Consolidating Non-Core HR Services
Transforming Business Through Case Management

Case Management is an emerging space within Business Process Management (BPM) that recognizes that most of what constitutes an organization’s process spaces is not necessarily a “transaction” to be processed through a workflow but rather a “case” to be managed through a workflow. This recognition is not limited to the usual (though still valid) classification of processes as being more structured versus more unstructured across a spectrum of process types, but also include the way business processes are to be described and automated depending on where they fall in the spectrum, as shown in the figure below.

What is needed to address the business processes in the Case Management and hybrid domains are technologies that directly empower and support the knowledge worker in making decisions and otherwise managing the case in ways that are not just the automation of routine and largely procedural activities. Instead, the software solution that is needed not a traditional BPM Suite (BPMS) that has been retooled to address Case Management, but rather a new class of software solutions that more directly addresses the dynamic and adaptive needs of the knowledge worker performing Case Management.

This new type of application development platform is not just more lightweight, configurable, and quickly deployable than the other retrofitted BPMS platforms, but has been engineered from the ground up to be focused solely on simplifying and managing the informational context of the knowledge worker in making better decisions faster and more effectively. It makes for a different kind of business system implementation experience – one that is less reliant on technical development skills while more reliant on business design skills to create and automate the case workflow in an agile and flexible manner.

eCase from AINS, Inc. (AINS) is just such a platform. It enables rapid prototyping and production of case workflows across horizontal segments (e.g., HR onboarding activities that fall outside the purview of an ERP), vertical segments (e.g., inspection and audit activities that cut across organizational elements), and any combination of segments across which a case travels. eCase stands as the vanguard of Case Management solutions as conveyed in our case studies.
Case Study: Consolidating HR Processes on the eCase Platform

Commercial organizations and Federal agencies have made great strides in automating their core human resources (HR) lines of business. Core services include personnel action processing, compensation management, and benefits management. While core services are an important first step, these core services only automate a fraction of HR business processes. Non-core services, such as employee relations, labor relations, reasonable accommodations, telework, EEOC-complaints and others, are still often processed manually or through siloed, ‘home-grown’ applications that fail to provide the transparency and efficiency that is expected from a demanding customer base. This white paper reviews the failings of these ‘home-grown’ systems and presents the value of a comprehensive case management platform solution to automate non-core HR lines of business to keep pace with the growing demands for reporting, transparency and efficiency placed on business and government today.


In the absence of a unified electronic solution, organizations have turned to manual processes and ad hoc, ‘home-grown’ systems to fulfill the needs of their non-core HR line of business. These processes and systems have consistently failed to adequately serve organizations and their customers in a variety of ways.
The Problem with Manual Processes

Before the advent of the internet age, there was less pressure to improve on traditional manual processing of documents, requests, and customer information. However, given today's technology, proliferation of electronic data, and expectation of instant access to information, manual processes now fall far short of public and government expectations. Manual processes are much harder to control, monitor, and report-on than electronic processes—at the very least reducing accountability, efficiency, and transparency and at worst causing an agency to be non-compliant with Government standards.

Manual processes present the following problems:

- Poor tracking creates unclear accountability for critical HR outcomes
- Labor intensive process slows service to customers, does not maintain adequate case files—resulting in missed deadlines and non-compliance with external policies.
- HR processes often not consistently followed
- Incorrect data entry by HR staff
- No automated workflow to enforce HR policy
- Work status information and detailed reporting often impossible
- Poor data accuracy and tracking
- Loss or unaccounted for documents and records
- Inability to search and report on HR process

The Problem with ‘Home-Grown’ Systems

To improve these manual processes, many organizations have made the decision to migrate these processes to an electronic solution; however, they often make the mistake of making this solution independent of the rest of their HR operations. Systems are procured or developed on an ad hoc basis for each of their non-core HR processes, creating a very different look and feel to each application and making communication between systems impossible. The lack of a common interface and platform limits data sharing between different business units and increases the total cost of operation for the organization. In addition, these disjointed processes increase errors and take time away from the HR department’s more important core duties.

Siloed ‘home-grown’ systems present the following problems:

- Lack of consistent interface between HR applications
- Insufficient communication between systems
- Poor reporting capability across non-core services
- Inconsistent implementation of company or agency policy across lines of business
- High cost of operations and maintenance
- Hard-coded workflow rules that are difficult and expensive to update or change
Impact on the Organization

All of the problems listed above combine to cause significant negative impact on the business’ or agency’s HR operations. Impacts include:

- Unhappy HR staff, users and customers
- Personnel actions not completed in a timely fashion
- Processing errors raise transaction costs and delay successful completion
- Poor visibility into processes make it difficult to identify bottlenecks and weaknesses
- Inability to spot/mediate problems
- Proliferation of siloed, ‘home-grown’ systems greatly increases total cost of operation for non-core services
- Inconsistent interfaces increase training and maintenance costs
- Noncompliance with policies and standards

Business and government must move to a new service model that successfully automates their non-core lines of business while maintaining communication between systems and delivering transparency and accountability across the HR enterprise.

The Solution: The eCase Case Management HR Platform

The eCase HR Case Management Platform provides a unified and comprehensive automated electronic solution for non-core HR services. eCase provides core adaptive case management tools to automate and track all aspects of each non-core HR process, ensuring optimal process visibility across the agency’s human resources department. eCase approaches the problem of disparate manual and ‘home-grown’ systems by replacing these systems with applications on the eCase platform. By unifying HR non-core services on this platform, eCase provides unparalleled process visibility, reporting, and accountability across all HR business processes. To further unify these non-core services, eCase provides a shared end-user portal for access to each application, giving agency staff a consistent and intuitive interface to non-core HR services. An overview of the eCase platform is provided below:
To illustrate the benefits of this type of architecture, as well as use of the adaptive eCase case management tools, let’s focus on the Reasonable Accommodation (RA) non-core HR service. The Reasonable Accommodation service provides equal opportunity employment for all Federal agency employees including persons with disabilities. Employees submit reasonable accommodation requests for things like ergonomic key boards, back support, and other items to ensure an optimal work environment. Federal agencies must produce a weekly report on time and funds spent on RA cases and produce a quarterly report on total case assignments by RA specialist, closed cases by RA specialist, and total case assignments closed. In addition, agencies must process ad hoc requests from unions regarding RA processing and respond to litigation data calls.

If the agency uses a manual process to track this activity, it becomes extremely difficult and labor intensive to produce these reports and automatically tracks all relevant metrics within the system by request, employee, supervisor and HR analyst. The eCase reporting module allows any HR analyst to instantly generate these reports, as well as their own custom reports, at any time. Further, it allows the agency to easily identify and address process bottlenecks.

eCase automates the entire RA process within the system, reducing error and speeding processing. The end user simply accesses the eCase portal from their browser, fills out the electronic form for their request, and submits. Key information need only be entered once; this information will then auto-populate in relevant fields during the remainder of the case life cycle.

The form then moves through the workflow to their supervisor for approval and to the HR department for final processing. Along the way, all relevant information is tracked and stored for real-time analysis, report generation, and delivery.
**eCase HR Benefits**

By consolidating non-core applications on a single platform, eCase HR Management provides a single platform, eCase HR Management provides a variety of benefits, including:

- Report across all non-core services, giving a holistic view of the HR enterprise
- Seamless, timely and accurate information flow
- Effective management decision making with accurate, accessible, real time data across non-core services
- Foster collaboration among staff and managers across non-core services
- Improved tracking and reporting capabilities
- Higher customer satisfaction with faster/more accurate service delivery
- Reduce average time to resolve open cases
- Increased defensibility in case of litigation
- Identify and resolve process bottlenecks

In addition to the benefits of eCase’s electronic process automation, the full benefits of the platform are found when the end user interacts with another non-core HR service, like Workers Compensation. Workers compensation (and all other non-core services) is accessed through the same portal and interface as reasonable accommodation, reducing training time and centralizing access for end users to non-core HR services. This benefit is even further realized for the HR analyst, which will use the same interface, workflow processing module, and reporting module for analysis of all non-core HR services. No more switching between confusing electronic and manual systems with limited communication between each system; every non-core line of business is accessible from the same interface—speeding and improving overall HR service to customers.
The HUD eCase HR project won the “Public Sector” 2013 Global Award for Excellence in Adaptive Case Management (ACM) for the public sector, sponsored by the Workflow Management Coalition (WfMC). ACM winners were selected by a 12-person program committee comprising experts in the field of adaptive case management. Co-sponsored by WfMC and BPM.com, these prestigious awards recognize user organizations worldwide that have demonstrably excelled in implementing innovative case management solutions.

eCase HR Platform: Improving Customer Service & Accountability

Many non-core services are still utilizing manual processes or ‘home-grown,’ stand-alone systems to deliver their HR lines of business. With the failure of these manual and ad hoc systems, business and government need a new approach to providing non-core HR services to their users. The eCase HR Case Management Platform offers a solution: consolidating these non-core services into a single, adaptive case management platform. By centralizing non-core HR services, and utilizing core, adaptive case management tools, eCase speeds processing, enforces accountability, reduces cost, and ultimately improves customer satisfaction.

eCase Platform Capabilities

Move your business forward with an agile and adaptable case management platform. Whether you are looking for a ready to use COTS solution or something completely unique, eCase is what you need to transform your business for the better.
About AINS

AINS Inc. is a minority-owned, small business headquartered in Gaithersburg, Maryland that has been providing innovative solutions for Enterprise Information Management (EIM) since 1988. AINS provides comprehensive Information Technology (IT) services to federal, state and local governments, health institutions, and commercial customers. By offering a single point of service for designing, installing, implementing, and supporting commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) and custom solutions, AINS is able to help our customers make best use of technology in support of their business.