

Sutter Connect and Ingenix Consulting Successfully Accelerate Centricity Business Web Implementation

Sutter Connect Profile

Based in Sacramento, California, Sutter Connect, formed in 1999, integrates managed care administrative services and physician practice management to support community-based healthcare serving more than 100 Northern California communities. Sutter Connect's billing, accounts receivable and managed care administration services reach over 410,000 members from more than 30 health care organizations. The enterprise is focused on being recognized as a national leader among administrative services organizations.

Sutter Connect: Commitment to Service, Quality and Value

Sutter Connect's commitment to service, quality and value for its clients is built into every level of the organization; from employment and training to individual, department and organizational goals. The decision to implement GE Healthcare Centricity Business Advanced Web with Enterprise Wide Scheduling and Enterprise Task Management was part of a long-term strategic goal to streamline patient access workflow processes for improved patient satisfaction, and automate revenue cycle processes. "It has been a lengthy process to get to this point," said Director of IT Operations, Gregg Smith-McCurdy. Advanced Web offers tremendous flexibility for users as well as robust capabilities to improve revenue cycle management.

"Our clients had been requesting a more user friendly product that would be easier to train on with more initiatives in terms of best-practice and workflows. And, there were client installs on the horizon which entailed the use of Advanced Web in conjunction with another product. We required Ingenix Consulting¹ Services in order to accelerate the project," he explained.

Sutter Connect uses the GE Healthcare Centricity Business as its foundation system. The organization is one of the largest GE Healthcare Centricity users in the nation. Advanced Web integrates applications for financial management, managed care, and practice management. The set of applications offered by Sutter Connect to support Managed Care Administration (MCA) and Billing and Accounts Receivable (BAR) services include member enrollment, benefit management, provider network management, referral and authorization processing, case management, claims, capitation, billing and accounts receivable, practice management, appointment scheduling, and customer service.

"Advanced Web is a comprehensive IT solution that offers robust financial and administrative capabilities to improve revenue cycle management," said Greg Smith-McCurdy. "It allows physician organizations, hospitals and IDNs to share clinical and billing information seamlessly across the enterprise," he added. This results in greater efficiency and data integrity from the back office to the front desk, leading to higher patient satisfaction and regulatory compliance.

Ingenix Consulting: Supplementing the Sutter Connect Team

"We knew at the onset we would need help with this implementation," said Manager of Applications Support, Amy Goulston. "We brought Ingenix Consulting in to supplement our team because we all have demanding day-to-day responsibilities and the scope of the implementation was tremendous," she continued. Sutter Connect has a long standing relationship with Ingenix Consulting and uses their software for systems integration and data warehouse ETL. The Ingenix Consulting consultants worked closely with the Sutter Connect implementation team guiding them through the install design session and completing analysis, system set up, testing and troubleshooting of the Advanced Web and Enterprise Wide Scheduling applications.

¹ Global Works Systems, Inc., a division of Ingenix Consulting

"Our experience has taught us to address certain key points for a successful install," said Ingenix Consulting Management Consultant, Shely O'Laughlin. "Dealing with these key points during the implementation helped us all," she stated.

Because Sutter Connect services a wide-ranging multi-specialty client base, "it was a challenge trying to set up a system that had to accommodate this kind of range," said Ingenix Consulting Senior Consultant, Anneliese Duncan. "It was a totally new scenario, kind of fun, and we were quite proud that we finished the system a week and a half before the deadline," she added.

"The Ingenix Consulting Consultants had the experience to help us determine what might be best," said Supervisor, IT Support Application, Kathy Enos. "They gave us options and described what had been done in other places, which made it easier for us to make a decision," she stated.

Key Points for a Successful Install

Ingenix Consulting and the Sutter Connect Implementation team offer the following points for use in planning a successful Advanced Web upgrade.

- **Analyze Security Plus Set Up** - Start with a review of your security set-up. Do changes need to be made? If they do, get the clean up done prior to starting a build. "We had to identify the roles and rights, said Kathy Enos. "Who the users are, who we were allowing to have access, and things like whether we were going to use profiles or individual tag words," she added.
- **Design is Key** - Take the time to really map out what you want the end result to be. The build will be more organized and multiple people can work on it, if everyone knows the game plan. "We used work sessions to create what we wanted to do," said Amy Goulston. "We really needed to know what users need to see and what types of workplaces they were coming from. It took several sessions," she stated.
- **Set Standards** - Naming conventions are the key to success when building menus, roles, rights. Set a standard and stick with it. The importance of this will be realized when you are searching through the long lists and trying to troubleshoot issues. "Having the naming conventions be the same helped us quite a bit," said Kathy Enos.
- **Use Automation** - Use automated tools such as Ingenix Consulting Enterprise Security View or Ingenix Consulting Security Configuration Toolkit when possible. This cuts out the busy work and allows you to spend more time focused on the build and decision making required. Automating security intelligence helped tremendously, especially in determining appropriate rights for those that were not assigned to a profile in Security Plus. "We found it was an advantage using the Ingenix Consulting tool," said Amy Goulston. "The bottom line for us was that we would have spent three times as long to manually create a user account."
- **Testing** - Have the users who work in the application everyday do the testing. It's okay to spend some time doing initial testing to ensure that your scripts work appropriately. However, let the people who will be using it tell you if it is working well for them. Have a test plan and include at least one integrated test. Have a test day with specific scenarios that need to be tested. Have those users report their results and sign off on the appropriate portions. "We had two separate testing days," said Kathy Enos. "It's important that you have people to hit different areas and report back to you."
- **Mini Demos** - Build a little and then show it off. This allows people to be involved in the project. Take their input and comments and use them to make the system better. Little things can make a difference to users - make it theirs as much as possible. These demos also allow you to determine if there are things you might have forgotten before the entire build is complete. It is much easier to incorporate as you learn about it, then having to undo and redo at the end. The other benefit is that it creates a sense of anticipation and excitement –

generating that type of enthusiasm is priceless when it comes to go-live. "We did different demos for different groups of people with specific demos for feedback," said Greg Smith McCurdy. "We found the demos helped build both excitement and buy-in."

- **Document Now, Not Later** – Ingenix Consulting has created the training documents, user manuals and policies and procedures manuals for Sutter Connect. "Document as you are building and do not wait until the end to do your documentation," said Anneliese Duncan. "There are a lot of pieces that can overwhelm you if you wait until the end." Use templates for documenting whenever possible so that the information that is being documented is consistent from one builder to another.

Sutter Connect and Ingenix Consulting Project Results

The Sutter Connect Implementation team credits the Ingenix Consulting consultants for their involvement in the project. "Ingenix Consulting was fantastic," said Kathy Enos. "They were focused and willing to do anything that would help us. We couldn't have done it without them."

Sutter Connect's advanced technology solutions, sophisticated reporting and analysis services provide a foundation for its commitment to customer service and quality performance. With the successful installation of the GE Healthcare Centricity Business Solutions that foundation has been strengthened and the commitment enhanced.

About Us

Ingenix Consulting is a premier, data-driven health and human services consulting organization. We have over 1,000 consultants with experience working with hospitals, physician practices, health plans, employers, government agencies, and pharmaceutical companies. This scale and exclusive health and human services focus set us apart.

