to export and then do a comparison. This will reduce test development and execution time by up to 50 percent. HealthNow is also simplifying what the underlying sources of data look like. For the application developer, HealthNow exposes one data service that combines five sources of data from many various databases. This consolidation will reduce development time by up to 25 percent; while there will be a corresponding 75 percent reduction in redundant data stores.

“The Informatica Platform and specifically Informatica Data Services have transformed HealthNow,” Myers concludes. “The organization is leveraging the Informatica technology for better business-IT collaboration and to decrease the time to delivery of business pertinent data fivefold. This is ultimately making HealthNow become a more data-driven, agile, and responsive organization.”

LEARN MORE

Learn more about the Informatica Platform. Visit us at www.informatica.com or call +1 650-385-5000 (1-800-653-3871 in the U.S.).

ABOUT INFORMATICA

Informatica Corporation (NASDAQ: INFA) is the world's number one independent provider of data integration software. Organizations around the world gain a competitive advantage in today's global information economy with timely, relevant and trustworthy data for their top business imperatives. More than 4,000 enterprises worldwide rely on Informatica to access, integrate and trust their information assets held in the traditional enterprise, off premise and in the Cloud.



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