

Outsourcing Document Management: An Essential New Tool in the Quest for Cost-Effective Healthcare Delivery

*How large-scale acute care providers can use
document management outsourcing to save
money and devote more resources to patient care*

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Executive Summary

Outsourcing enables large organizations to offload the burden of managing processes that are not core competencies, but are still critical to maintaining productivity and profitability.

In large acute care environments, document management is not typically a core competency. Yet virtually all functional areas—including patient care, hospital administration, reimbursement, technology deployment, and regulatory compliance—use a wide variety of documents in their respective workflows. This convergence of conditions leads providers to outsource document management.

There are four major categories of document management outsourcing in acute care: on-site services (such as copy center management and scanning), off-site services (such as commercial printing), business support services (such as mailroom, couriers, and reception), and network support services (such as network design and installation). The case for outsourcing these services is strong. Large-scale providers can realize significant benefits through outsourcing, including strategic reallocation of resources, operating cost reductions, higher productivity, and a faster transition to a paperless workplace.

Document management outsourcing services can be implemented one at a time or in combination, in a department or across the enterprise, depending on the needs of the healthcare provider. To find the best outsourcing partner for your organization, look for a company that has significant experience in healthcare, offers a wide range of document management capabilities, uses well-defined processes, measures its own performance, and has a strong legacy of satisfied customers.

What Is Outsourcing?

“Outsourcing has become a mandatory business strategy for companies that wish to compete successfully in today's fast-paced, e-commerce enabled market environment.”

— *The Outsourcing Institute*

Outsourcing is a broad topic, one that applies to virtually every aspect of business operations. At its highest level, outsourcing includes all the ways in which organizations employ other companies to provide specific products and services. Technically speaking, basic services such as electricity and telecommunications have always been outsourced. In manufacturing, acquisition of raw materials, processed goods, components, and parts are typically outsourced to a network of vendors known as the supply chain.

In its more recent context, outsourcing refers to two important cross-industry trends. The first is the wholesale outsourcing of jobs, or offshoring, which refers to the transfer of U.S. manufacturing and customer service jobs to overseas providers that charge significantly less for labor, and may also have less restrictive regulatory policies. Many companies have come under fire for offshoring, which is not without its economic benefits but can carry a high cost to brand equity and customer loyalty.

The second type of outsourcing — and the focus of this white paper — refers to the practice of turning over back-office and other historically internal functions to outside providers in an effort to cut costs and improve efficiency. This kind of outsourcing occurs frequently in a wide cross-section of “non-core” functional areas, from software development and Web design, to information technology (IT) management and help desk, to human resources and accounting, to copy centers and mailrooms. In the context of outsourcing, “non-core” describes any activity not directly related to the company's core competencies, which are generally regarded as those required to fulfill the organization's value proposition. Different companies define their core competencies in different ways, which is why the range of outsourced services is so wide.

It is also important to note that many non-core processes are still critical to productivity and profitability. In acute healthcare, for example, printing is not a function that is specifically related to patient care. It is a basic operational process required to produce forms, patient education materials, training documents, and marketing collateral. Yet hospitals cannot function properly if printing is not handled efficiently.

Many businesses, including healthcare providers, have been outsourcing non-core activities for several years. In fact, the Outsourcing Institute says this practice has become a mandatory business strategy for organizations that want to stay competitive. Mandatory is a strong word. However, it is likely that the vast majority—if not all—of the large organizations in the U.S. are outsourcing at least some non-core activities.

The universal benefits of outsourcing are clear. Outsourcing enables large organizations to offload the administrative burden of managing the people, processes, technologies, and other resources involved in a given process. This removes layers of administrative complexity and frees up internal resources that can be delegated to more important activities. It also brings in professional expertise, resulting in higher levels of productivity and process efficiency than were previously possible. The outsourcing provider is also responsible for upgrading equipment, adopting new best practices, and continuously optimizing performance. All the customer is concerned with is whether or not the provider is meeting agreed-upon expectations for service quality and cost-efficiency.

Of course, outsourcing offers significant cost advantages as well. It creates opportunities to reduce headcount and maintain management focus on core competencies. Outsourcing is generally less expensive than managing a process internally, simply because outsourcing providers offer powerful economies of scale and better cost controls—as well as a tighter focus, dedicated resources, and a wealth of experience.

Potential pitfalls of outsourcing exist as well, and will ultimately affect your final decisions about which processes to outsource and which providers to hire. By definition, outsourcing requires you to give up a certain measure of direct control over a process. This lack of control may result in an unacceptable decline in the quality and reliability of service if you do not establish a strong working relationship with the selected provider.

Outsourcing document management

Within the broad spectrum of outsourcing, document process outsourcing (DPO) is a \$30 billion market and growing. This is not surprising, because the average mid-sized to large organization (500 to 2,000 employees) spends more than \$3.5 million annually in printing and print-related services¹. That is a significant sum, one that many organizations do not have expertise in managing, let alone precisely controlling.

So what exactly is involved in a DPO engagement? From an executive perspective, it is very similar to a joint venture where two or more companies join forces, blend capabilities, and optimize their respective core competencies to deliver a product or service.

Every provider takes a different approach to outsourcing. However, the Ricoh outsourcing organization (Ricoch Professional Services, or RPS) uses a two-phase methodology built around pre-sale partnering and post-sale continuous improvement. What follows is a brief discussion of this methodology, which we include to illustrate the basic concepts and steps that will likely be involved in any professional document management outsourcing arrangement.

We always start with a discussion of what capabilities the customer needs and what service level expectations will be. We then outline the framework of potential solutions and perform an extensive analysis of existing workflows, associated costs, and reengineering risks. This helps create a detailed picture of the current state. We then design and develop the outsourcing solution — or future state — based on this information and present a proposal for customer validation and approval.

¹ CAP Ventures, "United States Document Outsourcing Market Forecast: 2002 - 2007," published January 2004.

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After approval, we focus on change management and the transition of services, where our teams take over the tasks formerly handled by the customer's employees or another vendor. This is one of the most challenging phases of any engagement, and one of the most critical. The transition involves assembling a staff, then creating and executing a jointly agreed upon transition plan to make sure there are no service interruptions. Once the solution and team are in place, we use a monthly reporting process to measure results, and we use internal auditing to identify opportunities for improvement in between monthly reporting periods. We also send customer satisfaction surveys to end-users for a third quality verification.

Whatever outsourcing provider you choose, it will be important to have a continuous monitoring and measurement process with well-defined metrics specifically created to fit the business objectives, because internal requirements change so frequently.

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Outsourcing Document Management in Acute Care

“The U.S. healthcare services market prints more than 100 billion pages per year.”

— CAP Ventures

Healthcare providers face a complex hierarchy of ongoing challenges, starting with high-quality patient care and extending to the overall profitability of the operation, health insurance, new technologies and procedures, and government regulation. The burden of these challenges is enormous, especially considering the rapid rate of change in each area.

Dealing with these issues on a daily basis is what healthcare providers do best. In other words, this is the core competency to which all available resources must be directed. Document management, on the other hand, is typically not a core competency. Yet each one of the aforementioned critical areas generates and requires a wide variety of documents. Here we see the convergence of conditions that lead healthcare providers to outsource document management. The specific processes that are outsourced are varied, and in addition to those covered in this white paper include a number of highly specialized services related to billing, claims processing, and reimbursement, as well as medical records transcription. What we will detail here are four major categories that will apply to the majority of large-scale acute care environments. Ricoh can discuss these with authority, because our teams have many years of experience providing these services to our healthcare customers.

On-site services

Also called facilities management, on-site outsourcing services are services performed within the customer's environment, either in the facility or on the campus.

- **Fleet management.** The fleet includes the healthcare provider's entire inventory of printers (desktop, high-volume, and production), copiers, fax machines, and scanners, as well as multifunction products that print, copy, fax, and/or scan. The fleet may also include the software end-users require to utilize any or all of these devices. In a fleet management engagement, the outsourcing provider handles everything related to these systems. This includes asset management tasks such as installation, network integration, upgrades, relocation, removal, and replacement. Fleet management also covers technical support, preventive maintenance, break-fix repair, and service call escalation (in which on-site operators not only service the equipment but call in additional resources if necessary), as well as ordering, stocking, delivering, and replacing consumables and supplies, such as paper and toner. The engagement may involve end-user training (so physicians, nurses, and administrative staff understand how to use all of a specific device's features). In most engagements, fleet management also includes software and analytical tools that provide the management team with real-time information that tracks and measures utilization and helps right-size the fleet for optimal performance.
- **Enterprise-level document management.** This refers to the unique configurations of hardware and software (solutions) healthcare providers employ to create, distribute, capture, share, or otherwise manipulate documents, from prescriptions to patient education materials to internal training documents to marketing collateral. As hospitals continue to remove excess paper-handling from daily activities and instead take full advantage of electronic document workflow, many healthcare providers are investing in new tools for document capture, indexing, and storage; content management; cost tracking; production printing; and many other functions. These solutions must be deployed enterprise-wide (not by floor or by department) to achieve maximum efficiency and acceptable return on investment. Unfortunately, because document management is not a core competency, many providers lack the internal resources to oversee rollout and ensure a smooth transition — which often hinges on adoption of a new workflow by reluctant staff. In these situations, an outsourcing provider handles deployment and installation, and provides all the managers, operators, and service teams necessary for day-to-day troubleshooting and management of these solutions.
- **Copy center operations.** In a large acute care facility, the copy center (also known as the central reprographics department, or CRD) may serve a wide range of internal customers, including physicians, support staff, hospital administration, and other on-site vendors (such as gift shop proprietors). The copy center may also include production printing (also called host printing) for forms. Here, your outsourcing partner provides all of the copy center equipment, as well as operators and managers required to run them, and handles all activities, such as order reception, production, and delivery; staffing; vendor relationship management; equipment maintenance; and performance measurement.
- **Mailroom operations.** Just as your outsourcing provider staffs and runs the copy center, the same team can run the mailroom. Typical services include comprehensive mail processing, pickup and delivery for internal mail (inter-departmental or campus), courier dispatch, express mail service, packing and small parcel services, vendor and asset management, and shipping and receiving.

Off-site services

Off-site services, which are sometimes referred to as contract printing, are performed at a separate facility in relatively close proximity to the hospital. This is because even large healthcare facilities are unable to accommodate the support staff and floor space these processes typically require.

- **Commercial printing.** Outsourced commercial printing gives healthcare providers the responsiveness and quality control of a dedicated, in-house printing facility, without the capital investment. Printing services usually include everything offered by a conventional commercial printer, such as four-color and four-color-plus sheet and web offset printing, typesetting and desktop publishing, high-speed laser printing (>100 pages per minute), commercial scanning, electronic pre-press (setup and imposition, trapping, direct-to-plate or film output) and bindery (tabbing, folding, drilling, cutting, stapling, saddle-stitch, and binding).
- **Archiving, data backup, and document destruction.** Archiving and data backup add an important layer of redundancy to your health information integrity. These tasks not only require significant storage space (for paper files), they are notoriously error-prone when handled on-site, by staff for whom archiving is only one in a long list of responsibilities. With focused attention on archiving and data backup by your outsourcing partner, you can ensure reliable and timely access to archived information while reducing storage and media costs and minimizing the risk of errors. Services may include document and image scanning, digitizing of hardcopy records, retrieval of images and documents, and file room management. These services are often paired with document destruction, including document pickup, shredding, and secure disposal. (On large hospital campuses, these services may be performed by on-site teams.)
- **Backfile and day forward scanning.** Both of these scanning applications are used in acute care environments to convert existing paper-based medical records to electronic formats. Backfile scanning involves the electronic conversion of all existing paper records. (This option is often regarded as a necessary evil, because it is extremely time-consuming, yet there is no good way to predict which files may be needed in the future and which can be destroyed.) Day forward scanning involves scanning only new files (from the first day forward). This service, while it offers an easier transition, poses its own challenges related to patients who relocate or those with intermittent care histories. For example, consider a patient who underwent cardiac surgery eight years ago, then moved to a different city two years after treatment. The patient no longer sees a local cardiologist. Six years later, the same patient returns to the original city where the surgery was performed. In the meantime, the hospital has engaged an outsourcing provider for day forward scanning of medical records. If the same patient requires further cardiac care, the hospital that performed the surgery will not have electronic access to the patient's pertinent files, since they would not have been among those digitized. (In large-scale environments, scanning services may be performed on site by dedicated teams.)
- **Print-on-demand, distributed printing, and forms management.** All of these services are geared to speed delivery of critical documents (new procedures, staff education materials, technology updates, research results, frequently used forms) and eliminate the waste inherent to bulk printing. Print-on-demand allows your staff to order exact quantities of any document via the nearest connected output device, instead of printing in bulk or ordering from a fulfillment house. Distributed printing is ideal for authorizing output of a certain document at many locations simultaneously, instead of sending long-distance faxes or distributing hardcopy via courier. Forms management involves a middleware solution that allows conventional desktop printers and other output devices to print forms that must be populated with data that is only available from a legacy host.

Business support services

Business support services, or ancillary services, include the basic yet critical activities required to run a large organization efficiently. Although many are not document related, they can usually be outsourced to a document management outsourcing provider. This is because many document outsourcing firms either are or were involved in facilities management — a legacy concept that traditionally combined document-related functions with essential business support. In healthcare, these services include inventory management (warehousing, shipping, ordering, and restocking for medical and office supplies), as well as office management, which covers reception, switchboard, hoteling, courier service, conference room management, and planning for meetings and events.

Network support services

Information technology (IT) services represent one of the largest and fastest-growing cost drivers in healthcare. Because most document equipment available today is network-ready, document outsourcing providers have also developed expertise in IT and network support for these and other components of IT infrastructure. Services may include network design, installation, configuration, and integration; workflow analysis and consulting; security assessment and reinforcement; print server support; help desk; break-fix repair; and software configuration. By outsourcing these services, acute care providers can remove a significant cost burden and frequent source of slowed productivity; improve overall network and device uptime; simplify IT decision-making through more precise measurement of network performance and costs; and task the outsourcing provider to create a migration path that fits the hospital's workflow and annual IT budget.

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The Case for Outsourcing in Healthcare

“The healthcare industry generated \$2.7 billion in document outsourcing revenues in 2002. Revenues are expected to reach \$3.3 billion in 2007, representing a compound annual growth rate of 4.2%.”

— CAP Ventures

According to recent research, the percentage of healthcare organizations outsourcing document-related processes is growing rapidly. Specifically, CAP Ventures reports that the healthcare industry generated \$2.7 billion in document outsourcing revenues in 2002. (By way of comparison, government agencies generated \$1.7 billion; telecommunication/utilities generated \$2.0 billion; retail/wholesale generated \$4.3 billion; and manufacturing generated \$6.4 billion.) In addition, outsourcing revenues in healthcare are expected to reach \$3.3 billion in 2007, representing a compound annual growth rate of 4.2%.

In other words, outsourcing is working in healthcare. This does not necessarily mean outsourcing is the right choice for every large-scale acute care provider. But there is a strong case for it, one that is growing stronger year by year. Here are four reasons why:

1. Reallocation of resources

Many acute care providers are attracted to the flexibility of outsourcing in terms of resource allocation. In healthcare, demands on time, money, and person-hours are constant and continuously increasing. Budgets must be tightly controlled, federal regulations must be adhered to, insurance reimbursement must be monitored — and patients must receive the highest possible quality of care. Of course, no facility has the resources to meet its objectives in every category at all times, and this creates tremendous pressure on departments and hospital administration.

By offloading document-related tasks to a reliable third party, healthcare organizations can de-prioritize non-core activities without sacrificing quality. This immediately reduces the number of functional areas that must be handled and improved internally. Organizations can expand or contract at will without the logistical concerns of hiring, managing, or firing the people required to support the outsourced document processes. Most important, outsourcing frees up time, energy, and financial resources, all of which acute care providers can redirect to support core competencies and alleviate internal pressures.

2. Cost reduction

Outsourcing offers healthcare providers a proven strategy for reducing and controlling the cost of document management, which are significant.

By handing off responsibility for basic document processes, healthcare organizations can reduce headcount. You can also negotiate contract pricing and put services out for bid to further reduce operating costs. Frequently, outsourcing professionals can achieve higher degrees of cost-efficiency and provide services less expensively than would have been possible internally, which is another source of cost reduction.

Outsourcing is also a long-term cost reduction tool. Healthcare providers can use outsourcing to acquire resources that demand a considerable investment, are cost-prohibitive, or are simply expensive. These resources can range from capital equipment and facilities (such as an off-site commercial print operation) to content management solutions (including software licenses) and document management systems (printers, multifunction products, fax machines, scanners). Outsourcing not only reduces acquisition, staffing, and support costs. It also eliminates the risk of investing in equipment or technologies that do not meet expectations, turn out not to support your strategic objectives, or quickly become obsolete. Because in an outsourcing engagement, the burden of keeping technology up to date falls on the provider, not with the outsourcing customer.

3. Higher productivity

Beyond cost reduction, outsourcing generates a long list of “soft cost” improvements, or improvements that cannot accurately be measured in dollars. These include productivity, efficiency, and employee satisfaction.

Because outsourcing involves outside experts who take over internal processes, it gives companies access to world-class capabilities that were previously unavailable. Just as your organization is free to focus on what you do best, document outsourcing providers also focus on what they do best. That means organizations can reap the rewards of expert advice, innovative thinking, and continuously improving best practices without paying to recruit, train, and retain these resources. These rewards usually include optimized efficiency and higher productivity.

Practically speaking, these benefits take many forms. Internal customers may notice improvements in document quality and turnaround time. In commercial printing or copy center engagements, the outsourcing provider may offer new capabilities that allow departments to create and distribute new kinds of documents (for example, four-color presentation packets in Wire-O binding). With print-on-demand technologies, these same departments can rethink how they disseminate critical information across the enterprise. Forms management also creates significant soft cost benefits, because departments can revise forms as needed without the normal concerns about making current bulk-printed forms obsolete. In fact, engaging a document outsourcing team creates important opportunities to improve control over any document workflow, resulting in tighter control over versioning, revisions, and document security.

Ultimately, the culmination of multiple soft cost benefits is higher employee satisfaction. Document management consumes a significant portion of many healthcare employees' average work day. On the micro level, as on the macro level, making document processes more efficient allows these employees to spend less time dealing with paperwork and correcting the errors that are endemic to poorly managed processes.

4. Faster transition to a “paperless workplace”

As we just noted, paper-related inefficiencies can compromise productivity at multiple levels in acute care environments. This is why many providers are investing in a wide range of solutions to convert historically hard copy documents into electronic formats, such as electronic medical records (EMR) and more sophisticated practice management systems. Although truly paperless environments are not likely to occur in the near future, they are a positive long-term objective. Acute care facilities have an advantage in this area, because they can afford to implement large-scale solutions.

Outsourcing makes the transition to paperless processes faster and less expensive. Instead of contracting with a document solutions provider directly, large facilities can work backwards from specific objectives, such as reducing retrieval time for medical records, or improving the speed of payment processing and reimbursement. The document outsourcing provider, tasked with this goal, can survey the available technologies, select the best configuration, implement it, train end-users, and support the solution. This can help large organizations implement these solutions faster and more frequently, which will reduce dependency on paper and eliminate related inefficiencies more quickly. Again, outsourcing these solutions also helps mitigate the risk of investing in enterprise software and increases the level of cost control, because these solutions can be incorporated into the existing outsourcing contract.

Methods of Implementation

There are as many ways to outsource document processes as there are individual acute care providers. Many assume that working with a professional outsourcing team must be an “all or nothing” proposition. Of course, the opposite is true. The purpose of outsourcing is to give the healthcare provider greater flexibility, higher productivity, and lower operating costs. With respect to document management, these goals can be met on an enterprise-wide scale as well as in individual departments. Here are some typical scenarios for how document process outsourcing occurs, depending on the needs of the customer.

- **Single-application implementation.** In this case, the healthcare provider usually has one overriding document problem that is compromising its productivity or profitability. For many, this problem is related to scanning paper documents, either for archiving or for integration into a centralized data repository. The volume of documents can be high, and the accuracy of any paper filing system declines over time, creating a difficult challenge for hospitals that want to go digital — but cannot do so until older documents are converted. Here, the document outsourcing provider would set up a short-term contract to complete the scanning work on-site. Pricing would be based on several key metrics, including the volume of documents, their condition and location, their final electronic destination (file format), and delivery schedule. No long-term engagement is necessary; the outsourcing provider solves the immediate problem.
- **Select multi-application implementation.** This situation may evolve from the customer’s satisfaction with a single-application engagement. Or the hospital may simply have two or three main concerns that need immediate resolution. In either case, the only difference from a single-application engagement is the size and scope of the contract. For example, consider a hospital that requires scanning of paper records, a forms management solution that will reduce bulk printing, and a new high-volume production printer network (hardware, software, network design, and integration). This a la carte outsourcing arrangement enables large acute care facilities to resolve their most pressing document challenges simultaneously, often for a lower cost than would have been possible using internal resources.
- **Departmental implementation.** A long-term engagement becomes necessary when the outsourcing provider takes over multiple document processes in an entire department: administration, medical records, pediatrics, radiology, or others. In these cases, the department typically has an internal outsourcing champion driving the implementation, occasionally as a pilot program for larger, enterprise-wide engagements. In other departmental cases, the department has been singled out for sub-optimal performance in certain categories and instructed to meet well-defined performance benchmarks. The array of outsourced services can vary. For example, they may include fleet management (of print/copy/scan/fax devices) and right-sizing of the fleet, implementation of new hardware and/or software, document scanning, forms management and variable data printing, and IP faxing technology, as well as many others, depending on the department’s needs and goals. This engagement will likely involve both on-site and off-site services, delivered through a single- or multi-year contract with established service level agreements that are measured and reported on continuously.

- **Enterprise outsourcing.** Full-scale handoff of document management can be daunting for acute care providers, but it also carries the greatest potential payoff for cost-savings, improved efficiencies, and streamlined workflow. In this situation, a healthcare organization will likely develop a request for proposal (RFP) that outlines exactly what capabilities need to be outsourced. Again, the range of services varies widely, but will likely include elements of on-site service, off-site service, business support, and network support. As with a departmental engagement, a single- or multi-year contract with monthly all-inclusive pricing and guaranteed service level agreements — including cost savings — is standard.

Evaluating Outsourcing Providers

Choosing the right outsourcing provider is an important decision, but the selection process should not be difficult. The most important component will be the nature of your relationship with your provider. There should be a solid, strong, and comfortable “fit” from day one. This is the foundation of a positive working relationship and is fundamental for a successful outsourcing engagement, regardless of scale.

Beyond fit, there are several other important factors that should affect your decision. It is in the best interest of all acute care providers to look for — and ask questions about — the following attributes:

- **Experience in healthcare.** Understanding document management and related processes is critical, obviously. But understanding how healthcare organizations operate is equally so. Your outsourcing provider should have a wealth of hands-on experience serving healthcare customers, especially acute care providers. This experience is vital for knowing how to evaluate customer needs, how to set priorities, how to optimize workflow, and how to manage change. It is also important because many healthcare documents are unique and their management must adhere to local, state, and national regulations (for example, protected health information, or PHI).
- **Range of capabilities.** The document management needs in any given acute care facility will change rapidly, from quarter to quarter and year to year. Strategic priorities change and evolve, as do document management technologies. This is why it is important to select an outsourcing provider with a broad portfolio of services. What you need is a provider that can adapt with you, regardless of which document workflows you need outsourced. What you do not want is a provider that delivers excellent service in one area, but refuses to address new challenges. Ideally, your outsourcing provider will offer a wide range of services, technologies, and areas of technical expertise, and is open to researching, analyzing, and recommending new solutions for the issue you deem most important.

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- **Process and methodology.** Your provider should have proven, standardized, documented processes for discovering what you need, evaluating how to meet the objective, and delivering the solution. In large acute care environments, proven processes are critical to successful transition of services, and are vital to maximizing cost-efficiency — especially in complex, multi-application work. Of course, the methodology should be flexible enough to accommodate your specific budget, timeline, and facility. But a methodology should exist, and it should be geared toward continuous improvement. Without a proven methodology, the risk of errors and delays during implementation — and of failure to meet expectations during delivery — rises considerably.
- **Transparency, metrics, and reporting.** Handing over control of any process, even a relatively simple document management task, is a necessary yet frequently troubling aspect of outsourcing. Transparency helps alleviate this issue. Look for an outsourcing provider that can measure its own performance and deliver detailed reports on a regular schedule. Measurement against benchmarks is the only way to gauge success accurately. It is also the only way to ensure continuous process optimization and ongoing cost savings. Ideally, reports should be delivered in frequent face-to-face meetings.
- **Customer satisfaction.** Successful outsourcing providers excel in retaining customers over the long-term and keeping them satisfied. Time-tested relationships are a strong indicator of the provider's outsourcing capabilities, ability to meet expectations and adapt to change over time, and attention to customer satisfaction.

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Conclusion

For acute care providers, document management outsourcing makes a great deal of sense. It can deliver nearly immediate cost savings, coupled with improvements in document quality and turnaround time. It can help large organizations eliminate nagging problems — such as backlog of medical records slated for electronic archiving — as well as make permanent improvements in workflow and enterprise-wide efficiency. Best of all, outsourcing is a flexible solution designed to adapt to your specific needs, timeline, budget, and existing resources. In other words, outsourcing is not an all-or-nothing proposition. It is a versatile strategy acute care providers can employ selectively to meet specific financial and operational objectives. In this way, document management outsourcing gives healthcare providers an exceptional opportunity to improve efficiency, devote more internal resources to the delivery of high-quality patient care, and differentiate from competitors in a demanding market.

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