Success Story

Custom IDEAScript Streamlines Payment Tracking for Non-Profit

About

In 2008, St. Louis County voters passed a sales tax measure to create a community children's service fund to provide mental health and substance abuse for children and youth. The St. Louis County Children's Service Fund (CSF) operates four offices to collect and distribute approximately $40 million in annual resources to children in St. Louis County.

Highlights

- 70,000 accounts payable transactions per month

- Needed an automated payment review process

- IDEAScript developed to identify improper payments

- Misstatements on timesheets totaled hundreds of thousands of dollars

Challenge

The St. Louis County Children's Service Fund needed to automate their payment review process to identify possible improper payments and other inaccuracies. See how the Solutions Development team developed an IDEAScript to run frequent tests on accounts payable records, which uncovered multiple misstatements on timesheets, totaling hundreds of thousands of dollars.

The organization operates much like an insurance payer and handles more than 70,000 transactions per month. Each transaction is entered into a spreadsheet template which is imported into the customer relationship management (CRM) system where it is processed for payment. The accounts payable process includes reviewing transactions to test for suspicious entries, duplicates, appropriateness, and accuracy. The review process required a staff of two auditors and up to three accountants who worked long hours, and often overtime, to complete the work.

Given the high volume of detailed transactions, the CSF team needed a way to automate their payment review process to identify possible improper payments and other inaccuracies. They also needed a way to feed information to and from the Microsoft Dynamics CRM system.

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Solution

CSF reached out to the Audimation Services Solutions Development team to modify an existing IDEAScript, also developed by the team, to automate frequent audits of accounts payable records. To facilitate the CRM interface and integration, CSF brought in CRM experts, InfoStrat.

The newly developed IDEAScript automatically picked up fresh data exported from the organization's CRM by InfoStrat's process and then ran a series of analyses to search for duplicates, suspicious entries and accuracy. Identified exceptions were placed on hold for further review and updated information was uploaded back into the CRM by InfoStrat's process.

The IDEAScript automatically launches when new data becomes available. It compares user IDs on outgoing payments to check identification codes and review exceptions. The automated process allows CSF auditors to quickly interpret high volumes of data to process, review and pay invoices based on accurate information.

Results

By automating the manual process, and working with InfoStrat to fully integrate information coming into and out of the CRM system, CSF is able to process thousands of files within minutes. Client records are updated on a regular basis and payments are made using accurate data. CSF uncovered multiple misstatements on time sheets, totaling hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Data is now analyzed using 16 different tests to identify errors and potential fraud. The time savings has helped the agency's team focus on correcting errors and achieving higher levels of efficiency.

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> Our focus is on recognizing and addressing the needs of children in our community. By automating our AP process we are now taking a proactive approach, one that ensures higher levels of accuracy. The cost and time savings we have achieved benefits the agency to continue our mission of caring for youth.
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> **— David Ewing,** Acting Exec Director & CFO, St. Louis County Children's Service Fund