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- Carlier Lauer
Fox River Software

Total Data Quality – Just What the Doctor Ordered

Company

Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM)

Industry

University Education

Challenge

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM), located in the Canadian province of Ontario, offers an undergraduate MD program, various residency programs and a Continuing Health Professional Education (CHPE) program for practicing physicians. But here's where it gets complicated.

In order for the university to manage the CHPE program, it had to develop a business application to administer information and activities such as course descriptions, participant registrations, and transcripts management. But the system was manually intensive and time-consuming, and consisted of a combination of disparate Microsoft SQL Server applications, Microsoft Access data sources and paper processes.

NOSM wanted to improve its program by creating a single application and completely automating the process of scheduling and managing its CHPE events.

Solution

A custom application developed by two systems integrators consisting of Ironspeed software for the website application development framework, Microsoft SQL Server as the centralized database, SSIS as the data integration and workflow tool, and Melissa Data Total Data Quality Integration Toolkit (TDQ-IT) as the data quality solution.

TDQ-IT works within the SSIS data flow to deliver a wide range of data integration, transformation and cleansing functionality including: profiling, parsing, cleansing, matching and monitoring.

About NOSM

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM) is a pioneering faculty of medicine. A medical school for the whole of Northern Ontario, the school is a joint initiative of Lakehead University and Laurentian University with main campuses in Thunder Bay and Sudbury, and multiple teaching and research sites distributed across Northern Ontario.

Lakehead University
955 Oliver Road
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 5E1
Canada

P 807-343-8110
F 807-343-8023
www.normed.ca

Benefits

The Total Data Quality Integration Toolkit allows users to:

- » Identify data quality issues that require immediate attention and avoid processing unacceptable data
- » Parse, correct and standardize data into a common format to build more consistent data
- » Consolidate records within or across datasets to eliminate waste and provide a single view of the customer

Results

As one example, NOSM utilized the email and fuzzy matching components of TDQ-IT to take data inputs from six completely different sources – including Microsoft Access, Excel, flat files, and Novell Groupwise – merge them together, validate the email addresses and create a resulting list of deduplicated email addresses and names. The total records on the initial load were 50,000 and the university came back with 6,000 distinct records that were corrected, and another 3,500 with invalid email addresses that needed to be manually corrected before being imported into the centralized system.

“Since the data sources were from all different departments within NOSM, there was quite a bit of duplication, which the Melissa Data TDQ-IT detected and eliminated,” said Carlier Lauer of Fox River Software.

Ultimately, NOSM was able to cleanse and integrate data from about 30 distinct source systems, which is now centralized in a new automated CHPE system – saving the university large amounts of time and money.

About Melissa Data

Melissa Data is a leading provider of data quality, marketing and mailing solutions. Melissa Data helps companies acquire and retain customers, validate and enhance data, improve marketing ROI, and save money on postage and mail processing. Since 1985, Melissa Data has helped companies like Mercury Insurance, Xerox, Disney, AAA, and Nestle improve customer communications.

Melissa DATA
22382 Avenida Empresa
Rancho Santa Margarita
California 92688

1-800-MELISSA
P 949-858-3000
F 949-589-5211

www.MelissaData.com

