

Building an Architecture for the Future of Pharmaceuticals

Major pharmacy benefit manager updates and integrates systems with Liferay

Summary

MedImpact needed to upgrade the systems it had built and long relied on in order to support a growing user base and keep up with the demands of new regulations. They chose Liferay to provide a new portal platform, which integrated with existing systems and improved development, information access and content management. As a result, MedImpact is migrating all of its web portal technology to Liferay.

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In Brief

INDUSTRY:

Pharmaceutical

COUNTRY/REGION:

United States

USE CASE:

Employee Portal

KEY FEATURES:

Integration Platform, Single Sign-On, Data Synchronization, Custom Portlets, Custom Theme Styling, Dynamic Web Content

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The solutions built on Liferay improved business agility and reduced ongoing operational costs of ramping up new client sites. Xtivia engagement helped establish a solid architectural foundation for MedImpact’s portal strategy.

Patrick Ravenel, Vice President, Software Development

Challenges

- Provide benefit management services to 35 million+ members
- Comply with a wide spectrum of federal, state and local regulations on the industry
- Support pre-existing systems with a new platform that improves development and access

Results

-  Portal replication provides self-service content management to users
-  Lower operational costs for new private-label sites and maintenance of current sites
-  Portal security provides centralized authentication and authorization control
-  Application integration brings SSO and synchronization of user and group data

Supporting Millions of Benefits Members

MedImpact HealthCare Systems, Inc., is the nation's largest full-service pharmacy benefit manager (PBM) deriving revenue through independent drug benefit management rather than benefit management with conflicting interests due to drug fulfillment. MedImpact uses information technology and human capital to improve the practice of managed care pharmacy. MedImpact partners with the nation's finest health plans, hospitals and employers to provide pharmacy benefit management services to more than 35 million members. Clients include corporations and employers, unions, managed care organizations, health plans, insurance carriers and third-party administrators, as well as local, state and federal employee programs. Founded in 1989, MedImpact is a private company with offices in San Diego, CA, and a state-of-the-art call and operations center in Tempe, AZ.

MedImpact works with hundreds of organizations to provide pharmacy benefits. While benefit programs have many features in common, each program has a unique combination of offerings for its members. For example, programs may optionally include consumer-directed tools such as spending accounts, cash discount cards, member websites or a health management system. Delivering a custom website for each organization's operations staff and their members is nontrivial.

In addition to the variability of individual benefit programs, MedImpact must comply with a wide spectrum of federal, state and local regulations. For instance, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) provide guidelines for eligibility, enrollment and disenrollment in Prescription Drug Benefit Plans, and websites must follow standards in terms of prescriptive language as well as for people with disabilities as specified by Section 508

of the Rehabilitation Act. And the rapidly changing face of healthcare regulations in the United States has only increased the complexity of compliance.

Over time, MedImpact has extensively invested in systems to meet the needs of clients and regulators. These systems were built using traditional website techniques and effectively meet current needs. However, as more and more client sites were desired, along with the need for supporting new regulatory and market requirements, it became apparent that a different approach was needed.

Creating a Foundation for the Future

After extensive evaluation and research, MedImpact picked Liferay Portal as the base platform for new development and delivery of access to existing systems. MedImpact found the Liferay Portal framework to be a solid, industry standard and scalable solution that easily met the needs of the organization.

Liferay scales well both in terms of performance but also in terms of operational self-service and eases the burden on IT. In addition, MedImpact selected Xtivia, Inc. to help guide and accelerate integration of the portal into these environments. The goal was to develop a portal strategy that could be easily replicated across many sites providing self-service content management to the business users and saving on costly IT labor.

“MedImpact found the Liferay Portal framework to be a solid, industry standard and scalable solution that easily met the needs of the organization,” said Patrick Ravenel, Vice President, Software Development.

Before engaging Xtivia, MedImpact diligently prepared plans for Liferay deployment and sent several people to Liferay training.

This detailed preparation was essential.

Even with this advanced preparation, the Xtivia initial assessment identified more than 25 topics

for discussion, development and resolution. The two companies worked together on these items during the engagement with an emphasis on mentoring and ongoing knowledge transfer.

Much of the work focused on centralized authentication and authorization control, provision of custom look and feel and architecting a pattern for future sites. Some of the more detailed highlights include:

1. Design and implement Single Sign-On (SSO)
2. Integrate existing applications into portal with SSO
3. Integrate LDAP into Liferay with ongoing LDAP user and group data synchronization to Liferay
4. Develop a comprehensive test suite and perform end-to-end SSO testing
5. Develop login portlet and autologin filters
6. Implement custom portlets and custom theme styling
7. Leverage velocity templates to create dynamic web content

Finally, Xtivia provided advice in many different areas, ranging from short-term “do it this way” through long-term planning and direction. For instance,

Xtivia advised on the configuration of development, QA, staging and production environments, as well as the performance tuning of the production cluster. Xtivia provided MedImpact with the professional experience needed from their lessons learned over many engagements and deployments.

The team also developed plans for future deployment and replication of environments. All this was done in a way to effectively transfer knowledge to MedImpact.

MedImpact expects the Liferay Portal solution to accomplish long-term outcomes for the PBM provider. As MedImpact moves all current web properties to Liferay, the compliance, marketing and client engagement teams can create and modify content and submit it for approval. This results in lower operational costs in the areas of new private-label sites and maintenance of current sites because, prior to Liferay, site content management required expensive IT software engineering resources to implement compliance and marketing content changes.

MedImpact has plans to migrate all of its web portal technology to Liferay in the near future.