

HMT recognizes the best healthcare IT case histories from 2003

By Robin Blair, Editor, and Karin Lillis, Managing Editor

Health Management Technology is known for its case histories. We believe, editorially, that nothing highlights the real usability of healthcare IT products like customers who will stand up for those products and let their stories be told. *What Works* is a specialized case history format that focuses upon IT solutions that demonstrate quantifiable results.

Every year, *HMT* publishes between 15 and 25 *What Works* case histories. At the end of the year, we impanel up to seven judges selected from within the healthcare IT industry to read all the *What Works* articles published that year and to determine for us the top three winners.

With pleasure and pride, we present the winners of the 2003 *What Works* Awards competition. The winning end-user organizations receive plaques from *HMT* in recognition of their contribution to the creative, successful use of information technology in healthcare. Vendors associated with these award-winning stories also get plaques that they can use at trade show exhibits to illustrate their contributions to healthcare IT.

All winners, healthcare organizations and vendors deserve commendation for their success in 2003.

Judging Criteria

What Works judges are asked to score each case history on five weighted criteria:

Benefits to the user. This category encompasses the “results” section of every *What Works* and is the most important section in every case history. What makes a case history a *What Works* is quantifiable results, metrics and measures of real gain to the healthcare organization. Judges are asked to consider the following: Did the software or hardware solution quantifiably help the healthcare organization to achieve its objectives? Did the healthcare organization achieve its objectives? Was this the best solution for the problem at hand? Was the organization able to solve or alleviate its problem?

Applicability. Judges are asked to consider whether this hardware or software solution would be applicable to other organizations with a similar problem and whether they could expect similar benefits.

Installation, implementation and ease of adoption. Even the best solution sometimes requires Herculean effort to get it onto first base. Judges are asked to consider all details about the product installation and especially the degree to which the supplier or vendor participated in helping the healthcare end-user to install and implement. Did the implementation go as planned? How much training was required for staff to learn the technology? Were bumps in the road easily ironed out?

Scalability. The degree to which a solution is scalable to include more functions, more transactions or more end-users—but without disproportionate impact upon the organization’s resources or infrastructure—is always important.

Creative challenge. Judges are asked to determine how well the technology worked for the organization within its own limits, be they limits of finances, infrastructure, legacy systems or users.

Submit Your What Works

You can submit a *What Works* case history, just like any of those that we publish throughout the year. Contact any of the *Health Management Technology* editors for guidelines. We can share with you how to think through a case history, what to look for, how to pitch and, especially where *What Works* case histories are concerned, the individual components that go into making the *What Works* format. These are:

Problem. Every *What Works* has an identified problem or situation that the end-user organization faced, for which information technology provided a resolution.

Solution. We want to know how a particular solution was decided upon, what alternatives were considered and how a particular vendor was selected.

Installation, implementation and training. We want to know the details of the installation and implementation, how staff members were trained on the technology, and the role of the vendor or supplier in assisting the end-user.

Results and benefits. This is the section that makes a case history a *What Works*. *What Works* stories have quantifiable results and benefits—i.e., some measurement proving that IT gave the end-user the outcomes it wanted.
