

Microsoft
Knowledge Driven Health

> Turning Information into Action

Executive Summary

Abstract

Relentless cost increases. Growing consumer expectations. A highly fragmented ecosystem. Increasing government regulation. As a health plan executive, you face an almost impossible set of challenges in the quest to respond to these complex issues. The reason? In order to succeed, you must be able to maximize the value of your company's existing business model and simultaneously reinvent your organization to enable it to meet the demands of today's market for better care management, improved access to information, and higher-quality customer service.

While the root cause of all of the issues that you face varies, experts agree that a key to success lies in a new generation of technologies that will enable health plans to transcend their traditional focus on transactions. These technologies—which are revolutionizing the way information is created, stored, and shared—will enable you to transform your health plan into a collaborative, information-driven organization that provides consumers, providers, and employers with the tools they need to make sound decisions about health and healthcare.

To help you achieve this promise, Microsoft and its partners in the health plan industry have worked together to develop Knowledge Driven Health. A shared vision for affordable personal and population health through informed decision-making across the healthcare ecosystem, Knowledge Driven Health offers a rapid, cost-effective approach designed to enable health plans to take advantage of innovative technology solutions that make it easier to turn information into action. The result: faster time to market for new products and services, expanded capacity to meet new business demands, and more efficient business processes across the healthcare ecosystem, all leading to better health, greater healthcare affordability, and improved customer loyalty.

Health Plans: The Need for Breakthrough Innovations

In 1995, U.S. annual healthcare spending stood at \$988.5 billion. Ten years later, that figure stands at a staggering \$1.8 trillion. Meanwhile, premium increases continue to outpace general price increases and growth in our economy. For health plan executives, these numbers translate into unprecedented pressure. You face pressure to cut costs. Pressure to improve service. Pressure to expand coverage and improve the quality of care.

Ultimately, the quality and cost of healthcare is determined by the millions of financial, lifestyle, and treatment decisions we all make every day. Of course, the best decisions are made when all relevant information is instantly accessible, when and where it is needed. But today, that information is often locked away in a proprietary database or stored in paper records. Or it may simply reside in the mind of the physician or clinician. That means too many decisions are based on incomplete and inaccurate information.

Across the healthcare industry, there is widespread consensus that the time has come to break down the barriers that limit access to information. Many experts agree that by streamlining information access, automating processes, and improving collaboration between healthcare providers and health plan employees, healthcare costs could be slashed by as much as 40 percent. The key: software that enables employees, teams, providers, and consumers to work together to turn information into action whenever and wherever healthcare decisions are made.

Many experts agree that by streamlining information access, automating processes, and improving collaboration between healthcare providers and health plan employees, costs could be slashed by as much as 40 percent.

Microsoft and the Health Plan Industry

In today's business environment, your long-term success will depend on your ability to transform your company into an organization that is consumer focused, information driven, and highly collaborative. As a pioneer and industry leader, Microsoft understands how people use digital information technologies in their daily lives. We've applied that knowledge to the issues that health plans face. The result is a new approach to information management and collaboration. Based on software that is simple by design and widely used and supported across the healthcare ecosystem, this new approach will help you reduce the cost and complexity of your existing IT infrastructure while providing a broad range of new capabilities.

To deliver the greatest possible value to health plans, Microsoft focuses on three key concepts: commitment to affordable breakthroughs, the consumer community and experience, and the best economics for business and consumers.

Commitment to Affordable Breakthroughs

At Microsoft, we are driven by a single mission: to create breakthrough software products and online services that connect people and empower them to achieve their true potential. To fulfill this mission and accelerate the speed to impact of new technology, we are committed to delivering innovations that are highly cost-effective and can be utilized quickly. We do that by building products that are simple by design, that work with the technology you already have in place, and that are highly adaptive.

- > **Simple by design:** To successfully tackle the problems you face, you will need software solutions that can help you simplify the increasingly complex world of healthcare. Microsoft offers products that are designed for easy set-up and maintenance, require little training, and minimize the personnel and resources needed for deployment, operations, and user support.
- > **Works with what you have:** Microsoft® .NET has revolutionized software development by providing a powerful framework for connecting information, people, systems, and devices, regardless of platform or language.¹ Based on the .NET Framework, solutions for health plans are built on products that are designed to connect with one another, and with the technology your company already utilizes today. Microsoft is also working with the industry to advance a new generation of software that is interoperable by design,² reducing the need for custom development and cumbersome testing and certification.
- > **Adaptive:** Rather than forcing users to adapt to technology, Microsoft recognizes that software must adapt to the way people and businesses work best. Using familiar products such as Microsoft Windows®, Microsoft Office, and MSN®, we deliver innovations in software that make collaboration and information sharing effortless and widely available on any device.

"We look at this as a breakthrough innovation. ...It gives us about 12 more nurse full-time equivalents—or about \$9.6 million a year in terms of decreasing medical costs."

— John Castiglia, MD
Chief Medical
Officer and Senior VP
Premera Blue Cross

¹ For more information, review the executive e-mail "Building Software That Is Interoperable By Design" <http://www.microsoft.com/mscorp/execmail/2005/02-03interoperability.asp>

² "One of the most surprising aspects of the [Jupiter Research] study was that Microsoft came out on top of interoperability requirements. A full 72% of the IT decision makers ranked Microsoft No. 1 in interoperability." *InternetWeek*, June 28, 2004

“Our move from an IBM mainframe running DB2 to HP servers running Microsoft SQL Server paid for itself within two months.”

– Ming Hua
IT Project Manager
Broadspire

Established Consumer Community and Experience

Today, expectations for customer service are changing dramatically. Conditioned by retailers, travel services, and financial institutions that offer fast and convenient in-person, online, and call center channels, health plan members are demanding ever-higher levels of access and service.

Because it is a world leader in consumer software and online services, Microsoft offers the health plan industry a wealth of experience and knowledge for tapping into the consumer market. With more than 420 million unique users logging on to MSN each month, 2.5 billion instant messages sent each day over MSN Messenger, and 450 million people starting their workday with Microsoft Office, Microsoft products and services are ubiquitous in the home, the office, and, increasingly, through mobile devices while people are on the road. Familiar, adaptive, and easy to use, these products and services can give health plan executives a critical competitive advantage by improving the way health plans interact with physicians and consumers in existing channels while providing opportunities for creating new channels.

Best Economics for Business and Consumers

By combining the price and maintenance cost advantages of the Microsoft Windows platform, Microsoft applications, and Microsoft online services with commodity hardware and rapid application development tools, Microsoft is able to deliver some of the best economics of any company in the industry. Microsoft’s ability to deliver value through best economics starts with your initial technology investments and extends to implementation, training, and ongoing support. In addition, our support for open standards and interoperability with non-Microsoft products help ensure that your organization can continue to realize the full value of your existing IT investments.

Microsoft Knowledge Driven Health

To help health plans succeed in a complex and difficult business environment, Microsoft and its partners in the health plan industry have developed Knowledge Driven Health. Knowledge Driven Health is a shared vision, strategy, and blueprint created to enable health plans to deliver affordable personal and population health through informed decisions and evidence-based care across the healthcare ecosystem.

Knowledge Driven Health is composed of innovative and interoperable software from Microsoft and its industry technology partners that will work with your existing IT investments—regardless of programming language or platform—to produce breakthrough results. It provides a rapid, cost-effective approach that will enable you to transform your business into a collaborative, information-driven enterprise that has the infrastructure and tools it needs to focus on improving health, affordability, and the consumer experience.

Knowledge Driven Health offers health plans a new generation of information technology solutions that will provide the foundation for implementing profound organizational change and turning information into action. Microsoft's innovative software and its partner's solutions are uniquely positioned to help health plans achieve this vision by providing the ability to establish collaborative information-sharing and decision-making processes across your company and the healthcare ecosystem faster, with fewer resources, and with less complexity.

The result: faster time to market for new products and services, expanded capacity to meet new business demands, and more efficient business processes across the ecosystem.

Microsoft Knowledge Driven Health Addresses Five Key Areas for Health Plans:

- > Collaboration
 - Collaboration Within and Beyond the Enterprise
 - Collaborative Care Management
- > Business Process and Intelligence
 - Business Process and Integration
 - Business Intelligence
- > Customer Experience
- > Enterprise Project Management
- > Risk Management and Compliance

“Microsoft is taking us forward with a clear vision. They are consistently challenging themselves and others to create the most effective technology.”

– Gadi Gilon
CIO
Clalit Health Services

“Collaboration among payers and providers offers the most promising strategy to improve patient safety and quality, make healthcare more affordable, and improve the efficiency of healthcare delivery and administration.”

– Cynthia Burghard
Analyst
The Gartner Group

Collaboration Within and Beyond the Enterprise

Knowledge Driven Health starts with a vision for effortless collaboration that supports decision-making processes across your organization and the entire healthcare ecosystem.

People Drive Business Success

The greatest strategic asset for any health plan is its employee base. When your employees work together to transform health and transaction information into action, it leads to better care, a stronger bottom line, and a sustainable competitive advantage.

This raises a fundamental question that every health plan executive must ask: How can I amplify the day-to-day impact of each and every employee, team, division, and partner to create greater success?

The problem? Deluged with information, your employees constantly fight competing demands for their attention, even as they struggle to cope with increasing pressures to be more productive.

Informed Decisions Determine Health

Healthcare quality and medical costs are the result of a complex equation that includes a nearly infinite number of decisions made by employers, consumers, and providers. Employers must select the benefits they offer and the programs they adopt. Consumer decisions—which are strongly influenced by trust relationships, beliefs, and personal finances—span health-related behavior, care options, and providers. Providers choose the tests and treatments that account for 80 percent of healthcare spending.

Seen through this lens, the critical component for improving care quality and cutting costs is better decision-making. Few healthcare decisions are made in isolation. Most involve choices that reach across people and teams. But in our fragmented ecosystem—which spans 6,500 hospitals, 200,000 physician practices, and 1,300 health plans—we still rely on the most costly and inefficient collaboration methods: in-person meetings, phone, fax, and mail. The inevitable result is that too many decisions are based on insufficient information.

The Competitive Advantage of End-to-End Collaboration

Knowledge Driven Health will enable your organization to gain a competitive advantage through cost-effective, affordable technology that delivers pervasive collaborative capabilities. These capabilities will empower employees, providers, and consumers across your ecosystem by:

- > **Replacing** inefficient, manual information management with automated processes that streamline information collection, storage, and sharing
- > **Merging** communications such as e-mail, instant messaging, voice mail, telephones, mobile devices, and Web conferencing into a single unified experience that is always available, regardless of location
- > **Integrating** easy-to-use team workspaces that enable people to share information and work together in a common environment
- > **Empowering** employees with a single place to access relevant documents, news, directories, and business data
- > **Connecting** employees to critical business information through familiar Microsoft Office programs and line-of-business applications that automate business processes and enable them to respond to customers without leaving the applications they use most

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Collaborative Care Management

Care management is an integrated approach to improving health, controlling costs, increasing productivity, and reducing absenteeism across the continuum of care. It encompasses everything from disease management to case management, utilization review, wellness programs, and behavioral health.

To transform care management into a collaborative process, incentives for consumers and providers must be aligned with technology and information that enables each stakeholder to communicate and share information in ways that lead to better outcomes and improved economics.

Chronic Illness: Improving Health and Controlling Costs

According to the Center for Studying Health System Change, 10 percent of patients account for 70 percent of U.S. healthcare spending. The implication is clear: patients with chronic, costly illnesses offer the greatest opportunities for improving health and controlling rising premium costs.

To reap the benefits of chronic care management requires collaboration capabilities of the highest level, spanning your company's ecosystem and the entire continuum of care. Health plans, providers, and consumers must be able to collaborate effortlessly and share insights and information, regardless of where or when a patient receives care. Knowledge Driven Health gives your organization the ability to:

- > **Find** at-risk members proactively using predictive modeling methods
- > **Create** an adaptive portal for organizing research, sharing information, and automating tasks while offering the flexibility to handle non-routine processes and multi-channel communications
- > **Integrate** existing care management applications using open standards
- > **Extend** collaboration and information sharing to providers and consumers
- > **Increase** case management capacity by as much as 25 percent without adding new staff
- > **Offer** consumers and providers easy access to the authoritative information they need to make sound decisions about chronic care management

"Using the Microsoft platform, American Healthways is in a natural position to serve as that point of integration, providing relevant information to health plans, providers, patients, and employers precisely when they need it to make the most appropriate health-care decisions possible."

– Ben R. Leedle, Jr.
President and CEO
American Healthways

Business Process and Intelligence: Actionable Knowledge Anywhere

Every decision influences the bottom line. Even the smallest improvement in everyday decision-making can improve profitability and member health.

Because all health plans have similar access to customers, provider networks, and claims data, competitive advantage is increasingly built on your ability to control administrative and medical costs by empowering employees, customers, and partners to make better-informed financial and clinical decisions. To move from survival to success, you must be able to anticipate emerging trends and rapidly adapt strategy and business processes to focus on the right opportunities at both the operational and clinical levels.

Business intelligence can improve operations across departments, enabling your finance department to facilitate compliance with changing regulations while helping your IT department to optimize operational efficiency. For your sales department, business intelligence provides better insight into the sales and broker channels. In a clinical setting, it supports outcomes research and predictive modeling to improve medical expense forecast accuracy.

Business Intelligence from the Data Center to the Desktop and Devices

Knowledge Driven Health offers health plans a flexible and easy-to-use business intelligence platform that extends from the data center to the desktop to mobile devices. It enables you to:

- > **Monitor** business performance and key performance indicators (KPIs) with detailed views of accountability, custom scorecards, and personalized notification of status changes
- > **Gain** insight into business drivers and perform group analyses using detailed, contextual business analyses from reports, charts, and spreadsheets as well as unstructured contextual data
- > **Share** strategies, enable collaborative group analyses, assign and monitor tasks, and transform insight into action to improve business performance and execution of strategic plans
- > **Reduce** costs and risks by delivering the right information, in the right form, at the right time to employees, consumers, providers, and employers
- > **Meet** provider demands for pay-for-performance reports with business scorecards
- > **Expand** scorecarding to all business activities by empowering employees to create scorecards using familiar Microsoft Office applications

“ We wanted our providers to be able to see all the information about a patient ...not more than was needed and not less than needed. And we needed to reduce complexity in our organization, to become more agile.”

– Gadi Gilon
CIO
Clalit Health Services

Business Process and Integration

As a health plan executive, you face the difficult task of transforming your business from an internally focused, transactional organization into a collaborative, information-driven business that enables members and purchasers to make informed decisions and helps providers deliver evidence-based care. This new collaborative model requires health plans to establish new and more customer-centric business processes that connect and integrate with digital lifestyles and empower employees, members, and providers with actionable knowledge that can improve member health with greater cost-efficiency.

“We have reached full integration as an organization. This is something people couldn’t believe. People told us that it would be very complicated, that the risks were too high, that it would take too much time and effort. But we were able to achieve integration in months, not years.”

– Gadi Gilon
CIO
Clalit Health Services

Compounding the challenge is the complexity and cost of legacy technology that drives your company’s core administrative transaction, care management, and customer service systems. Before you can provide the framework that makes collaboration possible, you must first integrate your aging portfolio of applications that have become increasingly complex, decentralized, high-maintenance “siloes”. The next step is to provide an infrastructure that enables you to deliver patient-relevant information into the hands of decision makers beyond your company’s boundaries. This requires you to integrate your business processes with the day-in-the-life processes of members on the go, providers, information systems, homes, and partner legacy systems across the healthcare ecosystem.

The key is simplified, easy-to-deploy technologies based on a standardized Web services platform that can improve the consumer’s healthcare experience by enabling seamless information exchange with a broad range of systems and processes within and beyond your corporate boundaries. Knowledge Driven Health enables health plans to leverage Microsoft’s leadership position in workflow, Web services, services oriented architecture, and business process automation³ to:

- > **Automate** business processes, workflow, and standardized transactions that span members, providers, purchasers, employees, and trading partners
- > **Extend** processes beyond enterprise boundaries with consumers, providers, purchasers, and brokers through highly automated, system driven exchanges and process portals
- > **Optimize processes** quickly by finding and correcting bottlenecks and refining procedures
- > **Add new functionality and agility** around existing core administrative, care management, and customer service systems

³ Microsoft BizTalk® Server named *InfoWorld’s* best Business Process Automation Solution.

Microsoft named leading vendor in Gartner Group’s Web services and integration backbone *Magic Quadrants*.

On September 14, 2005 Microsoft announced Windows Workflow Foundation as a framework to enable developers to quickly build workflow enabled applications that span people, applications, and processes. See <http://msdn.microsoft.com/workflow>.

Improved Customer Experience Across Every Channel

Today, health plan executives face a new imperative. You must transform your company into a consumer-focused organization that places the highest value on member health and service quality. The ultimate goal—to become the trusted advocate on all health-related matters. To achieve this critical strategic position, you must retool your organization to deliver and support products and services that are focused on not just meeting but exceeding the growing expectations of individual members as well as employer groups.

The reason for this new imperative? As consumers assume greater financial responsibility for their own healthcare, they will expect health plans to reciprocate with ever-better levels of service. At the same time, consumers have grown accustomed to the growing conveniences offered by other industries through access to live agents, e-mail, speech recognition, and Web portals. By most measures, health plans have a long way to go to meet these growing expectations. Today, 85 percent of consumer interactions are still conducted by the most expensive channel of all—the telephone. And as health plans launch new and more complex consumer-tailored products, service representatives are being called on to handle higher volumes and more complex calls to win and keep customers.

Focusing on the Moment of Truth

Every time one of your employees interacts with a health plan member, it represents a moment of truth—an opportunity to demonstrate that your company is as focused on what's best for the member as it is on the bottom line. Knowledge Driven Health includes technology that will enable your organization to precisely deploy flexible, high-touch solutions to guide consumers through the uncharted terrain of the healthcare marketplace.

Knowledge Driven Health offers the innovative software and partner solutions needed to operate as a consumer advocate by:

- > **Delivering** high-touch, consistent customer experiences across any channel and device
- > **Integrating** full-service and self-service channels to reduce call center costs and complexity
- > **Laying** a foundation to roll out new products and services easily and quickly
- > **Enabling** agents and self-service channels to handle increasingly complex customer interactions without adding staff

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Enterprisewide Project Management: Aligning People and Projects with Strategy

Your organization's ability to efficiently align resources and business activities with strategic objectives can mean the difference between thriving and just surviving. To achieve strategic alignment, successful health plans are "projectizing the business" to monitor performance more closely and make better business decisions about their overall work portfolio. By planning and tracking projects with clarity and precision, health plans can respond with greater agility to the demands of a fast-changing business environment.

People are the most valuable—and often the most expensive—assets of your organization. But managing people and projects across an organization is complex. Resource information is often controlled in various departments, making it difficult to forecast short- and long-term resource needs accurately. Without a complete understanding of the skills and availability of its staff, your organization cannot strategically hire, deploy, and develop resources that match the needs of your project portfolio.

And, unless you have a clear picture of the work that people and teams are spending time and resources on, you can't make the necessary course corrections to align projects with changing business priorities. It also makes it extremely difficult to assess the financial impact of strategic business decisions, or to know with confidence which investments are paying off and which are not.

Making your strategic goals a reality requires technology that is robust enough to support your core business and yet flexible enough to support organization-wide collaboration and business transformation. You need an adaptive infrastructure that allows you to gain visibility, insight, and control over your portfolio of projects, while helping your company improve productivity and collaboration, reduce cycle times, and decrease costs.

Knowledge Driven Health offers you the enterprise-wide project management infrastructure you need to gain visibility, insight, and control of project-based work to optimize business performance.

Knowledge Driven Health offers you the enterprise-wide project management infrastructure you need to gain visibility, insight, and control of project-based work to optimize business performance. By managing multiple projects as a collective portfolio you can identify, prioritize, and intelligently invest in projects that align with your corporate strategy, ensuring that your company's efforts are spent only on activities that contribute to the bottom line. Based on standard Microsoft technologies and products Knowledge Driven Health offers project management capabilities that:

- > **Align** project work to overall business priorities and accelerate project lifecycles to deliver more for the business with less time and money
- > **Use** roll-up scorecard reports that graphically display key business metrics to assure accountability among all levels of the organization
- > **Gain** a deeper level of project governance and control through project performance, issue, and risk tracking capabilities
- > **Optimize resources and collaboration** across your organization for sustained project management competence with powerful resource management capabilities to assist you in achieving the greatest return on your investment in your employees
- > **Streamline** project management performance for competitive advantage by capturing and deploying best practices, continually improving processes, creating plans that reflect realistic schedules, resource requirements, and budgets
- > **Are readily** deployed and managed, familiar to end-users, and reusable in multiple business contexts for greater agility and maximum ROI, such as:
 - bringing new products to market more quickly and at lower cost than the competition
 - making sound decisions about how IT investments will support business strategies
 - automating and streamlining common Six Sigma tasks and providing technology support for Six Sigma management methods

By managing multiple projects as a collective portfolio you can identify, prioritize, and intelligently invest in projects that align with your corporate strategy.

“ We wanted to be able to avert problems before any occurred... We went to Windows XP Professional with Service Pack 2 sooner than we usually upgrade because we were so excited about the service pack’s security benefits. We viewed the upgrade as a logical next step in our technology strategy.”

– John Sims
Technical Lead for
Desktop Engineering
Group Health Cooperative

Risk Management and Compliance

Today, compliance with an ever-growing body of regulatory mandates is as central to business success as the ability to manage claims and enrollment files. Noncompliance with any regulation needlessly exposes health plans to potential brand damage and resource-consuming action plans to address violations.

Microsoft and its industry partners offer solutions that reduce regulatory compliance risk by improving information protection and helping to provide the internal controls needed to meet HIPAA requirements, Sarbanes-Oxley provisions, and state-specific regulations.

Achieving Compliance, Reducing Complexity

Based on affordable, leading-edge privacy, security, and compliance technologies, these solutions will enable your organization to control access to administrative, clinical, and financial information across business units and will help protect against unauthorized use of sensitive information wherever the information is stored or sent. Equally important, rather than adding another layer of complexity and a new set of tasks, these solutions will also improve information exchange, streamline workflow, and automate processes. The results will enable your company to share information and collaborate more efficiently and with less risk.

To improve compliance and reduce risk, Knowledge Driven Health offers a broad range of products and technologies that deliver:

- > **Improved** identity management, information protection, internal controls, and team productivity
- > **Easier** compliance with HIPAA, Sarbanes-Oxley, Gramm-Leach-Bliley, and other regulatory mandates
- > **Reduced** complexity and risk related to privacy, security, and compliance coupled with improved individual and team productivity

Conclusion

Microsoft Knowledge Driven Health is a shared vision for achieving affordable personal and population health through informed decisions and evidence-based care. It enables health plans to realize this vision by helping them to establish better information sharing and decision-making processes across the company and the entire healthcare ecosystem. Through Knowledge Driven Health, Microsoft helps deliver these capabilities with greater speed, fewer resources, and less complexity than any other technology company.

Our approach is to offer a vision to help you transform your company into a collaborative, information-driven business and offers a blueprint composed of innovative and interoperable software from Microsoft and its partners. Knowledge Driven Health offers an infrastructure for collaboration across your company and your extended healthcare community. A platform for business intelligence and interoperability that delivers actionable information wherever and whenever it is needed. An enterprise-wide project management framework to align people and projects with strategy. And a security and compliance infrastructure that will help your organization to reduce the complexities and risks related to privacy, security, and compliance while simultaneously improving individual and team productivity.

Microsoft believes that health plans have the reach and the motivation to connect with providers, consumers, and employers at the economies of scale needed to transform our healthcare system. Microsoft is working closely with industry leaders and technology partners to enable health plans to achieve the organizational transformation needed to turn information into action in a way that makes informed decisions and evidence-based care a reality across the ecosystem.

Knowledge Driven Health delivers a platform that provides actionable information wherever and whenever it is needed.

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For more information and case studies about Microsoft and partner solutions for Health Plans, visit www.microsoft.com/healthplan or e-mail hlthplan@microsoft.com

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