

## AthletiCo's Paper-Heavy Billing Department Gets into Shape

*Ortho Rehab Company's Insurance System Runs Smoothly with ABBYY FineReader & FlexiCapture Studio*

Client: AthletiCo 



AthletiCo's billing department, which was manually working with deposits and paper and using an inefficient document-retrieval systems, needed some serious therapy.

The company, a well-known Chicago-area provider of outpatient orthopedic rehabilitation services, was using a manually-intensive series of procedures to track thousands

of pages of patients' explanation of benefits (EOBs) and insurance company payment checks. Having received an EOB, an AthletiCo employee would detach the check and write the check number, amount and other data on the EOB form, complete a deposit slip and scan the EOB, and then store this data on the server.

"An EOB can be up to 1,500 pages," said Nick Tsatsis, COO and CFO of AthletiCo. "If a question arose, locating the scanned version was a nightmare that could take hours in our document-retrieval system and days if people had to wade through the actual paper documents, since forms were saved as batches based on the date of receipt, and users could not search for a specific name or case number," he said.

"In the past, we would have to scan the EOB, but we'd never scan the check because of the process and how the business flowed. We'd hand-write the check number directly on the EOB," said Tsatsis. "Even harder, insurance companies often submitted a single check for multiple EOBs, as many as 300, he added."

## Road to Recovery

Thankfully, a business card he'd picked up three years ago had been burning a hole in Tsatsis' Rolodex. While at an accounting trade show, the AthletiCo executive had seen a booth and presentation by DocWorks of Schaumburg, Ill.

"For some reason, I took their card and held onto it," recalled Tsatsis.

DocWorks, which specializes in transforming companies' paper-filled environments into a world of easily searchable, cost-effective electronic documentation, offers both service bureau and in-house systems, based on an array of ABBYY recognition and data capture technologies. When Tsatsis and AthletiCo president and founder Mark Kaufman contacted the service bureau and VAR, James Daly, DocWorks vice president, immediately realized DocWorks could resolve the rehabilitation organization's paper chaos with a course of "OCR therapy"—and an on-going mechanism for keeping the system on its feet.

"Today, employees can retrieve information in seconds while on the phone with a client or insurance company," said Mark Kaufman, AthletiCo president. "Having this information at our fingertips has really improved our productivity and customer service."

DocWorks prescribed a solution that included strong ABBYY software products. The company had come across the healing benefits of the programs several years before. "We discovered the ABBYY products and realized the technology and features were much better than anything else on the market," said Daly. "One of our main reasons for using ABBYY's software is our ability to create OCR (layouts) much more quickly and much more inexpensively than in the past. We've been able to open more market opportunities thanks to ABBYY's speed and flexibility. We're now able to offer our service to small as well as larger companies, without requiring a large initial upfront investment."

## Rehabilitating the System

Having determined that AthletiCo preferred an in-house solution to DocWorks' service bureau offering, DocWorks recommended a system based on ABBYY FlexiCapture Studio and ABBYY FineReader Engine. Having seen the programs in action, Tsatsis knew they were the keys to getting his company's accounting processes walking into the 21st century.

"AthletiCo has to get that paper document into the system so they can match it with the patient's paperwork," said Daly. "Our goal was to keep their current structure, yet improve their efficiency. They wanted to roll out something everyone could use to be productive right away."

Today, AthletiCo scans all EOBs using a Kodak I280 scanner into the DocWorks system, and processes using a solution DocWorks' developed with ABBYY FlexiCapture Studio, in conjunction with ABBYY FineReader Engine. Once an EOB has been entered, the Oracle-based DocWorks solution pulls up all the payments for the related documents and automatically creates a deposit slip, Daly said.

"It killed three birds with one stone. We were cutting the time it took for someone to scan EOBs and for someone separately doing deposit slips, and [we are] organizing the information into a searchable format," Tsatsis said.

The amount of time employees saved by not having to search for the documents they need was huge, totaling the equivalent several employees focused full-time on the process.

In fact, given the increasing amount of business AthletiCo's 831-member professional rehabilitation staff provides, the company would have soon needed to hire at least one more staff member to join the input and paper-search team—a move that would have cost the company at least \$25,000 in salary plus additional employee benefits, Tsatsis said. The clerk who had previously been dedicated to pulling up information has been reassigned to other administrative functions, he added.

The less tangible benefit of being able to find and process payments more quickly is even more valuable, he added. "Locating a paper document could take three or four weeks in the past. In our old document-retention system, it would take hours. Now, we're talking seconds!" said Tsatsis. "If we can't retrieve the information, we can't get paid. You can't put a value on not being able to locate the information for up to a month."

## **The Extra Mile**

AthletiCo was so satisfied with the initial system that it decided to expand its paperless endeavors. DocWorks used ABBYY's forms processing software to help create e-forms for 401K, human resources and other business documents, which AthletiCo distributes via e-mail to its 32 Chicago-area offices. Using FlexiCapture, DocWorks wrote dynamic descriptions, or FlexiLayouts, based on AthletiCo's requirements, said Daly.

"The client isn't building his own (FlexiLayout)," he said. "We do it for him. It's a truly complete and seamless solution. Users complete all the forms like they did before—but now they're online."

Once again, the solution saved huge amounts of money and time: "The electronic process eliminated postage, copying, mailing and courier costs, and the time associated with physically moving documents from site to site," said Tsatsis. "And this approach means a department can automatically route a form to the correct individual or department for approval," he added.

Thanks to DocWorks' TLC and ABBYY's extensive capabilities, AthletiCo's internal administrative and billing work is fighting fit and ready for action.

### **Service:**

*Provider of outpatient, orthopedic rehabilitation services*

### **Number of Offices:** 32

### **Patients:**

*Include Chicago Bears; Chicago White Sox; Chicago Bulls; Illinois PGA; the Joffrey Ballet of Chicago, La Salle Bank Marathon, and numerous colleges, rugby, performing arts and endurance events*

### **Enabling technologies:**

*ABBYY FlexiCapture Studio; ABBYY FineReader Engine*

### **Results:**

*Cut search time from weeks to mere seconds; prevented necessity of hiring an additional person at a salary of at least \$25,000 per year*