→ ProcessFlows prescribe the ideal document management solution for Coloplast

A ProcessFlows automated document capture and document management solution is enabling dispensing healthcare product provider Coloplast to automatically verify 100,000 patient prescriptions a month for reimbursement by the NHS.

A global supplier of business information

Coloplast are licensed suppliers of personal prescription products and market leaders in ostomy and continence care accessories. They are a global organisation, operating in 55 countries worldwide. In 2012, their turnover was around £1 billion and in 2013 the company came 68th in the Sunday Times "Top 100 medium-sized companies to work for" list.

Providing prescription products discreetly and efficiently

The UK operation is centralised around the supply and distribution of products to over 100,000 NHS patients and maintaining their award-winning customer care services.

Coloplast aims to make the purchase of 'embarrassing' healthcare items as easy as possible. Patients can order directly from them, rather than having to request items from the pharmacist. Their dedicated 'click to door' web ordering and free home delivery service operates under the brand Charter Healthcare. All items are sent in un-branded packaging and are guaranteed to be delivered within 48 hours, with no signature on receipt required.

Coloplast collects customers' prescriptions on their behalf

As the value of customer orders is covered by a prescription, there are no transactional processes. Patients do not need to wait for their prescription to be issued before they can order product. When an order is dispatched, Coloplast automatically generate a letter notifying the patient's GP, who then issues a prescription, on the familiar green and white form, and posts it directly to Coloplast.

Processing 3-4,000 paper prescriptions daily … and growing

As a dispensing contractor, Coloplast has to claim prescription product revenues directly from the Prescription Pricing Authority (PPA).

Before the reimbursement information can be collated and submitted at the end of each month to the payment authority, each prescription has to be matched with the order sent and verified. The average value of each prescription to Coloplast is around £100, so it is important that this matching/verification process is as accurate and efficient as possible. The unique 11 digit prescription number is used for verification.

A custom-built solution was implemented to help. The process started with all in-bound paper prescriptions being batch-scanned into electronic images by the customer care team 'in their spare time' (generally at the end of each business day) and the prescription number being manually keyed-in to the Siebel Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system by the 70 strong dedicated Prescription Team, to complete the dispatched order information.

The CRM system has an integrated, custom-built scanning and recognition module set up to automatically verify the prescription number on the scanned image with the prescription number on the associated dispatched order held within the CRM system; thus speeding up the verification processes.

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Improving Business by Transforming Process

Exceptions (prescription number does not match order shipped) were causing problems

However, as the business expanded and prescription numbers went up, this customised system could no longer cope. Manual keying errors were inevitable. Scanning recognition rates dropped to 65%; the remaining 35% being exceptions.

The low recognition rate meant that a lot of manual work needed to be completed by the Prescription Team before the matching process could be performed successfully.

Exception rates eventually crept up to around 40%, making the task ever more frustrating and time consuming for staff and presenting a business dilemma for managers.

They didn't want to increase head count in the UK. As there was capacity elsewhere in the business, why not let them look after the process so the customer care team could focus on customers?

Solving the problem

Accurate matching of prescription/order information is key to claiming back funds from the PPA in a timely way. Coloplast wanted a simple, reliable, stable and easy-access electronic document processing system in place, so the team could quickly retrieve and cross reference the prescription in the CRM system. This would speed up the entire process and keep reimbursement delays to a minimum.

Integrated data capture software + document management + reliable automatic verification reduces exceptions to 2%

After listening to Coloplast's requirements, ProcessFlows set up a demonstration using 'live' prescriptions for evaluation, eventually implementing an automated prescription capture, document management and matching solution for Coloplast and training both administrators and 'user' members of staff.

The ProcessFlows solution uses OpenText Alchemy Document Management and ReadSoft Capture technologies.

ReadSoft

ReadSoft Intelligent Capture software (OCR) is used with Coloplast's scanners to scan batches of prescriptions. As each prescription is scanned, it extracts and captures the prescription number – its unique identifier – from the digital image.

Alchemy

Images and prescription numbers (unique ID) are passed into Alchemy for storage, management and archiving. Alchemy automatically assigns each prescription with a date and batch number, before passing it into a transitional database ready for classification, using Alchemy index station, by the admin team.

Once classified, prescriptions are routed for authorisation by the customer care team. They use Alchemy Web to enable fast digital image searching and Alchemy Productivity Suite to speed up verification and endorsement of prescription against order. Productivity Suite recognises the prescription number on the digital image and automatically links it to the relating prescription order held in the CRM system… with 98% accuracy.

Any discrepancies (e.g prescription numbers do not match) are clearly identified as exceptions.

Once authorised, prescriptions are moved to a separate and secure Alchemy repository for storage.

Efficiencies and savings

The solution has enabled Coloplast to reduce the resources required for scanning and keying the prescriptions.

Valuable documents are stored securely, in line with compliance regulations.

Digital images of documents are quick and easy to work with.

"*Efficiency is all about the accuracy of data. With immediate effect, we dramatically reduced the number of exceptions to just 2% and saved masses of negative admin time, which we were able to divert to more productive tasks*" said Karl Otto, IT Systems Administrator at Coloplast.

On ProcessFlows …

Karl Otto said: "*ProcessFlows took the time to understand Coloplast's needs from the start. Their services team are experienced and helpful. At every stage, they were willing to accommodate changes and because they fully understand our setup, any issues are resolved with minimum involvement from us.*"

The future

"*The long term plan is to use digital images more extensively throughout the organisation; eventually digitising all our 'paperwork' at the beginning of the document journey so we can bring our back-end process right up to date, increase productivity and do more with less resource*" said Karl.