

Sunrise Consulting

Virtuo Business Intelligence Solution Drives Faster Decision Making and Helps Win New Customers

Headquartered in Hauppauge, New York, approximately 30 miles east of New York City on Long Island, Sunrise Consulting provides complete outsourced billing services to hospital and independent laboratories throughout the country. Sunrise Consulting was formed by a team of laboratory management experts who have more than 30 years of hands-on experience at one of the most successful laboratories in the United States. They realized that the billing expertise they developed there would be of considerable value to other labs.

To keep their in-house labs fully utilized, hospitals often provide 'outreach' lab testing services to local physicians, clinics and managed care organizations; however, hospital billing systems, processes and staff are typically not geared to handling the high volumes of low-value transactions that characterize lab billing operations. As a result, hospitals, as well as independent labs, turn to Sunrise Consulting, whose system and processes are already optimized for this style of billing. Using this system, which is based on a highly customized billing and accounts receivable system, Sunrise Consulting provides services across the full billing cycle, including invoicing, statements, payments and recovery

The Challenge

Although Sunrise's system does a great job of lab billing, it required an efficient method for obtaining information required for the reports that Sunrise generates monthly to keep its billing customers up to date on the status of billing operations and how well Sunrise Consulting is performing on their behalf. This includes information such as receivables aging, average Days Sales Outstanding (DSO), cash collections, accession prices, and volume of invoices by insurance carrier, to name just a few. Through a 'cut & paste' process involving Excel and various report-writing tools, it was taking a Sunrise accountant up to two weeks every month to pull this information together to create a standard package of customer reports.

"We were putting a fair amount of time into this report-generation process every month," says Eric Crugnale, CIO at Sunrise Consulting. "It

Customer

Sunrise Consulting

Solution

Virtuo Business Intelligence

Benefits

- Eliminates labour-intensive, error-prone manual report generation
- Eliminates the time and cost associated with extracting Key Performance Indicators manually
- Reduced analysis and reporting time enables faster decision making
- Staff focus on analysis rather than on gathering, consolidating and validating information
- Integrates with virtually any laboratory information system
- Supports value-added service offering and competitive differentiation

was a very laborious, manual task that was further complicated by the fact that the data was coming from the system in a variety of formats.”

In addition to the regular monthly reporting, Sunrise Consulting gets frequent ad hoc requests from customers and from its own management for information to support decision making, for example, and for internal audits to ensure preparedness for external audits and regulatory compliance.

“The information we wanted was part of a transaction-based billing system that is simply not geared to ad hoc inquiry or to slicing, dicing and analyzing data,” explains Crugnale. “We wanted to provide a certain level of transparency to our customers, giving them real-time access to information on the type of job we were doing on their behalf.”

The Solution

Crugnale and his IT team decided that the best way to solve their information access problem was to get the data out of the transaction system and into some form of data warehouse and then add some tools for analyzing the data. After examining products from several lab technology vendors, and even looking at some tools that might allow them to do this on their own, a small selection committee at Sunrise Consulting that included senior IT and Finance management chose the Virtuo Business Intelligence product from MediSolution.

“We chose Virtuo BI because the underlying technology was pretty standard stuff, such as Microsoft, that you’d expect to find in mainstream technology, so it wasn’t terribly expensive and there are lots of people around who understand and can work on it,” explains Crugnale about Sunrise’s choice, adding that MediSolution’s knowledge in the laboratory space was also a factor in their decision. It was also felt that Virtuo BI is a ‘modern’ product in terms of its look and feel and browser orientation, an important consideration since they would be making performance information available to their customers across the country via the Web.

“When you’re marketing your billing operations as a service, you want to offer clients cutting edge technologies,” says Crugnale.

Through a joint effort between Sunrise and MediSolution’s Professional Services organization, Virtuo BI was implemented at Sunrise, including creation of a number of routines so that every night, data is automatically extracted from the billing system and remapped into the Virtuo BI data repository where it can be easily accessed for analysis, reporting and ad hoc query purposes without impacting the production system. Through Virtuo BI, each billing customer is given anywhere, anytime access to a secure Web portal where they can see the status and various KPIs reflecting Sunrise Consulting’s performance.

The biggest challenge the team had to overcome was figuring out how to get data out of the billing system and into the Virtuo BI repository. This required a mapping of the data structures unique to the billing system into Virtuo BI’s relational database structure; and since the billing system dumps out low-level transaction data, the data had to be correctly interpreted so that it could be rolled up into the different high-level reports, and then validated to ensure that it matched reports produced using the old method.

“It wasn’t always very clear how the data was stored in the billing system, so a lot of back and forth and a lot of testing and attention to detail were required,” observes Crugnale regarding the collaborative effort that went into the Virtuo BI implementation. “The MediSolution programmer assigned to the project was really great – he was really into the product and making it do what we needed.”

The Results

The new Virtuo Business Intelligence system is in full production at Sunrise; and at the time of writing, sites were operational for four Sunrise Consulting customers. Manual reporting has been completely eliminated, and all reports are now created automatically, greatly reducing the time required to provide management with the information they need to make better decisions faster. Automation of the reporting process has also eliminated any chance for errors, and freed up accounting staff to spend more time on analysis and other higher-value tasks.

Along with their expert people, back-end processes and billing systems, Virtuo BI is now a key part of how Sunrise Consulting demonstrates its billing services capabilities to potential new customers.

“One of the things we’re excited about is that we think we have a bit of a competitive advantage by having this powerful tool,” exclaims Sunrise’s Crugnale, adding that, “We’re now offering it as a value-added part of our service to billing customers.”

The new solution enables Sunrise’s customers to get more actionable information on a daily basis, giving them the timely, consolidated information they need with a just a quick glance at an online KPI dashboard.

Sunrise Consulting has been getting good feedback from customers about the value of the new system; and people are starting to see the additional possibilities beyond what’s been done so far in terms of analysis, reporting and the dashboarding of KPIs.

“We’re just scratching the surface with respect to what the Virtuo BI system can provide as an effective decision-support tool, and we have so many ideas on how to further enhance what we’ve been able to with the system so far,” enthuses Crugnale. “As CIO at Sunrise Consulting, it’s my job to get management the information they require so they can make the decisions they need to make to run the company effectively; and Virtuo BI was a great way to do that,” he concludes.

MediSolution (TSX: MSH), a Brookfield Asset Management company, is a leading healthcare and public sector information technology company, providing software, solutions and services to customers across North America. More than 500 hospitals and other healthcare facilities and close to 200 public sector and related organizations rely on MediSolution’s systems to maximize their operational efficiencies, lower their costs, and improve the delivery of services. MediSolution has two operating segments. The Resource Management Systems segment is comprised of Financial Management software such as accounts receivable, budgeting and materials management as well as Human Capital Management tools including human resource management, staff scheduling and payroll processing. The Healthcare Information Systems segment is comprised of clinical solutions such as patient tracking, electronic patient health records, pharmacy, radiology and laboratory software for healthcare organizations.

Contact MediSolution

CANADA
5915 Airport Road
Suite 810
Mississauga, Ontario L4V 1T1
1-866-4MS-INFO

US
Three World Financial Center
200 Vesey Street
New York, NY 10281-1021
1-866-467-4636