



PREMERA BLUE CROSS CURES AUDIT REQUIREMENTS WITH SERENA

Leading healthcare provider reduces risk and cuts costs with Serena Dimensions



Premera Blue Cross

Mountlake Terrace, Washington
premera.com

INDUSTRY

Healthcare

PRODUCT

Serena® Dimensions™

APPLICATION

Configuration management

“With Serena Dimensions, we are lowering costs and reducing risk, which supports the top line objectives of the company.”

— Gary Soule, manager of IT application lifecycle management, Premera Blue Cross

Premera Blue Cross is a non-profit, independent regional health plan providing members, employers, providers, and brokers with high quality healthcare coverage and service. Operating as Premera Blue Cross in Washington state and Premera Blue Cross Blue Shield in Alaska, the company employs over 3,000 people and serves more than one million members. In recent years, Premera’s IT department has been faced with increasingly stringent audit requirements, rapid company growth, and non-standardized, inefficient change management policies and processes. With Serena Dimensions, Premera has reduced risk and can now easily meet audit requirements. The company has also significantly reduced costs via process automation and standardization. Premera has new visibility into the software configuration management lifecycle—ensuring high quality, on-time, on budget projects. Premera is one of 30 Blue Cross companies across the U.S. that uses Serena Change Governance™ solutions.

CHALLENGE

- Increasingly stringent government audit requirements
- Non-standardized IT change management policies and processes
- Company migration from multiple legacy systems to Windows-based system
- Rapid company growth adds complexity

SOLUTION

- Serena Dimensions selected for its ability to link business owner and developer processes as well as work activities through one system

RESULTS

- Reduced costs via process automation and standardization
 - New visibility into entire software configuration management process
 - Ability to easily and quickly meet audit requirements with no extra resources
 - IT initiatives aligned with business objectives
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“Our IT department will devote even fewer resources to administering Dimensions 10 due to improved, automated security features.” —Garth Frazer, senior technical analyst, Premera Blue Cross

CHALLENGE

With the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 and its implications, Premera has become highly regulated by state and federal government entities. Auditors regularly conduct SAS 70 audits, a widely recognized audit for service organizations that focuses on IT controls and safeguards for companies that host or process customer data. “As regulatory requirements have changed, our IT department has been forced to change systems and processes to ensure we have everything we need to comply with government standards,” says Gary Soule, manager of IT application lifecycle management at Premera. Without standardized change management policies or automated processes in place, the IT department has faced the challenge of limited visibility into the status of IT projects, and a cumbersome,

time-intensive process of gathering and sharing of information among developers and business owners to get work done. Premera has also grown its customer base “exponentially” in recent years, which has placed new pressures on IT. The company has added thousands of members from Alaska and Arizona—and taken on self-insured giants Microsoft and Weyerhaeuser—all within the past two years. “We used to be a regional provider but are now a national company,” says Soule. Along with rapid growth, the company has embraced new technology and systems. IT has been tasked with moving legacy (mainframe) membership and claims processing applications to a Windows-based application, one that requires extensive customizations.

SOLUTION

Once Premera determined it needed a configuration management solution, the company embarked on a rigorous selection process. “We hired a consultant to help us evaluate vendors,” explains Soule. “We chose Serena Dimensions because there was a built-in integration between strategic business requirements and tactical changes—a unified solution for our business owners and developers.” Serena Dimensions has helped establish a cohesive process for employees working in both groups—and maximum visibility for effectively managing change control from inception to completion.

Premera plans to upgrade to Serena’s most recent version, Serena Dimensions 10, a process-centric Change Governance™ solution for application lifecycle management. “Serena has delivered a very robust solution in Dimensions 10 and we look forward to upgrading,” says Soule. “With a user-friendly interface, dashboard capabilities, IDE integration, project views, and other great features, Serena will continue to provide real value to Premera by further mitigating risk, providing excellent traceability, and streamlining software configuration management.”

RESULTS

Serena Dimensions is delivering business value to Premera. “With Dimensions, we are lowering costs and reducing risk, which supports the top line objectives of the company,” says Soule. “Dimensions has streamlined the way work gets done. We’ve reduced e-mails, phone calls, and sending Word documents back and forth between business owners and IT, eliminating

a tremendous amount of administrative work. With a central repository for configuration management, work gets funneled through one system with consistent processes. We have excellent visibility, control, and traceability.” Since Dimensions links the work of business owners and developers, Premera has become more strategic in its IT initiatives. “Business owners are now driving IT priorities, as opposed to the other way around,” says Soule. “Our IT initiatives are better aligned with the strategic needs of the company.” With data provided from Dimensions, Premera can also satisfy SAS 70 and other audit reviews—with relative ease. “Audits can be time-intensive and nerve-wracking for everybody,” says Garth Frazer, senior technical analyst for Premera. “With no additional resources, we’ve been able to access data quickly and easily to meet audit requirements. It’s given our executive team great confidence that IT is meeting regulatory requirements—and can consistently prove it.”

Premera looks forward to taking advantage of new features and offerings delivered in Serena Dimensions 10. “Our IT department will devote even fewer resources to administering Dimensions 10 due to improved, automated security features,” says Frazer. “We’ll have the ability to further define roles for groups such as testers, developers and implementers. We’ll be able to track and strictly enforce processes and activities for each role. The automated security features will lower our total cost of ownership and further streamline the audit process.”

ABOUT SERENA

Serena Software, the Change Governance™ leader, helps more than 15,000 organizations around the world—including 96 of the Fortune 100 and 90 of the Global 100—turn change into a business advantage. Serena is headquartered in San Mateo, California, and has offices throughout the U.S., Europe, and Asia Pacific.

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Learn more about the enterprise-wide power of Serena solutions by visiting www.serena.com or contacting one of our sales representatives in your area.

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