



Case Study NS1201

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California Department of Health Services, Licensing & Certification Unit, Health Facilities Consumers Assistance Center



Case Study
prepared by
Neunet Solutions



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The California Department of Health Services – Licensing & Certification Unit's Health Facilities Consumer Assistance Center (DHS L&C's HFCAC) is using Neunet Solutions' EConExplorer™ platform for its Complaint Tracking System to maximize its efficiency in receiving, processing, investigating, and resolving complaints received in 25 statewide district offices.

Background

Appointed by the Governor of the State of California, the Department of Health Services' Director heads one of the largest departments in California State Government, with over 5,000 employees working in the Sacramento headquarters and over 60 field offices throughout the state. DHS is one of 13 departments comprising the Health and Welfare Agency.

DHS is organized into seven programs, one of which is the Licensing & Certification Unit. L&C oversees and promotes the highest quality of medical care in facilities throughout the state of California.

Last year L&C received and investigated over 19,000 complaints that registered concerns about health care services provided by various facilities and providers.

The State of California Legislature passed a law in August of 2001, which mandated the creation of the Health Facilities Consumer Assistance Center (HFCAC).

Prior to the formation of the HFCAC, complaints were received in various district offices. However, there was no centralized system in place to collect, process, and manage complaint data.

The development and installation of a Complaint Tracking system based on Neunet Solution's EConExplorer™ technology has greatly improved the speed, accuracy, cost, and timeliness of resolving complaints.

Problem

HFCAC was inundated with complaints. But, they but lacked the ability to manage the complaint process and provide critical information to agents who handled the complaints as well as administrators responsible for managerial oversight and regulatory compliance.

Each district office logged complaints received via telephone, fax, and standard mail and then recorded those complaints onto hard copy forms. L&C's headquarters then had to wait for the reports to be filed, which resulted in a slow and error prone system. L&C's personnel lacked a system that would enable them to quickly add new complaints, access existing complaints, or redirect complaints to the proper agents. Further complicating the situation was the fact that the 25 offices were unable to effectively or securely share complaint information with one another or with the Sacramento headquarters.

Solution

To create a solution for the complaint management process, Neunet Solutions used EConExplorer™. Highlights of this innovative approach to designing and deploying a highly capable automated Complaint Tracking System follow:

- ❑ **Scalability** – EConExplorer™ features a distributed architecture based on the industry standard SOAP protocol. This allows a highly scalable solution, where low to very high complaint volumes can be handled without system adjustments or hardware additions
- ❑ **Thin Client** – The solution permits agents with low-end desktops to receive, log, and process complaints thereby avoiding the purchase of more capable and consequently more costly PCs or workstations.
- ❑ **Flexibility and cost savings**- Because EConExplorer™ conforms to J2EE standards for web applications it can be deployed in virtually 98% of commercially available servers on the market. As such, the client is not burdened with additional hardware expenditures. To further reduce the cost for this solution, Neunet Solutions used Tomcat from the Jakarta project, which is an open source JSP container available at no cost.
- ❑ **Creating a virtual network** - EConExplorer™ is really a multifaceted core technology with many varied capabilities and advantages. One of its remarkable capabilities lies in creating access to files, applications, and data that may reside on different systems, repositories, networks, or platforms. In the case of HFCAC, EConExplorer™ created a *virtual network* with all 25-district offices and the headquarters. As such, access to data in all offices was made possible without the cost, risk, and complexity associated with data migration, integration, or consolidation projects. Using EConExplorer™'s ContentObjects™ content in all offices (files, data, records, etc.) was organized and categorized in virtual folders. This categorization not only creates a basic framework for locating and accessing information but for assigning privileges or authorities to staff for viewing, editing, deleting, and modifying complaints.
- ❑ **Establishing Role Based Authorities** – After the system Administrator establishes or publishes the ContentObjects™; staff can view and work the complaints using any web browser for access. Using EConExplorer's™ Administrative interface, the system administrator assigns roles to users that specify authority to view, edit, and delete complaints. For example, authority to modify complaints may be limited to a district office's caseload and not complaints being handled by agents in other offices. Or, administrators may have role



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assignments that limit their access to viewing but not modifying complaints. The entire process of setting role-based privileges is done without any coding using EConExplorer's™ ContentManager™.

- ❑ **Business Analysis** – EConExplorer™ has a very robust ad hoc report capability. The Complaint Tracking System can quickly and easily generate reports that measure or provide up to-the-minute status on:
 - Number of complaints outstanding – aged from date of initial receipt
 - Average number of days from intake to resolution
 - Patterns based on type of complaint, facility, or geographic location
 - Productivity metrics by agents
 - Number and patterns of complaint volumes to justify staff levels and project future staff needs
 - Patterns by complainant characteristics
- ❑ **Time to Build** – The time to build and deploy this customized application was significantly less than other marketplace alternatives because of EConExplorer's™ proprietary framework-based architecture and the functionalities embedded in it such as retrieve, sort, review, search, edit, navigate, save, and more!
- ❑ **User Friendly** – The flexibility to use any web browser is a decided advantage to the client as their staff can work with a familiar tool to access and navigate on the system.
- ❑ **Metadata Search Capability** - EConExplorer™'s built-in Peer-to-Peer architecture allowed HFCAC to create a distributed content network and utilize Distributed Search Services to find information within the content network using metadata search. Essentially, data can be located and retrieved instantaneously ... far superior to other software alternatives with typical search wait times of 15-20 seconds.

Customer Benefits

HFCAC derived substantial benefits in selecting Neunet Solution's EConExplorer™ as the core technology on which a customized Complaint Tracking System was developed:

- ❑ EConExplorer's™ open architecture and embedded functionalities allowed the Complaint Tracking application to be developed in a five-week time frame at only 10% of the cost of other proposed solutions.
- ❑ Business operations and service continuity was almost unaffected as actual deployment of the solution was done in a single afternoon.
- ❑ The customized solution was deployed within a single server located at the HFCAC HQ in Sacramento.
- ❑ Since the system used EConExplorer's™ core technology, HFCAC and the 25 district offices are able to securely access this server through virtually any web browser.
- ❑ HFCAC reported a significant increase in productivity.
- ❑ HFCAC's access and privilege requirements were fully accommodated and tailored to their exacting requirements – made possible by the ContentObject™ and ContentManager™ features of EConExplorer™.
- ❑ Management can easily run ad hoc reports to monitor the efficiency, responsiveness, and accuracy of complaint handling and thereby discharge their responsibility to the spirit and letter of the legislation that mandated creation of the HFCAC.
- ❑ EConExplorer™ facilitates immediate notification to the appropriate agent when a claim is reported thereby speeding service and reducing the elapsed time for complaint resolution.
- ❑ Neunet Solutions NeuChat™ instant messaging system allows agents to collaborate with their supervisors in real time when assistance is needed to handle difficult complaint issues.
- ❑ EConExplorer™ has the capability to detect and preclude the creation of duplicate complaint records, which is a common problem that slows complaint processing and causes customer dissatisfaction.

Summary

Neunet Solutions takes great pride in working with the professional staff at HFCAC and building a state of the art Complaint Tracking system using cutting edge EConExplorer™ technology. Neunet Solutions is an authorized provider of technology services by the California Department of General Services Procurement Division

For more information on how Neunet Solutions' technologies can improve the efficiency of your business processes or automate your workflow, please visit www.neunetsolutions.com or email love@neunetsolutions.com.