Business challenge

The healthcare industry is always evolving, making it important for applications at HM Health Solutions (HMHS) to streamline releases by creating an agile development environment.

Transformation

HMHS established continual development practices using the IBM® UrbanCode® software suite and built optimized, automated processes using IBM Business Process Manager software.

Business benefits

Facilitates
rapid and continual
application and process improvement

Saves 210
staff hours annually
by integrating optimized processes with automated application deployment

Ensures
consistency
in the quality of solutions deployed in its application environments

HM Health Solutions

Using IBM DevOps and process automation solutions to keep pace with industry changes

HMHS delivers business solutions to health plan payers so that they can run their organizations efficiently in a competitive and ever-changing market. By offering cutting-edge technology and extensive industry knowledge, HMHS meets the many operational needs of health plan payers. A wholly owned subsidiary of Highmark Health, HMHS teams with eight health plans serving 10 million members. Headquartered in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, HMHS has more than 3,500 employees.

"The IBM solutions up the tempo at which we're able to roll out the application updates and new solutions our customers need."

—Marc Rohrer, IT Infrastructure Engineer, HM Health Solutions

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Constant change

HMHS customers must navigate a landscape of ever-changing consumer needs and regulatory requirements, making it critical for HMHS to continually adapt the applications and solutions it provides to them. That development and deployment agility is key to maintaining a competitive edge and to delivering on the company's value proposition to its customers. However, certain operational processes hampered its efforts.

"When a customer asks for something, they want it now. They don't want to hear that we'll have their solution ready next quarter. We needed to streamline our releases by developing an agile development environment," says Marc Rohrer, IT Infrastructure Engineer at HMHS. "As it was, whenever an application team needed a routine configuration change, for instance, they would submit a ticket to my team through a manual ticketing system. We also had batch scripting processes. It just took a lot of time to build and deploy any changes or new solutions, and human error was a significant factor as well."

Continual development

As the foundation of a scalable, agile and consistent DevOps environment, HMHS deployed IBM UrbanCode Release, IBM UrbanCode Deploy and IBM UrbanCode Build software. Further, it integrated the UrbanCode tools with IBM Business Process Manager software.

"When we purchased the UrbanCode products, we created self-service processes, which allowed us to automate manual configuration change processes and get those routine configurations back into the application team's hands quickly," comments Rohrer. "I work most with the UrbanCode Deploy product, which really helps us keep our deployment processes consistent and helped us get into the continuous development mind-set, constantly pushing out updates for applications for customers."

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IT Infrastructure Engineer, HMHS.

HMHS uses Business Process Manager software to build process applications that provide optimized, automated workflows for both internal and external uses. Rohrer's team took advantage of an UrbanCode plug-in for the Business Process Manager solution to create seamless integration between the two environments. "The UrbanCode resource tree maps out our entire application environment, and IBM BPM [Business Process Manager] assigns processes across the resource tree. That gives us 100 percent assurance that our processes remain consistent, which helps us provide a better product to our customers."

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Agility and scalability

According to Rohrer, simply using the plug-in between the UrbanCode tools and the Business Process Manager solution saves the company an estimated 210 staff hours annually. More generally, HMHS's DevOps practices facilitate rapid and continual application and process improvement, so the company can keep pace better with changing requirements. "The bottom line for us is the IBM solutions deliver speed to market," says Rohrer. "They up the tempo at which we're able to roll out the application updates and new solutions our customers need."

"One of the biggest benefits is consistency; we know what we're pushing out to our environments," Rohrer explains. "We're storing version-controlled configurations within UrbanCode Deploy, so if something goes wrong with the latest version we can easily roll back to the previous version, and our whole environment automatically resets to where it was before we had any issues. It allows us to have an environment that is both scalable and agile while, at the same time, it helps us keep our deployment processes consistent."

Solution components

- IBM Business Process Manager
- IBM® UrbanCode® Build
- IBM UrbanCode Deploy
- IBM UrbanCode Release

Connect with us

Take the next step

To learn more about IBM UrbanCode Build, IBM UrbanCode Deploy, IBM UrbanCode Release or IBM Business Process Manager software, please contact your IBM marketing representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit the following websites: **ibm.com**/marketplace/urbancode-build, **ibm.com**/marketplace/application-release-automation, **ibm.com**/marketplace/urbancode-release, **ibm.com**/software/products/business-process-manager-family

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