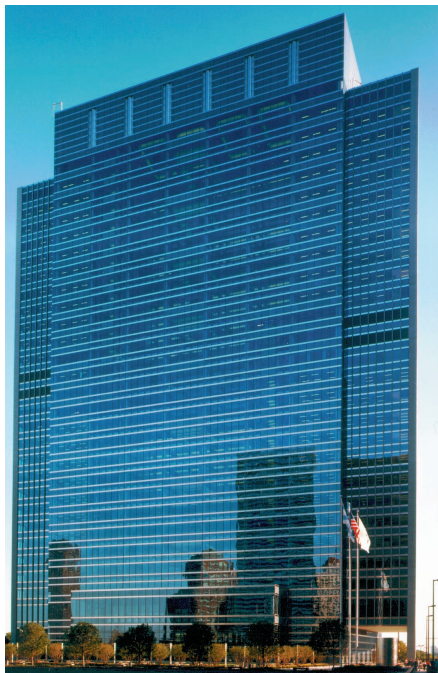


# Health Care Service Corporation offers top-notch service with ImagePlus.

Managed healthcare is increasingly about managing excessive paperwork. As one of the largest healthcare insurance organizations in the country, Health Care Service Corporation (HCSC)—better known as Blue Cross and Blue Shield (BCBS) of Illinois and Texas—will process nearly 51 million claims this year, more than half of which will be on paper. Add to that some 14 million inquiries from its 5.8 million plus customers, and the organization has its work cut out processing documents expeditiously.

*“ImagePlus has resulted in huge productivity gains. We’ve eliminated 70 percent of our clerical duties and improved the efficiency of customer service representatives by at least 20 percent.”*

*—Ray Angeli, Vice President, Customer Services, Health Care Services Corporation*



*Health Care Services Corporation has improved customer service dramatically with its implementation of ImagePlus.*

HCSC, however, is well prepared to meet this challenge—and has been since the time it deployed a state-of-the-art document imaging system in the early 1990s. Based on IBM ImagePlus for OS/390, part of the IBM Enterprise Document Management Suite (EDMSuite) of products, the imaging system has enabled HCSC to transform its reams of paper documents into electronic assets, boosting both customer satisfaction and its corporate bottomline. Says Ray Angeli, vice president of customer services, “ImagePlus has resulted in huge productivity gains. We’ve eliminated 70 percent of our clerical duties and improved the efficiency of customer service representatives by at least 20 percent. Overall, customer service has improved dramatically, as has workflow management.”

<b>Application</b>	Insurance claims processing
<b>Business Benefits</b>	70% reduction in clerical functions; 20% improvement in service representatives' productivity; claims processing four to five days faster; optimal workload distribution; improved customer service
<b>Software</b>	IBM® ImagePlus® for OS/390® (part of IBM EDMSuite); IBM DB2® for OS/390
<b>Hardware</b>	IBM S/390®

### **An end to paper-shuffling**

At HCSC, all mail is received at its headquarters in Chicago, Illinois, and Richardson, Texas, and routed to its 11 regional full service units (FSUs) that are responsible for serving large, individual clients or groups of clients. In the past, HCSC employed an army of clerks to stamp, count, categorize, batch and send paper documents to the FSUs. All documents were also microfilmed and stored centrally. When local offices requested documents for reference, the microfilm retrieval unit would locate and

## Healthcare Software Solutions



*ImagePlus is being deployed in other functions at HCSC, including the management of returned checks and refunds.*

send them to the local office—a process that could take two to three days. “The whole operation was less efficient and more expensive,” recalls Angeli. “We were overhandling paper, leading to loss, mis-routing or damage.”

Imaging has virtually eliminated these problems. Incoming mail is scanned, sorted and verified using Intelligent Character Recognition (ICR) and Optical Character Recognition (OCR) technology, then stored in an IBM DB2 database on the central IBM ES/9000 mainframe as well as in IBM 3995 C-Series Optical Libraries. The imaged documents are consolidated in electronic claim files that are prioritized and placed in appropriate work queues, supplying a steady flow of work to claims processors and customer service representatives. As a result, claims and inquiries are being processed four to five days sooner with the imaging system. “The improvements are so visible that we’ve never stopped to put a dollar value to these gains,” says Angeli. “But, they would add up to millions of dollars by now.”

### **Unhindered workflow**

The ability to manage enterprisewide workflow is enabling HCSC to ensure that there are no bottlenecks or delays in processing documents. “The last time we had an ice storm in Champaign, Illinois, where we have a large office, we were able to spread the work automatically to other locations,” recalls Angeli. “The workflow management capabilities of ImagePlus are what really sold us on it.”

That and its scalability. With its recent merger with BCBS of Texas, several hundred thousand new customers were added to the organization’s processing environment. And, both companies have

experienced record growth over the last two to three years, adding well over half a million new customers. “By May, Texas will be fully integrated with the imaging system,” notes Angeli. “Scalability has never been an issue with ImagePlus. In fact, that’s one of the reasons we wanted a mainframe-based product. ImagePlus was one of the few products with which we could ensure enterprisewide access to information.” Presently, 4,000 HCSC users access the system.

### **Customer service at its best**

Apart from streamlining internal processes, document imaging has brought much needed reprieve for customer service representatives. Because they can now retrieve documents from their Microsoft® Windows NT® desktops and provide instant responses to customer queries, the percentage of inquiries resolved on the first call has increased from 88 percent to 98 percent. “People are often surprised that we can respond to their questions so quickly,” quips Angeli.

The system also eliminates the confusion caused when multiple service representatives respond to queries from different people regarding the same claim. “Earlier, we would have needed to answer each separately. With imaging, we can annotate the document, so we know who’s working on a file, and, if they’re finished, what the outcome was,” explains Angeli. “So, the representative can say, Mr. Jones already called about the claim, and this is what happened. It adds some personalization to a high-tech industry.”

### **Integrated growth**

When HCSC first opted for imaging, an important consideration was how well ImagePlus would integrate with its existing claims processing application, Blue Chip. With IBM providing technical support, this was accomplished in just seven months, and the results could not have been better. "Because we've been able to integrate ImagePlus into our software, it plays very well with customers," says Angeli. "We often demonstrate our image-based claims processing and customer service environment to customers—their reaction is gratifying. It's become a powerful sales tool."

The IBM imaging solution was selected over ten other solutions that HCSC evaluated. According to Angeli, "ImagePlus had the functionality that complemented our claims processing system, was the easiest to integrate into our environment and was the most cost-effective long-term solution."

### **Powerful imagery**

HCSC is expanding ImagePlus into other functions now. "We're beginning to use it in our financial applications to manage returned checks or refunds, for example," says Angeli. "And we will also be using it to manage our eligibility and enrollment functions."

At HCSC, it is difficult to imagine life without the imaging system. "We rely heavily on cutting-edge technologies to compete with the plethora of managed care companies in the market," Angeli concludes. "To be superior, we must provide world-class customer service. That wouldn't be possible without solutions such as our imaging system, powered by ImagePlus."

### **For more information please contact your**

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For information faxed direct to your location: 1 800 IBM-4FAX.

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3-99  
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