HP technology helps IDX customers successfully address the business side of healthcare

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IDX®

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— Kent Rowe, V.P. Sales, Flowcast, IDX Systems Corporation

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Healthcare is an expensive business. Expensive for providers. Expensive for payors. Expensive for patients.

IDX Systems Corporation provides information technology solutions to maximize value in the delivery of healthcare, improve the quality of patient service, enhance medical outcomes, and accelerate the enterprise revenue cycle.

According to Kent Rowe, V.P. Sales, Flowcast™ at IDX, "Today, the success of the entire organization is contingent on the business side of healthcare. Healthcare organizations have to find ways to fund their clinical initiatives, and they do that by focusing on the revenue cycle."

With experience, expertise and an unrelenting focus on quality, IDX has created Flowcast – the foundation for world-class patient service and business performance. It's no wonder that Flowcast is being enthusiastically received by healthcare organizations.

With the announcement of the Flowcast product line, IDX has seen an incredible momentum – not only in its customer base that is looking to move to Flowcast, but also from prospects. "Last year our Flowcast sales grew 52% year over year," comments Rowe.

HP technology – including the HP OpenVMS operating system, HP AlphaServer systems and ProLiant servers – are a key part the technology foundation of the IDX Flowcast suite of products.

Bringing cash in the door
Rowe comments, "At IDX, we realize that we, and the people we love, are all consumers of healthcare. Our overarching goal is to add value to the delivery of health-care. With Flowcast, we focus on the financial viability of our customers. Our bottom line with Flowcast is to help healthcare organizations to improve revenue cycle, improve market share, and increase patient satisfaction. We look to HP to help us achieve these objectives."

Flowcast is a comprehensive IT solution that offers large physician organizations, hospitals and integrated delivery networks (IDNs) robust financial and administrative capabilities to improve revenue cycle management. Flowcast enables organizations to seamlessly share clinical and billing information across the enterprise. This results in greater efficiency and data integrity from the back office to the front desk, which leads to higher patient satisfaction and regulatory compliance. Flowcast is the only solution that drives organizational performance by combining proven capabilities with next-generation technology features and best practices.

In addition to Flowcast, IDX also considers its customer base a competitive advantage. Rowe explains: "Our customer list reads like a Who's Who in healthcare, and some have been with us for over 20 years. We're able to take information from some of the best healthcare organizations in the country and measure that data against the rest of the industry. When we do that, we can clearly show that the Flowcast suite of products enables organizations to add dollars to the bottom line – which they can then use to fund other initiatives."

Best-in-class products, best practices
While Flowcast is platform-independent, 82% of IDX customers run the application on OpenVMS. Rowe elaborates, "When we're dealing with a prospect, let's say they want to look at a SUN or IBM configuration because that's their expertise. Then they start asking about our customer base – what do most of our customers use? All of a sudden, they get very interested in HP because they don't want to be part of the 18%, they want to be part of the 82%. They end up going where they believe they will get the most value and where IDX has developed the most expertise, and that's OpenVMS running on AlphaServer systems."

Brian Mitchell, Director of Technical Sales at IDX, explains why this HP platform is so popular with customers. "As part of our strategy to drive customer success, we're always trying to incorporate best-in-class technologies

with best practices in the industry, and OpenVMS Clustering is without a doubt best-in-class. Whenever we're positioning OpenVMS, there are two factors we talk about. The first is the clustering capability, which equates to business continuity and uptime. The other is security.

"Security is important to customers' businesses because if you look at statistics, most of the monetary damage and most of the instances of downtime are from system hacks – not from floods, hurricanes or tornadoes. So it's very important that you have a system that's as secure as OpenVMS from a business perspective. And it's also very important from the perspective of HIPAA regulations.

"Many of our largest customers, both hospital and ambulatory, run on OpenVMS Clusters – some of them have as many as six or seven systems in a cluster." Mitchell says that a typical customer site might have mid-range AlphaServer systems with all redundant components running OpenVMS – often in a clustered environment.

"Sometimes we do remote clustering or stretch clustering to provide business continuity or disaster recovery on a remote campus," Mitchell explains. "We have redundant data and redundant systems to give customers 7x24 uptime. We also add in HP Services that complement 7x24 support for hardware and software. In addition, ProLiant servers run some of the complementary products that enable such features as Web access and data mining. HP storage is also tied into nearly every sale – we are big fans of the EVA product line."

Playing together
In addition to AlphaServer systems running OpenVMS and ProLiant servers running Windows®, other IDX solutions, such as Carecast™, run on the HP Himalaya NonStop operating kernel.

"It's critically important that all HP components play together," explains Rowe. IT shops – and especially healthcare IT shops – are very complex environments, of which IDX is only a part. It's important that we can provide them with a total solution that is able to work with other environments that are already in place."

IDX and HP have a long-term working relationship that extends back 20 years because of OpenVMS. "Our relationship is truly what I would call an alliance because we're integrated very tightly with our HP alliance contacts," comments Rowe. "We share our goals, we share our plans, and then we work together to make those plans happen. In addition to that, HP works with our integration partners to help us be more successful. They extend our resources beyond what we have available to us in house to these other companies, so that we bring our combined resources to bear in helping our customers be more successful. We are looking forward to continuing to work with HP."

A flexible future
Given the plans that HP has for hardware that supports OpenVMS, Flowcast will be an even more powerful solution for IDX customers in the future. "HP's new Integrity platform is certainly part of our roadmap,"

Mitchell explains. "We have some very, very significant customers who will probably never switch operating systems as long as OpenVMS is available. We're hoping to eventually be able to move them to the Integrity platform because we've seen some promising early performance numbers, and we believe it may eventually outperform about anything else in the marketplace."

Mitchell says that IDX likes the fact that the Integrity platform is industry standard. "We're moving to an area where we're looking at industry standard hardware, which is going to be unique in the marketplace. Having one platform that will run OpenVMS, the Non-Stop Kernel, UNIX®, Windows, and maybe Linux could be part of our future. All those different operating environments running on one hardware platform is a pretty powerful statement. It gives us a lot of flexibility down the road."

With OpenVMS on the Integrity platform, IDX hopes to be able to create a clustered environment that will support a heterogeneous cluster – which includes both AlphaServer systems and Integrity servers. "That's very powerful," comments Mitchell, "in that people can upgrade to a new platform without losing the investment they have in AlphaServers. And they can use the AlphaServers as part of their production cluster or test environment, and it will help make the migration that much easier because it will have the common thread of OpenVMS already in place."

Mitchell continues, "Our focus from the technology foundation side of Flowcast is constantly improving performance, increasing capacity, reducing cost and minimizing risk. Those are key components we offer in support of our customers' business challenges. We have full confidence in the HP platform. It's the only operating system out there that has stated guarantees of longevity. And the other thing we like about HP is that they have a roadmap that tells us where they're going, and they're very good about sticking to it.

With its Combined Business Office (CBO) offering, IDX has a unique place in the market. Rowe explains, "To my knowledge, CBO is not offered by any of our competitors. The Combined Business Office (CBO) consolidates the disparate revenue cycles of hospitals and physician practices into a single, seamless process. The CBO brings together the strongest capabilities of a hospital patient accounting system and a practice management system.

For Rowe, it all comes down to one message for healthcare organizations. "We want them to remember that there's no one out there that's going to help them improve their bottom line, and thus their clinical mission, more than IDX Flowcast."

HP will be working side by side with IDX, helping create the roadmap to the future.

Adaptive enterprise solution overview:
Maximize value in healthcare delivery

Challenge

- Help customers maximize revenue, improve market share, and increase patient satisfaction
- Combine best-in-class products with the best practices in the industry

Solution

- Implement the IDX Flowcast solution on HP AlphaServer systems running the HP OpenVMS operating system in a clustered environment

Results

- 24x7 availability
- Bullet-proof security
- Business continuity and disaster tolerance
- Adaptability and scalability to meet future needs

At a glance

- Name: IDX Systems Corporation
- Headquarters: Burlington, Vermont
- Founded: 1986
- URL: www.idx.com
- Products/services: IDX offers a full suite of information technology solutions for healthcare organizations of all sizes. The core IDX financial, administrative, and clinical solutions deliver a total information system solution to physician group practices, academic medical centers, hospitals, and integrated delivery networks (IDNs). IDX products include electronic medical records, practice management and business performance systems, acute care systems, imaging, and connectivity services.

Technology highlights

- Hardware: AlphaServer ES47 systems, often clustered for disaster tolerance and business continuity; ProLiant servers for smaller Flowcast customers and for complementary products that require Windows 2000/2003 hardware
- Operating systems: HP OpenVMS, Windows 2000/2003
- Software: IDX Flowcast
- Storage: HP StorageWorks EVA
- Services: Gold or Silver Support from HP Global Services

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