



DENTAL HEALTH PLAN
An Affiliate of Delta Dental Plan
of California

PMI Delta Dental

CONTROL® spurs quantum leap in financial planning, analysis and reporting

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A subsidiary of Delta Dental Plan of California, PMI Dental Health Plan has more than 30 years of experience administering prepaid dental plans. PMI and its affiliates provide DeltaCare coverage to approximately 1.3 million people in nine states and the District of Columbia, and are part of the largest dental benefits system in the country.

Based in Cerritos, Calif., PMI employs more than 350 people and has field offices in northern California, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Nevada, Texas and Utah.

The Challenge: The Details

Like many corporations that experience significant growth over several years, PMI's financial planning and analysis team was facing the need to upgrade its processes and tools to accommodate the company's expanded business base. The challenge was to minimize the time and effort necessary to access, synchronize and manipulate data from a variety of sources.

Mel Aou, PMI's manager of financial planning and analysis, and Greg Colbert, senior financial analyst, would run numerous manual queries to extract data (enrollment, subscribers, revenues, claims, costs, etc.) from a legacy data warehouse and a Lawson GL. Next, they would download the data into Excel. From there, Aou and Colbert would generate necessary reports and re-key the data into SMART, a limited budgeting program. This multi-step process and the constraints of SMART made it difficult to efficiently formulate support plans for strategic objectives.

“You lose the usefulness of a tool when you can't get to the detail you need,” says Colbert. “And we were just using SMART for budgeting purposes, but didn't have the full capabilities we wanted for forecasting and reporting.”

Clearly, an alternative was called for. The gears were set in motion to find a single, comprehensive system that would facilitate detailed revenue modeling and planning, performance measurement, analysis and forecasting.

The Solution: CONTROL

PMI embraced **CONTROL** in Summer 2001 after considering all the major vendors. **CONTROL**'s built-in functionality proved to be by far the most extensive and sophisticated. Not only did **CONTROL** provide real-time, seamless data collection, instantaneous consolidations and actionable information, but it also offered truly integrated, one-stop, robust functionality for every aspect of financial management with drag-and-drop, double-click ease. Plus, it leveraged PMI's infrastructure and the power of Excel. And from an investment standpoint, **CONTROL** provided the best value and quantum leap for the money.

The implementation took six weeks and one consultant, and got the FP&A team onto the right track fast.

“We started using **CONTROL** for reporting almost immediately,” says Colbert. “And then, not that long after, probably about a month, we started using it for the budget. So the benefits were pretty immediate.”

Adds Phil Runnoe, PMI's controller, “**CONTROL** has been a valuable tool for our company, because it provides the means for performing data analyses from highly complex business models to ad hoc, on-demand reporting. Its flexibility and the ease with which data can be accessed and manipulated for presentation and analysis save a significant amount of time, and provide essential support for senior management decision making and strategic planning.”

(continued)

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Leveraged environment

While **CONTROL** enables PMI to precisely model their business and plan intelligently, it completely leverages the company’s existing infrastructure, systems, processes and knowledge base. **CONTROL** resides on PMI’s AS400 platform and shares common structures and data directly via dynamic or on-demand mappings to relational tables or non-relational flat files.

“KCI bent over backwards and proved that **CONTROL** works fine on an AS400 platform,” says Aou.

Gone are the old processes to bring in historical and actual data, the need for different tools for different requirements, and the data manipulation challenges.

“Another nice thing,” says Colbert, “is that in the prior years before we had **CONTROL**, we had created an Excel template for all of our cost centers to input budget information. And with **CONTROL**, we were able to use the same template, and bring the information straight into **CONTROL**. So we didn’t have to change anything, or teach our cost center managers to fill out anything different. They’re still able to use the same format they used in the past, that they were familiar with and comfortable with.”

Working smarter, not harder

With **CONTROL**, linking data from numerous database platforms and other non-relational external sources (e.g., GL, legacy data warehouse, underwriting spreadsheets, etc.) is simply a matter of mapping fields and tables. It merely takes a few mouse clicks to get the data, slice and dice it from different perspectives, drill to source-level detail, manipulate it and run rapid “what if” scenarios to plan for the future.

“Processes that we used to do, we don’t have to do anymore,” explains Colbert. “We have all of the information available in one central repository, **CONTROL**. ...Everything is centrally located. You do maintenance once. I know a lot of different budgeting software where you have to go to a few different areas to change stuff. But with **CONTROL**, you make any of the changes you need, whether it’s new accounts or cost centers, or anything in one place, and it’s applied universally.”

Empowered

Not only is the data easier to get at, but they are more reliable and detailed. This empowers PMI to do in-depth, dynamic budgeting and use the data to the best possible advantage.

“For budgeting, (**CONTROL**) provides a lot more detail than we were accustomed to,” says Colbert. “The drill-down is pretty nice to have. Before, we had to summarize a lot... and group plan budget information together. With SMART, we could only budget for 10 or so plans. In **CONTROL**, we have four times the detail. Now we’re budgeting for 40 to 45 plans.”

“We’re able to analyze the business in a lot better fashion than before,” he adds. “We can also get reports we never used to be able to get, due to the higher level of detail. ...Using drill-down, taking a look into the detail, analyzing variances—we do all of that in **CONTROL**.”

Agrees Aou, “Obviously, it has saved a lot of time.”

Beyond the increase in efficiency, **CONTROL** has enabled quick and complete access to PMI’s detailed plans and projections and dramatically enhanced reporting and information delivery.

“I think that it’s making a lot of the processes we used to do, like month-end, a lot easier,” says Colbert. “We now produce different reports that we were never able to produce before, and also, because we use two different systems to get our information...we never had a basis for comparison or analysis.

“Now, with **CONTROL**, we’re able to do better analysis on the information that comes from Legacy, as far as members, healthcare expense, revenue, and rates.”

“We’re able to analyze different aspects of the budget a little more easily, as well,” adds Aou. “Like analyzing variances... Now we can just summarize everything by cost center, by accounts, and put it all together. And there’s your report, essentially.”

Empowered by **CONTROL**, PMI can continue to focus on business—and leverage its new insight to truly drive performance.

Take your financial management practices to the next cutting-edge level with **CONTROL**[®], the one-stop solution that inspires the insight that drives performance. Contact KCI at (310) 921-6222 or info@kccorp.com.