



BUSINESS:
Medical Billing

COMPANY:
Medical Reimbursement Services

OBJECTIVES:
Safely store fire-damaged records; streamline key business processes

Following a devastating fire, SmartSearch helped a medical billing company rise up from the ashes and opened the door to a more efficient and profitable future

Documents are truly the lifeblood of many information-intensive businesses. For these companies, managing documents electronically can be a lifesaving business practice, as a prominent Maine medical billing company discovered—quite by accident.

After a fire destroyed the offices of Medical Reimbursement Services and many of its medical records were severely water-damaged, including those it was storing on behalf of clients, the company realized it needed to find a more secure way to retain documents. Affordable, easy to use and extremely reliable, SmartSearch is enabling the company to manage these critical records safely and is helping to streamline its business operations. “Our business helps our customers save people’s lives,” said Tanerillo. “After the fire, SmartSearch came to our rescue. While devastating, the fire we survived opened up a whole new world of opportunities by introducing us to SmartSearch and other advanced technologies.”

Medical Reimbursement Services is a classic business success story. Founded in 1989 by Diane Tanerillo, its president, the company has steadily built up a loyal clientele over the last 20 years, largely through word-of-mouth referrals. Based in Windham, Maine, the company started out in physician billing, but now specializes almost exclusively in ambulance billing. Today, Medical Reimbursement Services provides medical billing, including bookkeeping and document storage services, for more than 40 ambulance companies throughout the “down east” state.

Whenever an ambulance responds to an emergency call in Maine, a report must be generated that documents all of the lifesaving procedures performed for the patient. Referred to as a Maine EMS Patient Treatment Transport Run Report—or simply an ambulance run report—these reports are essential to Medical Reimbursement Services because the company uses them to generate its clients’ billing reports. In addition, they contain information of high medical and legal value. For this reason, Maine mandates that ambulance run reports be retained for at least seven years.

In 2007, Maine began requiring ambulance companies to file run reports with the state. In response, ambulance companies began to generate their run reports electronically. Today, these reports are uploaded to a web-based, statewide data system called the Maine EMS State Bridge, where they reside safely and can be accessed by authorized users such as Medical Reimbursement Services. As a result, the company no longer needs to retain these reports.

Prior to the state’s mandate, however, as a service to some of its clients, Medical Reimbursement Services stored the original paper copies of its clients’ ambulance run reports. The City of Portland, a client for 15 years, for example, made about 10,000 ambulance runs annually, each of which generated an ambulance run report. Tanerillo explained that, after 20 years of serving accounts like this, Medical Reimbursement Services had accumulated “tons and tons” of paper records, which the company had stored in its building.



ABOUT SQUARE 9 SOFTWARES

Square 9 Softworks is a leading developer of innovative, business-centric software solutions including the award-winning SmartSearch Content Management Suite. Dedicated to making content management available to organizations of all sizes, Square 9 Softworks designs solutions built on open architecture and cutting-edge technologies that drive efficiency and productivity across all business applications.

Through decades of experience with content management technologies in business enterprises of all kinds, Square 9 Softworks has acquired a thorough understanding of document-driven business processes. Intensely customer-focused and highly responsive, the company delivers effective, value-driven solutions and has achieved a reputation for excellence in meeting the rapidly evolving needs of its customers.

Square 9 Softworks distributes its solutions exclusively through a network of highly skilled channel partners from its corporate office in New Haven, Connecticut. For further information, visit www.square-9.com

On March 2, 2009, the part of Medical Reimbursement Services building containing Tanerillo's office burned to the ground. "That part of the building was a total loss," said Tanerillo. "Everything was burnt to a crisp. Nothing was recoverable. While the bulk of our records were in another part of the building and most of them survived, a large number of these were severely water-damaged."

Always resourceful, Medical Reimbursement Services quickly relocated, but their new building was smaller and the company had to rent a cavernous metal storage container in which to store the surviving records, a costly and unacceptable long-term solution. Fortunately, Tanerillo's office technology company contacted her shortly after the fire and demonstrated how these records could be stored affordably, quickly and securely using SmartSearch, and how they would be easy to find and retrieve when needed in the future.

Using SmartSearch, storing these records is simple and, best of all, secure. A temporary employee places the reconditioned paper records into a multifunction printer and simply presses a button to scan them into the appropriate SmartSearch Inbox (e.g.: "Run Reports"). From her workstation, the temp then indexes the records by run number, date and ambulance company name so they can be retrieved easily if needed. Because all of these records are backed up multiple times each day during regularly scheduled onsite and offsite backups, SmartSearch ensures that no disaster will ever claim the company's records again.

Only a short time after installing SmartSearch, Medical Reimbursement Services had already begun making plans to integrate SmartSearch with its core line-of-business functions. "In the future," said Tanerillo, "we will be using SmartSearch to manage records that are part of our everyday workflow such as checks, bank deposits, benefits statements and insurance company remittances. We are also exploring ways to use SmartSearch to produce our billing reports more efficiently."

"I would recommend SmartSearch to any organization looking for an affordable and painless way to eliminate paper documents and manage important records more efficiently and securely," said Tanerillo. "SmartSearch has given us real peace of mind. We are no longer worried about misfiling or losing records that are critical to our clients and to the survival of our business."