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Accenture's Global Health
Industry Practice

Accenture Helps Dana-Farber Researchers and Care Givers Achieve High Performance through Enterprise Resource Planning

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Dorothy Puhly, Dana-Farber's executive vice president and CFO

Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, located in Boston, Massachusetts, is New England's pre-eminent cancer care provider. It is ranked fourth in the United States in delivering expert, compassionate care to children and adults with cancer, AIDS and related diseases. The Institute, which employs about 3,000 people, supports more than 150,000 patient visits a year. It also conducts basic research into the mechanisms of diseases and translates these findings into effective treatments.

Business challenge

In its efforts to become a high-performance business, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute has focused on blending research and clinical excellence. This innovative combination, which has earned international acclaim, positions the Institute to bring novel therapies from the laboratory into clinical use.

Despite its successful and highly innovative collaborative model, the interdisciplinary combination of clinicians and researchers—with varying work methods and financial management needs—presented a challenge when it came time to implement an integrated application suite for Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP). The Institute needed to replace its highly customized ERP system, which had been in place for 14 years, with one that would better help the organization advance its efforts to achieve high performance. Specifically, the Institute wanted to implement a PeopleSoft system that would:

- Simplify and standardize business processes throughout the organization
- Eliminate disparate systems and move to a common platform across the Institute
- Move beyond automating transactions to analysis tools that allow financial managers to better track grants and budgets and help the Institute achieve its missions of discovery and high-quality care

As Dana-Farber set out to streamline and standardize business processes and modernize their enabling technologies, the Institute's executives wanted to challenge their existing processes and, where necessary, invent new ones—not just automate and further entrench processes that were not contributing value. Dana-Farber Cancer Institute chose Accenture to help implement

the PeopleSoft ERP suite across the Institute's multifaceted organization because its track record for process transformation in the health care industry fit well with the Institute's objectives. In addition, Accenture has deep industry experience and a proven commitment to helping its clients achieve high performance.

How Accenture helped

Fully aligned to assist Dana-Farber with a successful ERP implementation, the Accenture team became integrated with Dana-Farber's staff almost as a new department within the organization. One issue that needed to be resolved early was whether one global system could support the needs of both the research and clinical communities. In an effort to resolve this and other issues—and to accelerate the implementation process overall—Accenture orchestrated an off-site brainstorming session, which brought all key participants together in one place and away from daily distractions. The goal for this session was to raise problematic issues and resolve them equitably. This event was crucial for building trust and rapport between the project's functional and technical teams.

Accenture helped everyone on the implementation teams understand that it would be impossible to put together an initial work plan that would get everything right. Rather, the team needed to be able to strike a balance between process standardization and customization, and also accommodate different ways of doing things for researchers, clinicians and others who would use the system.

Accenture oversaw the PeopleSoft implementation in two phases. Phase 1 involved installing PeopleSoft's modules for HR, Benefits Administration, Time and Labor, and Payroll. In Phase 2, the team added modules for managing the supply chain, and for handling

Financials and Grants. In total, the functional scope of the project included the implementation of 14 PeopleSoft modules, including eProcurement, Purchasing, Inventory, Receiving, Accounts Payable, General Ledger, Asset Management, Project Accounting, Billing (non-patient), Receivables (non-patient), Grants, Contracts, Commitment Control and PeopleSoft Portal, which served as the starting point for an enterprise-wide portal to access all system functionality over the Institute's intranet.

Physicians, researchers and others struggling with the new system's standardization and rigor soon realized that the capabilities for tracking budgets and grants, for assembling data and generating reports, and for better financial and resource management were worth the extra effort of learning to use the system. Accenture encouraged acceptance of the system by offering evening software classes, expanding the help desk, setting up teleconferences with other user groups, making documentation accessible through Dana-Farber's intranet and establishing a "change agent network" throughout the Institute.

High performance delivered

With Accenture's help, the Institute met its original go-live commitment date with full functionality—a remarkable accomplishment considering the combination of challenges that had to be overcome, including two very different constituencies, software modules that were being implemented while still under development, and a virus attack on Dana-Farber's servers. One Dana-Farber executive remarked, "We could never have done it without Accenture; they were an amazing group of people who unselfishly gave of themselves for the good of the implementation and Dana-Farber."

The Dana-Farber/Accenture implementation project was ranked internally as one of the top 20 HealthCare IT projects for the Northeast based, and the client's level of satisfaction with Accenture's performance rates 4.5 (better than excellent) on a 5-point scale.

In short, Accenture served as a skilled facilitator and results-driven collaborator in helping Dana-Farber's varied constituencies work together effectively to implement a system that would meet everyone's needs and drive high performance throughout the organization. According to Dorothy Puhly, Dana-Farber's executive vice president and CFO, "If there's one big factor that made it work, it was that they all were able to work together so efficiently. I think up and down the line, people on the team from the Dana-Farber side and the people on the team from the Accenture side formed effective partnerships. They learned from each other, respected each other. People worked extraordinarily well together on all levels."

About Accenture

Accenture is a global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company. Combining unparalleled experience, comprehensive capabilities across all industries and business functions, and extensive research on the world's most successful companies, Accenture collaborates with clients to help them become high-performance businesses and governments. With approximately 177,000 people serving clients in more than 120 countries, the company generated net revenues of US\$21.58 billion for the fiscal year ended Aug. 31, 2009. Its home page is www.accenture.com.

About Accenture's Health Industry Practice

Accenture's health service group provides innovative solutions to both the private and public sectors of the health care industry, including integrated health care providers, health insurers, managed care organizations and public health organizations. The company has thousands of resources dedicated to helping organizations in the health industry achieve and sustain high performance.

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