

Customer Story

DocSite Finds the Suite Spot

by Allan McNaughton

To improve treatment results for patients with chronic illnesses, healthcare providers must ensure patients receive and adhere to treatment regimens consistent with clinical guidelines. Therefore, providers must actively manage patient populations to improve care processes, reduce practice variation and medical errors, enhance patient self-care, support quality-improvement initiatives, and deliver better patient outcomes.

Forward-looking providers now are combining patient data collected from office visits, health plans, labs, and pharmacies into patient registries enabling physicians to be more proactive, reach more patients, improve communication, and better manage medical conditions. Although primitive registries can be created manually, developing a useful registry efficiently requires specialized applications, such as the point-of-care solutions available from DocSiteSM.

DocSite's products create and manage patient registries with data from electronic medical records, payer claims, eligibility requirements, prescriptions, lab results, health-risk self-assessments, and medical charts. These registries form the basis of DocSite's care workflow and patient coaching applications—PatientPlannerTM and CareCoachTM—which support multiple patient conditions, disease states, and population health-management assessments. Furthermore, the registries are used by PopulationPlannerTM to evaluate the impact of specific clinical interventions on individual patients as well as on groups of patients.

Changing Times

Creating feature-rich yet easy-to-use products suitable for deployment in clinical IT environments challenged DocSite's technical team to find ways to work smarter. "As the code base of our product suite grew, it became increasingly important to find tools

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that would make the development process more manageable,” noted Anthony Jenkins, President. “We faced process and tools issues in the areas of defect management, change management, and quality assurance automation. In each of these situations, we were fortunate to find a Seapine tool that precisely solved the problem—and at the right price.”

Like many organizations, DocSite first tracked defects using emails and a spreadsheet. “The manual method of bug tracking soon became unworkable as the project increased in size and scope—important issues could easily slip through the cracks. To ensure accurate issue tracking, our team chose Seapine's TestTrack Pro. We had the tool up and running in less than a day, including customization time. The developers found TestTrack Pro so simple to use that they rarely opened the user's manual.”

“Using TestTrack Pro also gave us the opportunity to improve how we manage beta test cycles. Beta customers were sending us email when they found a problem in the product. This was suboptimal because the information provided in bug reports could vary greatly depending on who submitted the issue. To improve the consistency of this information, we let our beta customers submit defects directly into the TestTrack Pro database, which we had configured to



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require certain fields to be entered. Exposing TestTrack Pro to our customers was easy because it only required making the product's web interface available outside the firewall. Problems now get addressed faster because developers are informed immediately via email when new issues are filed.”

Based on their positive experience working with TestTrack Pro, DocSite's team members decided to tackle version control problems using Seapine's Surround SCM. “We originally were using Microsoft's Visual SourceSafe, but the tool was unable to grow with us. The problem was exacerbated when the engineering team expanded and became dispersed across the country—a worst-case scenario for SourceSafe. Even when we got SourceSafe to work over a virtual private network, it was still painfully slow. We found Surround SCM to be a much better fit: It does not require a virtual private network for remote access, is significantly faster at retrieving large file sets, and offers a flexible branching model that supports our increasingly parallel development process.”

Test for Success

With Seapine tools providing a solid defect tracking and version control foundation, DocSite tackled its last and most challenging development process issue. “Even though we initially relied on manual func-

tional testing, we always managed to ship a quality product on time. Unfortunately, this made the project's quality assurance phase time-consuming. Manually testing the product took about a week of effort by almost the entire team. We aim for quarterly releases, and as the time spent on testing mounted, development productivity was diminished.”

“We knew automated functional testing tools were available, but we avoided them due to their excessive cost and complexity. Upon learning of Seapine's QA Wizard, we made the leap to automated testing. QA Wizard is really simple to use—even compared with pricier tools. However, due to schedule pressures, we used Seapine's consulting services to automate our test cases. Thus, we were able to reap the benefits of automated functional testing without losing development time.”

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“Seapine has done an excellent job developing QA Wizard scripts for us: The company learned our product quickly and produced automated functional tests at a very reasonable cost. Now we can release more frequently and still fully test even the smallest bug-fix release without a negative impact on the schedule.”

Lessons Learned

- Outsourcing makes sense—Jenkins noted, “Seapine's consulting services made our organization more efficient. We focused on developing the product to meet customer needs, and Seapine created the scripts to test our work. Now we can fully test the product in much less time than before.”
- Change management is crucial—“Effective issue tracking and version control are crucial to success. Using TestTrack Pro and Surround SCM from the start of a project will save many hours of frustration and result in better quality products.”
- The real cost of a tool is important—“The simplicity and usability of a development tool are paramount. It's all too easy to find tools that drag down developer productivity with overly complex features that often go unused.”

Look to the Future

Using Seapine tools, DocSite accomplished its goal of working smarter in the face of growing demands. “It has been a satisfying experience working with Seapine,” Jenkins concluded. “We solved our most pressing development process issues at a modest cost without introducing unnecessary complexity into the organization. To top it off, we have barely scratched the surface with these tools and see substantial benefits down the road from using them together in a fully integrated manner.”

About the Author

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