

Centralized Communications Team Delivers Healthy Bottom Line with Cincom Eloquence®

Q&A Session with Independent Health



Being able to adapt quickly to ever-changing regulations makes Cincom's Eloquence an ideal fit for Independent Health.

The health insurance industry has experienced massive change over the past several years, but change has been the name of the game in this industry for decades. Being able to quickly create or modify member correspondence while maintaining high-quality standards and meeting compliance requirements is what has kept Independent Health at the top of its game for more than 40 years.

As the leaders of Independent Health's Enterprise Content Management group, **Jim Mis, Director, Enterprise Content Management and Implementation** and **Debra Espe, Manager, Enterprise Content Management and Implementation** are at the center of making sure their group can support all of the business and member communication needs now and in the future. Mis oversees all of the creation and distribution of member, employee, provider and company correspondence, which includes more than two-million letters each year. Espe manages the correspondence production team and is responsible for ensuring that every document that goes out of Independent Health is formatted properly, in compliance and contains the right information for each unique situation.

We recently had the opportunity to sit down with Mis and Espe to learn more about how they are using Cincom Eloquence to consistently deliver high-quality, on-brand and on-time correspondence while meeting ever-changing regulatory requirements.



Jim Mis

Director, Enterprise Content Management and Implementation



Debra Espe

Manager, Enterprise Content Management and Implementation

Independent Health:

Innovative health care plan dedicated to improving the health and well-being for eight counties in Western New York

Customers:

330,000 members

Headquarters:

Buffalo, New York

Communications:

Over two-million documents produced each year

Independent Health document types: authorization/denial letters, provider directories, member ID cards, employee handbooks, summaries of benefit coverage and more ...

● ● ● ● ● ● Why did the team decide to move to Cincom Eloquence?

- **Mis:** We were looking for a tool that reduced our dependencies on our IT team and was more user-friendly in order to provide us more control over the process of creating, modifying and managing our member correspondence. We also wanted something that was easy to learn and use, so as our responsibilities grew, we could quickly bring template authors and end-users up to speed on the solution. From a technical standpoint, the fact that Eloquence is Microsoft Word-based is huge for us. It's easy to onboard template authors who have more business than technical experience.

We were also struggling with the level of customer support we were receiving from our existing legacy correspondence system vendor, so we were looking for a partner more than just another solution vendor. For me, everything comes down to how the solution provider sells it, backs it, implements it and trains the customer on how to optimize the system. The Cincom team really helped us get Eloquence up and running quickly, which had a very positive impact on us. My experience has been that normally after a company buys software from a solution provider, they will get a few tips and pointers and then they are on their own to figure out how it really works. But with Eloquence, the Cincom team gave us tremendous support and walked us through everything.

● ● ● ● ● ● How are things different now that you are using Cincom Eloquence?



- **Espe:** The biggest difference for us is the adaptability and flexibility of the Eloquence system that enables us to make the changes we need quickly. For example, we recently had a letter from the New York Department of Health that needed to be changed. With our previous system, we would have had to drop everything in product development and have them make the change for us. What would typically take us weeks to get done in the previous systems now gets done right away by our own team members in Eloquence. In this case in particular, we were able to make the change in the same day.

We were also used to having to do a lot more steps manually because our previous system was a very technical application. With Eloquence, we use the drag-and-drop features of the data mapping facilities and templates to quickly compose documents that meet standards. And, because it is Microsoft Word-based, it is so easy to learn and use. This has dramatically reduced our training time for template authors.

"Overall, the biggest selling point for us is the ability to be flexible and to give our team members the autonomy to make the changes ourselves and not have to worry about getting access to an IT source. That has been the gift of Eloquence for us."

– Debra Espe, Independent Health

● ● ● ● ● ● What are some of the benefits you've seen using Cincom Eloquence?

- **Mis:** As I mentioned, we are able to be more flexible and respond to changes more quickly with Eloquence. In addition, it is also saving us time and money. What used to take two people to get our "by-request" jobs together (one person to do the data mapping and the other to review and run the job), we can now do with one person. We just set up the job, test run it, review it and then run it. Now we have a standard process and data file format that is so much more efficient.

● ● ● ● ● ● How are you using Cincom Eloquence today, and how do you see that changing in the future?

- **Mis:** Right now, we are using Eloquence for the creation of ad hoc and reoccurring letters to our members. We are in the process of migrating all of our member correspondence over to Eloquence and generating things like welcome kits, approval/denial letters and member ID cards. During COVID when our staff was working from home, we created a process we call "PDF to print" where our employees generated the necessary documents, saved them as a PDF in a folder and then we would go grab them and send them off to the printer. We are using Eloquence to replace that process and create new efficiencies across the organization.

● ● ● ● ● ● How has it been working with the Cincom team?



- **Mis:** My experience with the Cincom team has been wonderful. They feel more like co-workers and friends than a vendor. They have worked extremely closely with us, and I couldn't be more pleased. Their level of customer service really sets them apart from their competitors. No one else cares this much about their clients.
- **Espe:** It has been truly amazing. Their engineering team and project manager are always available if we have questions. They will set up working sessions with us and "hold our hand" on how to get things done quickly. It has been absolutely amazing and integral to us learning the solution so quickly. The team always circles back with us, and they provide us additional training if we need it. The Cincom team outshines other vendor teams I have worked with in the past. Part of the reason we left our previous vendor was lack of support, but that is absolutely no problem with the Cincom team. They have done such an incredible job that I feel like they are more like our friends and not just vendors.

● ● ● ● ● ● Why do you think Cincom Eloquence is such a good fit for health insurance plans?

- **Mis:** In the health insurance industry, federal and state regulations are constantly changing. There are literally hundreds of combinations of forms, letters and notifications that must be sent to members in a timely manner. Being able to be nimble while also maintaining compliance is a must, and we're excited to have the Eloquence platform in place to help us adapt to the constant changes. It's also important to be able to respond to member preferences when it comes to communication methods. That's why we're working with Eloquence Interactive* to be able to offer the option for print or digital correspondence in real time to our departments.

** Note regarding correspondence generated with Eloquence Interactive: Unlike structured correspondence produced in batch at scheduled time intervals (e.g., annual privacy notifications), interactive correspondence requires the human touch, matching smaller amounts of variable data—often entered by internal staff—with potentially hundreds of templates to assemble and generate print or digital communications in real time. Cincom Eloquence combines the flexibility to produce highly-personalized communications in real-time with the power to generate structured documents in batch and the versatility to have other applications trigger the creation of documents on demand.*

● ● ● ● ● ● **What are your plans for growth as a company, and how is Cincom supporting that growth?**

- **Espe:** We plan to continue to migrate more of our correspondence and documents, such as Explanation of Benefits (EOBs), to Eloquence. We send about 50,000 EOBs out every month, and Eloquence will make this process not only easier but also much more efficient.
- **Mis:** As with most of the healthcare space, we are focusing on digital transformation and meeting the ever-changing communication needs of our members. As an example, we currently have a pilot going with Eloquence Interactive that gives end-users access to certain templates within our template library, so they can select a template and put in the member ID number, which in turn populates everything else, like name and address, in the workflow automatically. This not only makes end-users more efficient, but also helps reduce errors in our correspondence while allowing us to generate in real time. We are also looking at integrating Eloquence with our CRM system and Care Management system in the future to find new efficiencies across the business. To help us understand how Eloquence can support these efforts, we have regular roadmap calls between our team and Cincom's.



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