Client

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City (Blue KC)
www.bluekc.com

Industry

Health insurance

Challenge

Blue KC strives to control administrative costs in order to keep premiums low and provide the best coverage services to its members. That attention to cost control extends to the IT department, which is always looking for ways to reduce operating costs and improve efficiencies.

Solution

Blue KC was approached by Sirius with a plan to create a single, multi-year contract that would help reduce costs while providing flexibility to add or replace hardware and software.

"This was one of those deals that looked too good to be true, but it has turned out to be everything that our Sirius consultants promised, and then some."

– Jeff Shipley,
Chief Technology Officer

BlueCross BlueShield of Kansas City

An Independent Licensee of the
Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

Sirius diagnoses rising maintenance charges, prescribes savings for healthcare insurer

Founded in 1938, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City (Blue KC) is today the largest health insurance provider in the greater Kansas City area, offering health coverage services, health and wellness education and resources, and trusted support to more than one million members in Kansas and Missouri. For more than 70 years, members have relied on Blue KC for their healthcare benefits and personalized services.

Like every business, Blue KC strives to control administrative costs while providing exceptional customer care. The importance of fiscal responsibility extends to all operations, including the IT systems. And like healthcare costs, systems maintenance costs continue to increase every year, challenging organizations to find ways to keep overhead down while improving performance, service and reliability.

Manufacturers' maintenance contracts offer a way for businesses like Blue KC to ensure its systems are operating optimally, and that software is up to date. The cost of those contracts is rising every year, turning maintenance into a major expense. So Blue KC turned to Sirius for a solution that would insulate the company from rising costs while still providing enough flexibility to keep its technologies current.

Sirius' contract provides extraordinary flexibility, allowing Blue KC to retire and acquire equipment during the term of the agreement. By replacing older equipment with new systems, Blue KC keeps its technology up to date to ensure the highest possible performance and reliability, and also realizes the lower maintenance costs that result with new equipment. Sirius' solutions will help Blue KC save maintenance/administrative costs while improving technology efficiencies.

Simplified, online management

Another benefit available to Blue KC is simplified asset and contract management. With Sirius' online Client Asset Management Tool, clients can manage their inventory and agreements via secure login to review hardware and software contracts, Sirius invoices associated with these contracts, and training credit information. The Client Asset Management Tool lets authorized users:

- Search assets by serial number, hardware model, machine, or contract number
- View asset details, including installation location, manufacturer, and status
- Link directly to the maintenance provider to place service calls online
- Export information in .html, .pdf, .csv, or .xml formats
- Filter by contract type, serial number, external customer number, and status

Surprising savings, backed by deep industry knowledge

According to Jeff Shipley, CTO of Blue KC, the savings that Sirius proposed, along with the flexibility it promised, didn't seem possible. "This was one of those deals that looked too good to be true, but it has turned out to be everything that our Sirius consultants promised, and then some."

Shipley trusted Sirius to deliver. "I have had a relationship with Sirius for a number of years. I deal with a lot of vendors, but of those, very few are truly strategic partners. The Sirius team really cares. They understand the healthcare industry and know how important it is to keep operating costs as low as possible. And everyone on the team knows a tremendous amount about the technology. Their service has helped Blue KC maintain a self-funded infrastructure spend budget. They look for ways to boost performance and reliability by displacing old equipment with higher maintenance costs. Honestly, I can't say enough good things about the company."

The creative thinking that went into Blue KC's Client Asset Management solution was critical to its success, in light of the challenges facing Blue KC and the industry as a whole. Says Jeff Shipley, "Ours is some of the most sensitive data that you can deal with in any industry. There's more ongoing change facing healthcare than any other industry. We're under pressure to increase cost efficiencies, and Sirius has been a strategic partner that's helping us achieve those things."

For more information

To learn more about Sirius Client Asset Management services, or about any of the systems, software and services Sirius provides for healthcare or any other industry, please contact your Sirius client executive.

Key Benefits

- *Hardware and software support is a combination of 24x7 and 8x5 coverage based on Blue KC's requirements.*
- *Equipment can be removed from "productive use" with credits returned to Blue KC at any time during the contract term.*
- *New IBM® equipment purchases will be managed on this prepaid contract. Full price protection is provided for the duration of the contract.*
- *The contract provides increased visibility into budgeting costs for maintenance.*
- *New IBM equipment purchases from sources other than Sirius can be managed under the contract.*
- *A quarterly true-up process coordinated by Sirius addresses additions and removals.*
- *An IBM Global Services Focal Point is assigned at no additional charge.*

SIRIUS
COMPUTER SOLUTIONS

1.800.460.1237
siriuscom.com