

Process visibility informs business, technology decisions



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After years of dramatic growth, Molina Healthcare is leveraging big data to gain better visibility of its business processes and the technologies that support them.

When big things change in dramatic fashion, it's easy to lose sight of all the little things that keep them connected and running efficiently.

Just ask Dr. Ben Gordon, who was hired as Molina Healthcare's vice president of enterprise infrastructure services after four years of rampant business expansion. Due in large part to a series of acquisitions and the boon of the Affordable Care Act, the Long Beach, California-based managed care provider was experiencing a number of growing pains.

"It's really hard to keep up with business growth if you don't have the right visibility and understanding of your environment," Gordon explains. "You can't manage what you can't see, and you certainly can't automate what you don't know."

For better visibility—of business processes and the technology components that support them—Gordon knew he needed to leverage the company's vast data resources. And that's why he installed Cisco UCS® Integrated Infrastructure for Big Data with Splunk Enterprise. Built with Intel® Xeon® processors, the new

infrastructure delivers real-time operational intelligence from all of Molina's systems, applications, networks, and logs.

"We wanted to build a metrics aggregation platform to draw out useful data about our business and technology processes," Gordon says. "We're starting to get deep insights that inform a number of strategic and operational decisions."

END-TO-END PROCESS VISIBILITY

Molina didn't have a real-time or enterprise-wide view of its data. This included the company's claims engine, which is the lifeblood of any managed care provider. When the claims engine broke or another IT issue cropped up, troubleshooting was ad hoc and Gordon's team had no way to prioritize investigations based on business priorities.

"There's the business process and the technology that supports it," Gordon says. "We wanted to make sure we could see that process end to end."

With its new metrics aggregation platform, Molina has gained visibility and correlation across its stack, which has reduced the number of IT incidents by 500 percent and mean time to resolution by 150 percent. And the operational intelligence provided by the platform is helping Gordon focus his team's automation, analytics, and scaling efforts to address the company's ongoing growth.

"We were looking for a single pane of glass and the ability to track transactions through all the systems," Gordon says. "We can now track our member interaction all the way through every system in the service stack."

ALIGNING PROCESS, TECHNOLOGY, PEOPLE

In addition to aligning operational processes with underlying systems, Molina's new metrics aggregation platform is bringing together its business and technology teams. According to Gordon, putting everyone in the same room and showing a single view of the company's business processes and how technology supports those processes created an "ah-ha" moment.

"Showing how business processes flow through the organization in real time in a very visual format has been eye opening for a lot of folks," he explains. "It bridges the gap between technologists and the business, so now you have the common ground to have a conversation."

Keeping up with rapid business growth is hard enough. Taking a step back to assess that growth holistically, ensure new workflows are mapping smoothly with legacy operations, and strategically guiding the company toward the future is even harder. For Molina, visibility and alignment spanning processes, technologies, and people have been essential.

"The platform gives us the ability to engage with our business users and our customers and understand what is important to them," Gordon says. "Having that contextual conversation without having to translate between technical terms and business terms has been invaluable. The platform is visual and educational—and there is nothing else like it."

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