



Florida Retirement System: Reengineering, Improvement and Modernization

In discussing the impact of *Reengineering Improvement and Modernization (RIM)* deployment on his staff, the FRS Records Administrator made the following observation: “Seeing and feeling a new respect from other bureaus has triggered an overall change in attitude resulting in high quality work and improved morale. Knowing that within 24 hours of receipt, they have member mail ready to be worked electronically throughout the Division of Retirement gives them a sense of responsibility and satisfaction they never experienced in the old ‘paper’ days.”

The Florida Retirement System’s RIM Project replaced legacy data entry with a Windows–based transaction system integrated with Global 360’s Content and Business Process Management (CM/BPM) toolset. PBT was responsible for analysis, design, testing, documentation, training and rollout of the Global 360 components of RIM.

Introduction

Legislative pressure to decrease labor costs and improve customer service, growing backlogs exacerbated by seasonal spikes in request volume and out-dated mainframe data entry systems difficult to modify and maintain were the key business drivers in the RIM project goal to completely replace the FRS information infrastructure and implement content management and workflow.

In order to insure user participation and cooperation, PBT created a RIM Workflow Project Team with representatives from each bureau. Team members were responsible for communicating requirements, verifying existing business processes, and approving the workflow design proposed by PBT. The Team understood that content management and workflow, concepts new to everyone, were at the heart of RIM goals to replace paper forms and microfilm with electronic workpackets, to re-engineer all member-related business processes, and to replace batch processes with client/server applications in a new information infrastructure.

The scale of change facing FRS employees was enormous. While workflow would affect business practices in all bureaus, the Records Management section faced a complete overhaul. Acknowledging the impact, the Records Administrator was named RIM Workflow Project Team chair. Pre and post RIM staffing reflect the impact BPM had on productivity and staffing at FRS. Although staff has been reduced, activity has grown by 80% in Records and 70% in Benefit Claims.

Function	Pre-RIM	Post-RIM	Variance
Records Management Clerks	31	15	(16)
Retirement Specialists	60	64	4
Retirement Clerical Support	10	5	(5)
Total	101	84	(17)

The Business Environment

Most FRS process issues were a direct result of the limitations inherent in the receipt, distribution, retrieval and routing of paper documents. The list of problems was reduced or eliminated by replacing paper with electronic media and automating business rules based on the attributes assigned to a member workpacket during scanning and indexing.

FRS Work Process Issues

- Backlogged requests for service
- Lost and misplaced documents
- Member call backs due to lack of folder access
- Manual prioritization, distribution, and assignment of work
- Single threaded access to member files and manual file routing
- A 5 day minimum to deliver mail with spikes to two weeks during periods of high volume
- Mail handled an average of 5 times before it reached the responsible employee
- Limited transfer of information between departments regarding a member or a payee.

While paper-handling costs were high, they were exacerbated by a lack of standards for the 284 forms and innumerable correspondence templates used throughout FRS, an outcome of departmental responsibility for forms. An analysis of incoming forms and outgoing correspondence revealed:

- Numerous field label inconsistencies
- Variable quality relative to the format, grammar and clarity of forms and correspondence
- A high frequency of incomplete or incorrectly completed forms
- Member misunderstanding resulting in additional requests for information
- Member calls requesting forms not enclosed in FRS correspondence as stated.

Research into work methods showed that work assignment, work management, and quality control responsibilities absorbed 40% of the personnel resources in Benefit Claims and Benefit Payments. Each new member request was reviewed to see who should best action it, non-standard correspondence was reviewed for content and grammar, and lack of confidence in data from disparate systems demanded a detailed review of benefit decisions.

As skilled staff spent time reviewing work, the backlog grew. Prior to workflow, 28% of the 147 full time positions in targeted bureaus were devoted to the handling and distribution of incoming and outgoing mail, and the maintenance of member-related documents. The backlog in Benefit Claims, defined as requests greater than 6 months old, totaled 5,200!

The PBT Solution

Today, there is no backlog. The statistic has been replaced in all bureaus by a category called *work in process*. The maximum duration in workflow prior to completion is 2 weeks.

The administrative and management activities facilitated by BPM have allowed FRS to:

- Evaluate incoming work on a daily basis
- Improve the presentation and clarity of outgoing mail
- Automatically assign work based on established priorities
- Identify workpackets for use in training new employees
- Reassign print output and mail preparation tasks to Support
- Reduce mailing and support costs through forms redesign
- Allow concurrent access to a member requests for consultation
- Coordinate requests from members that cross bureau boundaries
- Retrieve work based on daily or weekly management priorities
- Populate outgoing forms with member information to reduce errors
- Deliver on the job training through graduated exposure to defined processes
- Develop automated quality assurance thresholds based on business process and risk
- Document individual and section productivity and efficiency using comparative statistics
- Improve customer service through immediate inquiry access to member records regardless of section
- Reallocate resources by promoting from within.

As anticipated, the Records Management section experienced the most profound changes of all in both policy and practice. The FRS Records Administrator reflected on the impact:

The experience my employees received during the early months of *RIM* allowed several of them to be promoted to other bureaus within the Division, an uncommon practice for a Records clerk that recognized the skills they gained controlling the front end workflow. They prep and properly evaluate where in workflow correspondence should be scanned. Their input responsibilities are critical to realizing the downstream benefits of workflow.

The following table highlights key advantages of the BPM-enabled RIM solution. The outcomes reflect the flexibility of workflow and the positive impact it has had on customer service and employee satisfaction.

RIM Workflow Outcomes	Measure/Impact
Redesigned and standardized forms	From 284 To 95 standard forms
Automated indexing	Via bar coded forms
Quick and accurate work assignment	Through document preparation by <i>Group</i>
Automated pending information workpackets	Via automated timed 'expiration' task
Automated work assignment rules	Per user profiles
Automated request routing	Per workpacket attributes via workflow
Automatically match incoming docs w/workpacket	Via automated <i>Match to Folder</i> task
Reduced manual audits	By automating workpacket audit rules
Eliminated backlogs	By removing non-value added tasks
Improved productivity at all skill levels	Through technology-enabled assistance
Eliminated member call backs	Through concurrent workpacket access
Reduced second requests for information	Through clear, concise correspondence templates
Reduced occurrence of incomplete forms	Through standard, consistent labels & instructions
Reduced outgoing mail preparation errors	Through automated 'Enclosure Lists'
Improved request turnaround	By eliminating paper-handling tasks

About PBT

PBT can help you meet your productivity goals, improve your competitive position, and provide better customer service by automating time-consuming tasks and providing you with BPM-enabled solutions second to none. Our experienced business professionals deliver skilled project management, award winning process redesign, creative workflow solutions and ergonomically satisfying user applications.

Our customer commitment:

- Your anticipated return on investment is always achieved and frequently exceeded.
- Your business goals are reflected in our solution templates.
- Your self-sufficiency is our deployment goal.

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