

Using Data Analytics to Drive Organizational Success

Highlights

Profile

Conway Medical Center

- Conway, South Carolina
- 210 beds
- Approximately \$163 million NPR
- Electronic Health Record and Enterprise Resource Planning Systems: Meditech

Challenges

- Conway's operating and capital budgeting solutions were separate from its decision support solution
- This configuration resulted in different staff members loading and modifying the same information, which was not efficient, cost effective, or accurate
- The solutions it had in place were outdated and could not fulfill the vision of marrying cost and clinical data

Solution

- The Conway team unanimously chose Strata Decision Technology's StrataJazz solution, which provided all of the capabilities it required
- Conway deployed the capital budget, operating budget, management reporting, and decision support modules
- They then began working on the decision support solution, a more complex implementation that required detailed verification

Results

- Strata Decision's training and support facilitated a smooth and effective roll-out of the modules
- The go-live of the operating budget solution aligned perfectly with 2014 budget preparation, and Conway was able to leverage StrataJazz to meet all of its budget-related deadlines
- Conway was able to achieve a more than 99% increase in efficiency in cost accounting model building and running the costing process

Hospitals and health systems are confronting a mounting number of initiatives—both mandated and voluntary—that require access to and analysis of complex clinical and financial data. While many of these organizations have had some solutions in place to address these data needs, in many cases the solutions were disparate and required significant duplication of efforts and manual manipulation. Now that the stakes are so high for insightful decision-making, a number of forward thinking organizations are looking to single platform data analytics solutions to strengthen and streamline their ability to extract the information they need to remain successful.

The Challenge

Conway Medical Center had its operating and capital budgeting solutions in one application and its decision support solution housed in another system. This configuration resulted in different staff members loading and modifying the same information, which was not efficient, cost effective, or accurate. As the hospital planned for the future, the finance team became convinced that it needed to align its technology solutions in a way that would provide the capability to look at clinical and financial data together. The solutions it had in place were outdated and could not fulfill that vision of marrying the cost and clinical data, so Conway set out to replace its budgeting and decision support tools with an advanced single platform solution.

The Solution

After evaluating a number of options, the Conway team unanimously chose a suite of solutions from Strata Decision Technology (Strata Decision) called StrataJazz™ that would provide clinical and financial data on a single platform. "We chose StrataJazz because it has all the functionality we were looking for on one user-friendly platform," observes Robin

Awalt, Conway's Director of Cost Accounting and Financial Analysis. "When you're working with two different cultures, clinical and financial, it's so easy to separate them, but the two need to come together and analytics solutions need to work for both groups." Strata Decision's platform also enabled Conway to model its Medicaid reimbursement data during the evaluation process, something it viewed as critical that was not feasible with the other solutions the hospital considered.

Work began immediately, with Strata Decision and Conway collaborating to create a timeline for the implementation of multiple modules. Conway chose to begin with the capital budget and tracking module, which was successfully implemented in six weeks. They moved next to the operating budget solution, a more complex implementation that took approximately four months. That timing worked perfectly with Conway's preparation of its fiscal year 2014 budget, and the hospital was able to leverage StrataJazz to meet all of its budget-related deadlines. Next up was the monthly management reporting (a roughly three month implementation). Conway and the Strata Decision team then began working on decision support.

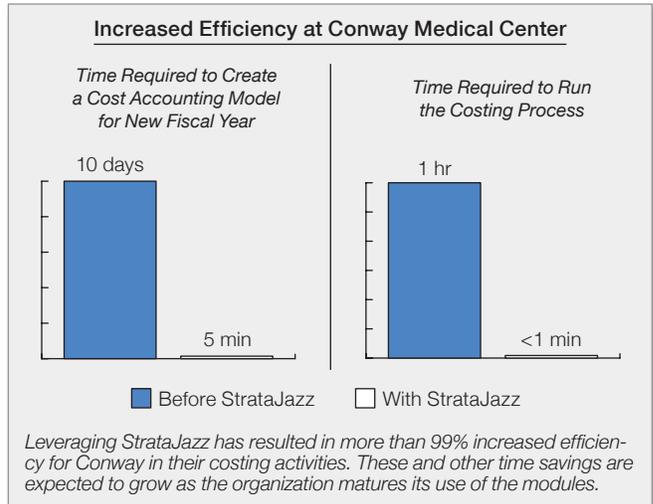
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– Robin Awalt
Director of Cost Accounting and Financial Analysis
Conway Medical Center

“Decision support implementations are complex because of the nature of the data ... your patient population, your financials, everything that happens within the walls of Conway,” notes Awalt. Strata Decision assigned a team specific to Conway’s decision support implementation, so that Awalt’s team would have individuals to go to on a regular basis. The teams began meeting weekly, initially working through best practice templates to set the foundation for extracting data from Conway’s existing systems, and then working on manipulating the data to easily integrate into StrataJazz.

Awalt recently used StrataJazz Cost Accounting to verify a manual analysis she completed to evaluate a service line. “I had to micro-cost the service line, and when you’re making decisions you want to make sure that you’re giving your upper-level management the right numbers,” she says. Awalt completed the analysis manually and then ran the same analysis through StrataJazz; the results of the two analyses were nearly identical. “That gave me a sense of trust and faith knowing that what’s in our Strata Decision tool was loaded correctly and that their team had truly understood what we asked them to do,” Awalt points out.

As each module arrived at close to the point of go-live, Strata Decision provided Conway with training both remotely and on-site. Remote webinar sessions prepared key users at Conway to maximize the on-site training time, and those users in turn trained both “power users” and regular end users. Strata Decision’s dedicated Conway team has provided support for that education. “They are with you 24/7, they give you their cell number, you can locate them on the weekend ... if you call Strata, someone will

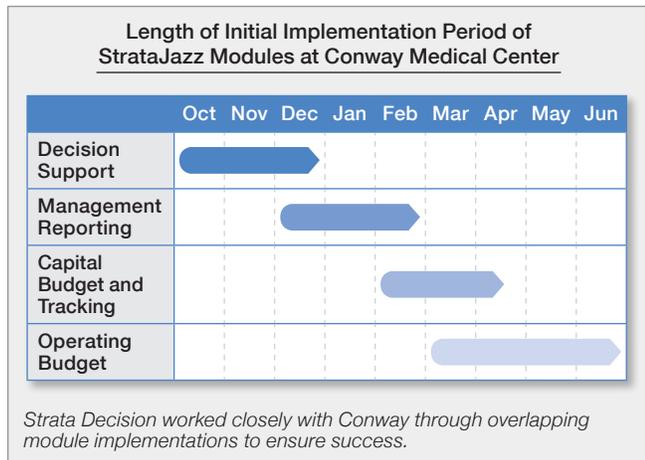


always quickly get back to you to find out what you need ... I’ve never had that kind of service from any vendor,” Awalt notes.

The Results

Conway expects to have more tangible data as it enters its first full year outside of the implementation stage, but results to date have been positive. The fiscal year 2013 data is fully migrated into StrataJazz and Awalt was able to successfully build a fiscal year 2014 cost accounting model. This exercise used to take her up to ten days, but with Strata it took only five minutes. In addition, whereas running the costing process once took Conway an hour, it now takes less than one minute—a more than 99% increase in efficiency. The organization expects those time savings to extend across all of the modules, freeing up valuable staff member time for more value-adding activities. Beyond that, there has been less stress on those involved because the required preparation for the cost accounting model is not time intensive with the Strata Decision solution.

Awalt also points out that in this new era of increased partnership between healthcare providers and solution providers, identifying a partner whose mission and value-set is aligned with the hospitals is crucial. She recalls attending the Strata Decision Summit last Fall and being deeply touched by the special tribute the company put together to honor the healthcare organizations in Boston that responded to the Boston Marathon bombing. “That was one of the biggest take-homes for me,” says Awalt, “letting upper management know that we’re in a partnership with a company with the same mission we have, to care for people.” +



About Strata Decision Technology:

- Strata Decision Technology is a pioneer and leader in the development of innovative SaaS (Software as a Service) solutions for financial and business analytics and decision support in healthcare.
- Strata Decision serves over 1,000 healthcare organizations, including community hospitals, children’s hospitals and many of the largest and most influential healthcare systems in the U.S.
- Strata Decision provides a single integrated software platform for budgeting, decision support, financial forecasting, strategic planning, capital purchase planning and tracking, management reporting, and performance management.
- For more information, visit: stratadecision.com