IBM®

The power of performance management: Success in healthcare

Overview

The healthcare industry is at a crisis point, with organizations facing ever-escalating costs, inconsistent quality, a critical shortage of skilled workers and an increasing demand for services. Healthcare organizations worldwide turn to IBM® Cognos® solutions for business intelligence (BI) and performance management.

The need to organize, analyze and assimilate information from numerous and varied sources is a critical requirement in today's challenging times. IBM Cognos software is enabling care delivery organizations, health plans and healthcare sponsors to turn data into meaningful information that can support clinical process initiatives and improve business operations. With IBM Cognos software, healthcare organizations can:

- Reduce costs by identifying, implementing and monitoring operational process efficiencies to drive down operating costs.

- Improve care quality by optimizing and aligning clinical processes to improve quality, patient safety and clinical outcomes.

- Promote transparency and access. Healthcare organizations can provide cost and quality information to purchasers, consumers and regulators to drive accountability, collaboration and equitable access to care.

- Drive sustainable and profitable growth. Institutions can support the organizational mission by ensuring market competitiveness and leveraging capacity and capabilities to expand into new markets, partnerships, products and services.

Read on to learn more about how:

- **Bloorview Kids Rehab** created a BI culture within the organization to make reporting more efficient and productive for end users while eliminating the manual steps involved in spreadsheet-based reporting.

- **VITAS**, one of the largest hospice care providers in the United States, is using IBM Cognos TM1™ for all its financial decisions, including the assessment of new markets, payroll analysis and the management of drug costs.

- **The Dutch Healthcare Authority** is delivering transparent and uniform information to decision-makers and stakeholders that monitor healthcare markets and rates provided by care institutions.

- **Martin's Point Health Care** utilizes BI to identify health trends in their member/patient populations, and to help guide their quality improvement processes.

Cognos® software

Bloorview Kids Rehab

Overview

Bloorview Kids Rehab, known as Bloorview, is Canada's largest children's rehabilitation hospital. In 2002, Bloorview partnered with the University of Toronto to become Canada's first teaching hospital in children's rehabilitation. The hospital is home to the Bloorview Research Institute, which was created in 2004 through an endowment from the Bloorview Children's Hospital Foundation.

In 2003, Bloorview's management team realized it could no longer adequately track and analyze its rapidly growing collection of data. More importantly, the organization needed to make information available in a timely fashion to its clinical users. As a result, Bloorview selected IBM Cognos for its BI needs, and more recently standardized on IBM Cognos 8 BI.

The organization is now able to provide information in real time to its users and run reports more efficiently, improving information delivery and patient care.

Challenges faced

Bloorview was a typical healthcare organization that collected huge amounts of data on paper and in databases without an easy-to-use method to drill into the data intelligently.

As the hospital matured, it became necessary for management to have an integrated view of information at all levels of the organization in order to make wise business decisions. Bloorview had an excellent IT foundation to capture data and execute basic reporting functions, but it needed to make information available in an integrated way to users on the management side.

According to Hakim Lakhani, Senior Director of Organizational Effectiveness at Bloorview, the organization was interested in creating a beneficial delivery solution. "We were data-rich but information-poor. We needed to develop a central repository of information that everyone could access in a timely fashion. We also wanted a solution that was easy to use and would not bog down our internal resources."

Bloorview evaluated proprietary systems, but found they did not have the flexibility to turn information around in a timely fashion. In addition, the organization looked at data repositories that they could access with business tools, but decided against this approach, since the vendors in this field were limited and there was a lack of established industry standards.

Strategy followed

After considering different approaches, Bloorview decided to implement IBM Cognos software in September 2003, and migrated to IBM Cognos 8 BI in 2006. Lakhani selected IBM Cognos software because it is the industry standard for BI solutions.

"We were interested in going with a product that had been industry-tested and was considered the leader in BI. IBM Cognos software was the natural choice. We were very impressed with the product's flexibility and ease of use."

Bloorview found IBM Cognos software to be extremely easy to install and manage, which translated into significant cost savings as the company was able to install the product using its own internal resources and avoid any outside consulting expense. In addition, Bloorview knew that IBM Cognos software was able to adequately address the unique needs of a Canadian healthcare organization.

"Indicators of information that are important in the US are not necessarily of a high priority in Canada," comments Linda Hatton, Director of Information Systems at Bloorview. "IBM Cognos was able to understand the needs of

our business and provide a solution that was a perfect match. As a result, we have standardized solely on IBM Cognos software."

Bloorview currently uses three components of IBM Cognos 8 BI: IBM Cognos Metrics Manager, IBM Cognos 8 Analysis and IBM Cognos 8 Reporting. Lakhani estimates that about 100 employees in finance, human resources and management access IBM Cognos software on a monthly basis. The majority are non-technical users from the clinical side of the business.

IBM Cognos software works in unison with Bloorview's Meditech ERP system. "Data from the Meditech modules is fed into a Meditech data repository," notes Lakhani. "IBM Cognos software then runs against the data repository. We have about 34 different models, which define our architecture from Meditech to data repository, and from data repository to the IBM Cognos models."

Benefits realized
"IBM Cognos software has helped create a new culture within Bloorview. Our users now have the confidence to go to one place and get the information they need when they need it. In essence, IBM Cognos software has actually become the glue for our various departments and brought them together to deliver information to the end user," remarks Lakhani.

In addition to providing end users with the information they need, IBM Cognos software has also helped make reporting more efficient. Previously, it took several hours for managers to create certain finance reports depending on the size of the portfolio. Bloorview eliminated the Microsoft® Excel® spreadsheet-based paper system by allowing users to access the IBM Cognos electronic reports to send information back to finance. The user only needed to open a report, view the already highlighted variances, and update it, then send it back to finance. Bloorview has gone one step further and eliminated the manual steps altogether, replacing them with metric-based reporting that has dramatically decreased process cycles.

In addition, IBM Cognos software has helped alleviate the workload associated with reporting. Previously, when an employee needed information on a particular value or scenario, Bloorview would have to run that information against the entire database of a live environment, which could take several hours.

"Now, all the information is already there and can be pulled and organized in any fashion in minutes. The employees can actually run the report themselves, which frees me to work on other things," comments Hatton.

Lakhani also noted that with IBM Cognos software, Bloorview has been able to develop applications that had not been created previously in pediatric rehabilitation. The ability to link information together has huge implications for clinical factors in helping Bloorview learn more about the process of care delivery and where to make adjustments and improvements.

Looking to the future, Bloorview has plans to be a host solution for other children's treatment centers, and provide IT and decision support services. "Other centers are attracted to what we are able to do through IBM Cognos and are looking to manage their business in the same way from an information gathering and analysis standpoint," states Lakhani. "We are excited about the opportunity to help other centers realize the benefits of using IBM Cognos solutions."

"IBM Cognos software has helped create a new culture within Bloorview. Our users now have the confidence to get the information they need from just one place when they need it. In essence, IBM Cognos software has actually become the glue for our various departments, bringing them together to deliver information to the end user."

Hakim Lakhani,
Senior Director Organizational
Effectiveness, Bloorview Kids Rehab

VITAS Innovative Hospice Care

Overview

VITAS Innovative Hospice Care, one of the oldest and largest hospice care providers in the United States, was founded to preserve the quality of life for those with a limited time to live. It is a company defined by the needs of the patients and families it serves.

VITAS has enjoyed dynamic growth since its founding as a volunteer organization by a United Methodist minister and an oncology nurse. Today, VITAS employs 9,000 professionals who care for terminally ill patients daily – primarily in the patients' homes, but also in the company's inpatient hospice units and in hospitals, nursing homes and assisted living communities and residential care facilities. VITAS team members include registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, home health aides, physicians, social workers, chaplains and other care-giving professionals.

Over the years, VITAS has expanded by adding new markets and additional locations, operating 46 programs in 15 states and the District of Columbia. VITAS currently cares for almost 12,000 patients a day in hospice programs across the US.

Challenges faced

Before implementing IBM Cognos TM1, VITAS relied on Microsoft Excel for reporting and data analysis. However, with multiple facilities, levels of service and patients, VITAS found that managing all of its financial data and performing the required calculations was a tremendous task. Simply compiling information was extremely time-consuming, and general ledger loads took as long as 40 minutes.

In addition, as VITAS added more and more data with mounting levels of detail, the multi-spreadsheet and multi-workbook approach became too unwieldy and inflexible. VITAS needed a robust financial analytics solution that was able to handle heavier volumes of data and do more in-depth analysis of its payroll, drug costs and healthcare reimbursement. That, coupled with the fact that the financial team spent considerable amounts of time simply gathering and collating operational and financial data, meant management could not access the information it needed for day-to-day or strategic decision-making in a timely manner.

Strategy followed

The VITAS financial planning department was a team of Excel power users, so management wanted to

use this in-house skill set while giving analysts a more flexible and powerful tool. VITAS knew a real-time analytics engine with an elegant Excel-like interface would enable them to analyze their multi-dimensional data in many ways that were not previously possible.

After a brief review process, VITAS selected IBM Cognos TM1, based on its ease of use, ability to rapidly analyze enormous amounts of data and perform complex scenario planning. "One of the things we liked about IBM Cognos TM1 was that it nearly eliminated any reliance on outside consultants – in both system deployment and management. We became the experts on our financial systems – not some outsourced group," says Neil Golub, Director of Planning and Analysis at VITAS.

VITAS implemented IBM Cognos TM1 as a corporate-wide solution initially in the mid-1990s and has enjoyed continued success using the solution, recently upgrading to the latest software version of the product. The system is used by 12 financial analysts in various departments and 20 accountants. More than 130 VITAS executives see and work with reports generated from the system. VITAS has also implemented an executive dashboard that is based on

IBM Cognos TM1 Web, the real-time Web interface of IBM Cognos TM1. This too is a corporate-wide solution, with 46 offices in 15 states now using the dashboard.

Golub notes, "We've now had IBM Cognos TM1 for over a decade, and have evaluated other solutions over the years, quickly realizing that no other solution can match up to IBM Cognos TM1, not only in terms of functionality, but also in terms of cost. Other solutions we evaluated were at least double the cost of IBM Cognos TM1."

Benefits realized
VITAS uses IBM Cognos TM1 for a variety of different tasks – serving new markets, analyzing payroll and drug costs, and maintaining compliance with healthcare reimbursement regulations.

Over the years, VITAS has entered under-served markets – ones the competition avoids because they view them as unprofitable – and made them profitable. VITAS moves into those markets backed by the strategic analysis and planning necessary to both meet patients' needs and make good business decisions. VITAS uses IBM Cognos TM1 for this analysis and planning, modeling data that affects profitability such as trend data for the potential location, regional government reimbursement rates and local labor costs.

Using IBM Cognos TM1, VITAS financial planners pull together detailed information in 10 minutes – a task that used to take them an entire day to complete. This information allows planners and the executive management team to determine quickly how long it will take a new market to become profitable. VITAS can then determine how to capitalize on the new market and how it will affect corporate cash flow. This approach to managed growth has enabled VITAS to grow its services without growing its financial planning department.

IBM Cognos TM1 has also helped VITAS with its extremely complex payroll analysis. The company employs more than 9,000 professional caregivers, from nurses and physicians to social workers and chaplains. Because it provides services in a variety of settings – including patients' homes, long-term care and assisted living facilities, and in-patient units – travel time, mileage rates and overtime must all be accounted for accurately.

VITAS uses IBM Cognos TM1 for its weekly payroll cycle to extract bottom-line data, spot trends, react quickly and adjust staffing as needed. By analyzing payroll so frequently, VITAS can quickly determine patient-staff ratios and re-deploy staff as needed – sophisticated analysis enabled only through IBM Cognos TM1, and especially important when healthcare

"If we had not deployed IBM Cognos TM1, we simply would not be able to do the kinds of analysis or handle the volume of analysis that we have today to assist management in making the business as successful as it is."

Neil Golub,
Director of Planning and Analysis,
VITAS Innovative Hospice Care

providers are affected by nursing shortages. Now, within just three days of a payroll cycle's close, VITAS has the necessary information to make changes to maintain exceptional care levels, while remaining profitable. Most recently, VITAS has built a weekly balanced scorecard of metrics across the business. Golub notes, "We can now extrapolate payroll information more frequently, in a snapshot view, and monitor and analyze weekly payroll trends that then roll up into monitoring and forecasting our business."

IBM Cognos TM1 has also helped VITAS manage its drug costs more effectively by providing insights into drug usage and drug expenditures. VITAS stores all drug information in a proprietary database and exports this information to IBM Cognos TM1, which then gives executive management the information it needs to align decisions with the corporate savings strategy.

For example, management receives information it can use to renegotiate contracts with pharmacies, such as the usage of generic rather than brand-name drugs.

VITAS also relies on IBM Cognos TM1 for many aspects of operations – from budgeting and forecasting to rollup analysis, monthly reports and what-if scenarios. As a result of using Excel as the front end for IBM Cognos TM1, executives and financial analysts can easily access the information, automatically make changes throughout linked data and drill down to details. The entire system looks and acts like a spreadsheet, but has added flexibility and depth that is impossible to attain with only a spreadsheet. This feature makes it possible for managers to analyze their data quickly on their own, without relying on help from the finance department.

"We have found IBM Cognos TM1 adapts to the way our management team works. Some of the management team members don't even know they are working with Excel. IBM Cognos TM1 can hide the Excel functions from non-Excel users," says Golub. He continues, "Often senior managers need new reports on trends or other information on which we have not reported previously. In the past, a new request like this would require a programmer to hard-code a solution. With IBM Cognos TM1, analysts can create their own reports without help

from the IT department – ultimately giving the managers more power in a timely manner."

By reducing the hours spent gathering and sorting operational and financial information, VITAS now has much more time to analyze what the data truly means to its business. For example, VITAS has also begun using the solution for compliance and financial and healthcare reimbursement regulations. VITAS can now monitor Medicare payouts and information, as well as revenue and operations, in one view. With up-to-date information at their fingertips, executives can immediately identify trends or anomalies, and quickly make adjustments across their entire business.

Whether the audience is internal or external, the graphic capabilities of IBM Cognos TM1 make it easy to present timely information. For example, the VITAS executive team can view a scoreboard with graphics that rank different aspects of each location's performance against a standard. The front end of IBM Cognos TM1 is so flexible that Celia Spitz, Vice President of Planning and Analysis, can create quarterly presentations for the Board of Directors in Microsoft PowerPoint®, with live links back to Excel and IBM Cognos TM1. IBM Cognos TM1 reduces by two-thirds the time it takes to compile information and input it into a presentation, saving many hours each month.

The benefits of being able to present information very quickly in an easy-to-understand format cannot be overstated. "We use IBM Cognos TM1-generated information in our presentations to our bankers and regulatory agencies. Our bankers are in awe of our reports and how quickly we can generate them," comments Spitz.

Since VITAS first started with IBM Cognos TM1, the company has grown by 120%. Even with the significant increase in financial data that has accompanied this growth, "we've never hit a wall with IBM Cognos TM1," Golub points out. He adds, "In years of working with IBM Cognos TM1, VITAS has never seen a need to do an ROI study – the benefits are that obvious. The justification for the investment is completely apparent."

As VITAS continues to expand its IBM Cognos TM1 deployment, it expects to increase its use to areas of the business such as clinical research as well as operations and marketing. The company also plans to use the new role-based home pages for executive dashboards.

"If we had not deployed IBM Cognos TM1, we simply would not be able to do the kinds of analysis or handle the volume of analysis that we have today to assist management in making the business as successful as it is," remarks Golub.

Dutch Healthcare Authority

The Dutch Healthcare Authority (NZa) came into existence in October 2006, having evolved from the National Health Tariffs Authority (CTG) and the Supervisory Board for Health Care Insurance (CTZ).

The NZa is located in Utrecht and employs over 235 people. The task of the NZa is to monitor the healthcare markets in the Netherlands and ensure that citizens receive more care for their healthcare euro. With this mandate, the NZa turned to IBM Cognos 8 BI to align the necessary data, people and processes for effective monitoring.

Challenges faced

In October 2006, the Healthcare Market Regulation Act (WMG) came into force. Within this framework, the organization's mission was to create and monitor properly functioning healthcare markets. "Consumers must receive the best services and value for their euro," says Anne- Christien de Zwart, Coordinator of the organization's Business Intelligence Competency Center (BICC). "By proactively monitoring the healthcare market, our

mandate is to guarantee efficiency, market transparency, freedom of choice and more access to quality care."

In addition, the NZa focuses on management of the total costs by defraying the costs of care providers and monitoring the proper implementation of healthcare insurance regulations. In order to accomplish all of this, the NZa had to have its information services ready before the act's official start on October first. This was a formidable task given the circumstances.

"There was a great need for transparent and uniform information," says De Zwart. "However, we were dealing with an organization in development, complex processes, new tasks and highly educated, independent employees who desired a high degree of participation and flexibility. We also faced a technical challenge: there was an enormous amount of data we could not handle effectively in Excel, and there were data sources and data providers still in development."

Strategy followed

The NZa constructed a data warehouse, and fed it with data from the budget and rate information from healthcare institutions, the Diagnosis Treatment Combination Information System, and more. For presenting the data, the NZa opted for IBM Cognos 8 Business Intelligence. IBM Cognos 8 BI emerged as the best of the six they evaluated during the course of a European tendering process. With IBM Cognos software, the NZa developed flexible cubes and layered standard reports, which provide insight on and analysis of the various levels of care and rates provided by institutions.

A newly established BI Competency Center played an important role in the development of the data warehouse, the cubes and the reports. "We did not want to depend on external consultants alone, but rather to build up and monitor the quality of the knowledge ourselves," says De Zwart.

In order to facilitate acceptance, the BICC invested in communication with the users. "We showed the users the possibilities and kept them informed of the progress. This was crucial," says De Zwart.

Benefits realized

With the data warehouse and IBM Cognos software, the NZa has laid the foundation for good information services and proper performance of its tasks. "Our organization must work transparently and make decisions based on solid information," says De Zwart. "This allows work to be done based on a single version of the truth."

For its task of monitoring free market pricing, IBM Cognos software and the data warehouse provide the NZa with good insight into the rates used by the different institutions and the relationship of these rates to their market hare. With the help of this information, the NZa can intervene in a timely way in the case of activities that interfere with free market processes. By streamlining information services, the NZa also ensures that policy and implementation are better and more quickly coordinated with each other. "We are able to advise the Ministry of Health on new policy based on an analysis of actual facts," says De Zwart.

"The BICC team understands the business processes and the direction we are headed, and is close to the users. This makes it possible to optimally set up and maintain information services, taking into account the level of reliability desired by the Board of Directors, the manageability required by the IT department, and the flexibility desired by users. All of these roles are represented in the BICC."

Next steps

"Both policy and our organization are still evolving," says De Zwart. "As we evolve, the data warehouse and our use of IBM Cognos software will continue to grow as well."

"Our organization must work transparently and make decisions based on solid information. With IBM Cognos software and a single version of the truth this is now possible. What's more, we are able to quickly coordinate policy and its implementation."

Anne-Christien de Zwart,
Business Intelligence Competence
Center, Dutch Healthcare Authority

Martin's Point Health Care

Martin's Point
HEALTH CARE™

Overview

Rising costs and increasing complexity are driving health care organizations to reassess what they need to do to keep patients–and business–healthy. Their challenge? Containing costs, while improving clinical outcomes, and at the same time meeting the increasingly complex needs of patients, physicians and other health care providers.

Founded in 1981 and headquartered in Portland, Maine, Martin's Point Health Care serves approximately 88,000 members and patients. As both a health care delivery and health plan provider, Martin's Point Health Care cares for its communities in two ways: by providing primary care through owned group practices and health care centers to patients in Maine and New Hampshire; and by offering health plans and wellness services to members throughout northern New England and northern New York. These health plans include: the Uniformed Services Family Health Plan (USFHP) for retired military personnel as well as active duty dependents; a Medicare Advantage plan, Generations Advantage; a commercial plan, Point Partners; and health management services for Maine employers.

As a physician-led organization, Martin's Point strives to keep people healthy, provide excellent service and find innovative ways to make the health care system more efficient and effective. By measuring success through health outcomes, cost, satisfaction, service and performance, Martin's Point fuels its constant process improvement initiatives, which in turn make it a stronger and more innovative institution.

In keeping with its goal of delivering effective and efficient care to its patients, Martin's Point selected the IBM Cognos 8 Business Intelligence (BI) platform for a standardized, Web-based reporting system, easily accessible throughout the organization. This case study will focus on how Martin's Point uses IBM Cognos 8 BI to:

- Save time, improve customer and employee satisfaction and make better use of resources by eliminating its paper reporting requirements

- Transform a reporting process that used to take weeks into one that happens in a matter of seconds

- Identify patients at risk, and respond quickly to decrease their risks

- Answer tough business questions with only a few clicks of the mouse

- Create executive dashboards and scorecards that monitor vital business metrics

- Enable employees across the organization to make better decisions.

"As a non-profit organization, we strive continually to improve the quality of the health care services we offer our members and patients," says Jeff Guevin, Manager BI Administration at Martin's Point. "IBM Cognos 8 BI enables us to identify health trends in our member/patient populations, and helps guide our quality improvement processes. The IBM Cognos solution also provides our employees with resources that are easier to use."

Reporting that brings value to the organization

"Because we are a non-profit organization, we have to be conscious of delivering our services in the most cost-effective way possible," Guevin says. "We must also focus on the well-being of the patients and members we serve. Therefore, our true ROI is whether we can improve the clinical outcomes of members and patients. We need to make people healthier and drive down medical expense."

With IBM Cognos 8 BI, Martin's Point has improved the turnaround time for reports, which Guevin says is saving the company money. It is now able to measure its critical success metrics, such as the medical loss ratio, and publish these metrics to the appropriate audience electronically.

"IBM Cognos tools have changed our whole paradigm at Martin's Point Health Care," he continues. "Prior to using IBM Cognos software, a data request would take days or weeks for an analyst to process, given the nature of our older SAS system. Then, after we delivered the results, a change or edit might be needed. The request went back to the analyst for further work, and so the cycle continued."

With the IBM Cognos tools, that time is now measured in seconds, or clicks. In addition, the company now has a robust ETL process that can handle the many data sources. This adds up to happier customers—both external and internal.

"We are now able to improve service internally," Guevin says. "With IBM Cognos 8 BI we can literally take our laptop into a meeting with our business users, ask them what they need to see and then drill down to different reports and analyze different aspects. The results are immediate. Questions are answered in a few clicks of the mouse and decisions can be made on the spot."

"We've also saved time in terms of reconciliation to get to that single version of the truth," he continues. "Instead of worrying about reconciliation, we consider what the numbers mean to the business. So it's definitely a big shift in thinking."

Innovations that support improved care
According to Guevin, quality improvement is backed by a commitment to staying at the forefront of technology. It's about improving functionality through innovation.

Martin's Point's physicians and care managers experience the benefits firsthand. With IBM Cognos 8 BI software, Martin's Point is producing clinical profiles of its patients and alerting physicians about potential gaps in care. For example, if a patient with diabetes needs specific tests done in a timely fashion, a report can alert the member's primary care provider that the missing tests should be scheduled.

"IBM Cognos reports have become a ready tool in managing our chronic disease registry," says David Hallbert, MD at Evergreen Woods Primary Care, a Martin's Point practice. "We use them to track patients with such conditions as diabetes or heart disease—to make sure they have the follow-up they need to prevent complications. The registry is as easy as putting one word in the web browser and finding your panel

of patients. We're meeting our goals in qualifying for pay-for-performance through these tools."

Martin's Point also uses a third party predictive modeling product and integrates the output into its BI reporting. Care managers receive reports that help them determine which health plan members should be contacted first because they have a higher risk of future medical needs.

"Health care organizations have a responsibility to keep people healthy," says Eric Place, Manager BI Reporting at Martin's Point. "With the amount of patient information that we can get from the reporting tools, EHR and claims data, our customer care is improved. A doctor can single out his patients who are diabetic, and then find out if they are in control of their blood sugar. It might indicate that his office should contact that person to talk to them. So, patient care takes on a whole new meaning because specific risk factors can be analyzed."

Thanks to IBM Cognos 8 BI software, getting that information is fast and simple. "Before, it took a week," says Place. "Now, the information is available upon request. In health care, there are thousands of diagnoses, and many things that affect the health status of a patient. It is so easy for a physician to just open up a dimension in IBM Cognos

software, select the diagnosis of interest and find the required information. It's unbelievable compared to what we used to do to support our clinician's requests."

"Every time I show our health care providers the power that is at their fingertips to create these secure reports, analyze the data and deliver different output formats, their eyes just light up," Guevin adds. "They are amazed."

Business background and case for change

"We needed to reduce time spent on creating reports for managers and providers by standardizing our reporting on a scalable, Web-based system," says Jeff Guevin. "Before, when the typical report request came in, the analysts would code it and then send the report back to the user for additional refinements. In all, it was frequently a two- to three-week reporting system process."

Frustrated by the time it took to produce usable reports, Martin's Point was looking for a user-friendly business intelligence tool that enabled its users to "point and click" for strategic reporting. After evaluating both IBM Cognos and Business Objects software, the organization chose IBM Cognos software, appreciating its simple integration process, ease of use and capability for aggregating and analyzing data.

"We needed fast, all-in-one BI software that put the answers to key strategic and business questions in the hands of our users with only a few clicks of the mouse," Guevin says. "We have found this in IBM Cognos 8 BI."

"Five years ago, our existing data warehouse had no real reporting functionality," says Eric Place. "Working with IBM Cognos partner Integration Management Incorporated (IMI), we built an ETL process in Microsoft SQL Server®. They recommended IBM Cognos software and the solution has grown from there."

During the initial implementation, Martin's Point deployed IBM Cognos Series 7 products into its Microsoft Windows Server 2003® operating system and SQL Server 2000® environments. They later used IBM Cognos PowerPlay® and IBM Cognos ReportNet® to aggregate data and provide a drill-down facility. In March 2006, the organization upgraded to IBM Cognos 8 BI and in April 2007, Martin's Point moved to IBM Cognos 8.2, which has enabled a significant increase in analysis speed.

With IBM Cognos 8 BI, Martin's Point was able to merge both the ReportNet and PowerPlay environments quickly into one common framework. This consolidation enabled users to access

only one Web site, as opposed to the two separate sites they previously needed to work with.

The capacity for company-wide access and information sharing was also a huge incentive for Martin's Point. "Most of our information today is now shared through portal pages," says Guevin. "We create these reports and put them out on one of the portal pages. As an administrator, I'm able to control and actually add these portal pages to other users' environments. Sometimes we're dealing with non-technical folks, so it's a huge benefit for me to use IBM Cognos 8 BI to go behind the scenes, add the key portal pages that the typical user needs, notify them with a quick phone call and then allow them to scroll through the report with a click of a button."

Today, Martin's Point's 80-plus trained users run about 300 reports on a weekly basis–touching all departments, from frontline workers up to the CEO. IBM Cognos BI 8 has also allowed Martin's Point to create two executive dashboards and a scorecard that monitors corporate strategic goals for health plan enrollment.

The right tools for the job

In the future, Martin's Point will continue developing dashboards and scorecards for the rest of the management team, including

directors. It also plans to automate more processes by leveraging the watch rules and alert capabilities of IBM Cognos BI 8.3. With these capabilities, the organization will be able to better focus on reports when there is a significant change to the data, since there is often no use reviewing or delivering reports when the data has not changed over time. Watch rules and alerts save users' time. The platform will also be extended to the committed Microsoft Excel users on the Finance team by dynamically linking their Excel spreadsheet data with IBM Cognos BI cubes via Cognos Analysis For Excel (CAFÉ). Ultimately, the team will expand functionality to meet the needs of the human resources department as well.

"Who knows what tomorrow will bring?" Eric Place asks. "Our job is to make sure we're ready to meet needs as they arise.

With the many different tools we have with IBM Cognos 8 BI, we can do that, but it's important to use the right tool for the right situation. We are very fortunate that we have Informatics staff who can identify and translate our medical directors' requests and then come back and deliver the results."

It's all about being cost-efficient. According to Jeff Guevin, IBM Cognos 8 BI has given Martin's Point a set of tools that makes it easy for users at all levels within the organization to focus on the organization's goals and mission. "We are able to not only keep an eye on the efficiency, but also improve the well-being of our members and patients by quickly identifying opportunities for intervention that lead to positive outcomes for their health."

"As a non-profit organization, we strive continually to improve the quality of the health care services we offer our members and patients. IBM Cognos 8 BI software enables us to identify health trends in our member/ patient populations, and helps guide our quality improvement processes. The Cognos solution also provides our employees with resources that are easier to use."

Jeff Guevin,
Manager BI Administration,
Martin's Point

**About IBM Cognos BI
and Performance Management**

IBM Cognos business intelligence (BI) and performance management solutions deliver world-leading enterprise planning, consolidation and BI software, support and services to help companies plan, understand and manage financial and operational performance. IBM Cognos solutions bring together technology, analytical applications, best practices and a broad network of partners to give customers an open, adaptive and complete performance solution. Over 23,000 customers in more than 135 countries around the world choose IBM Cognos solutions.

For further information or to reach a representative: www.ibm.com/cognos/healthcare.

Request a call

To request a call or to ask a question, go to www.ibm.com/cognos/contactus. An IBM Cognos representative will respond to your enquiry within two business days.

IBM