

When was the last time you got a return on investment (ROI) for a healthcare software product in less than 2 years?

Overview of Cost Benefits

In the medical field there are very few products that are cost justified because it is difficult to quantify a return on investment. However, one product, Blue Elm's DrAuditor, is the exception to this rule. Blue Elm has been in the business of auditing MEDITECH-based data repositories (DR) for over 10 years and has become the de facto standard for such work. The recent announcement by MEDITECH that clients migrating to their new 6.0 platform will need to install the DR caused Blue Elm to begin a major rewrite of our DrAuditor product. In preparation for outlining our development plan, we surveyed all our existing DrAuditor customers which included over 90 MEDITECH sites as well as vendors and consultants who utilize our product. It came as no surprise to us that our clients were saving time by utilizing DrAuditor. The surprise was the amount of time saved. When asked:

“How much time a day do you think DrAuditor saves you and your team? (Assume you were doing manual audits; also, factor in time spent tracking down unrealized issues with the DR integrity, etc.).”

57% percent of survey respondents answered two hours plus a day. Another 19% said they saved around one hour every day. At an average of two hours a day this is roughly 500 hours saved a year. If the average IT person earns approximately \$50,000 a year, this works out to a total savings of \$12,500 in just the first year. Not only does DrAuditor ensure data integrity but it frees up time so that end users can utilize their time creating useful reports which will show where money should be budgeted and saved throughout the entire HCIS.

Common Misconception

A common misunderstanding upon purchasing the DR is that once purchased and turned on, the customer will have an accurate warehouse of data without having to dedicate a great deal of time to monitoring its transfer process. On the contrary, it is the customer's responsibility to validate that the data being transferred is accurate. Without an automated tool this can be extremely time-consuming.

How DrAuditor Works

The DrAuditor accomplishes data integrity verification by establishing a multi-dimensional examination of data repository tables and their corresponding transactional application data. To assure that information is accurate data is taken from the transactional applications and compared with the data in the DR. The

first examination of data verifies that all available rows from the transactional applications have been transferred into the data repository. The second examination verifies that all columns of data within a data repository table accurately match the data from the transactional application. Auditing data using DrAuditor is as simple as choosing the tables in which you want to audit, choosing a sample rate, and scheduling your audit.

Case Study – NPR Reports

In the early days of DR, when the DR consisted of slightly more than 500 tables, one hospital attempted to create a series of NPR Reports to audit each table. Their goal was to create an NPR Report for each table in DR and then update the reports on each ring update. After a year of writing NPR Reports which took up a great deal of 2 FTE's time, the site had just about completed their NPR Reports only to find out that the DR had grown to over 1,000 tables and that more than 50% of the NPR Reports they had created would need to be rewritten. At this point the site, who had invested heavily in this solution, realized that NPR Reports were not an effective mechanism for auditing the entire DR. They selected DrAuditor to take over their audits and were able to reduce the staff doing audits down to about 0.2 FTE.

History of DrAuditor and Blue Elm

Founded in 1998 as part of AcmeWare, Inc., Blue Elm began independent operation as a product company in 2001. Our first commercially successful product, DrAuditor was created in 1999. Since then DrAuditor has become the standard for validating data in MEDITECH-based data repositories. DrAuditor also supports Picis and LSS based data repositories. DrAuditor is installed at over 90 MEDITECH sites to date. In 2003, Blue Elm introduced OpenGate, an ADO.NET driver for directly querying data in MEDITECH (MAGIC and C/S) databases. OpenGate's success has been remarkable with over 200 MEDITECH hospitals utilizing the power of OpenGate.

Conclusion

It is unusual in healthcare that a software product could actually have a short term ROI. The DrAuditor product from Blue Elm is that rare product that consistently shows that it more than pays for itself within the first 2 years. Comments such as:

- We would never be able to audit DR manually
- The DR is unusable without it
- We do 100% sampling and without it this would be impossible
- If there is an issue, this is an invaluable tool in identifying the issue
- It's hard to quantify the benefits, as I won't audit the data [without] DrAuditor

make the case for a strong cost benefit analysis. If you would like to find out more about Blue Elm's DrAuditor product, please contact us at www.blueelm.com or call us at 978- 239-4430