



COMPANY
athenahealth

INDUSTRY
Healthcare Technology

CHALLENGE

athenahealth's service model needed to evolve to deliver more proactive guidance to customers amidst changing buyer behavior.

SOLUTION

Within 89 days after kickoff, athenahealth had 170 CSMs and 50 Ops users onboarded onto Gainsight, and achieved its goal of 300 CSMs and 100 other users within eight months.

IMPACT

Gainsight **sizeably improved athenahealth's NPS scores**, and taking action on CTAs in Gainsight has had a **demonstrably meaningful impact on customers' revenues**.

Gainsight's Proven Onboarding Approach Helps athenahealth Fine-Tune and Successfully Transition to an Improved Customer Success Model

Since its founding in 1997, athenahealth has developed a well-earned reputation as a disruptor in the healthcare IT market. Through electronic medical records (EMRs) and other cloud-based services, the company helps medical groups better connect and doctors better focus on patient care. Today, its cloud-based national network serves more than 100,000 providers nationwide, and the company ranked 13th on the Healthcare Informatics 100 list for 2018 with \$1.2 billion in revenue.

athenahealth employs more than 5,000 people who are dedicated to the company's purpose: unleashing our collective potential to transform healthcare. The company is so committed to transforming healthcare and delivering value to customers that it aligns its own financial incentives with its customers' through a unique outcomes-based pricing model.

Challenge: Evolving the Account Management Model

In the midst of a changing market landscape and shifting buyer behaviors, athenahealth saw an opportunity to gain more market share by increasing customer satisfaction and retention.

athenahealth was unique in the market by relying on an account management service model that ensured a one-to-one relationship with each customer. However, the service model needed to evolve so athenahealth could deliver more proactive guidance to help customers perform better and extract greater value from the athenaNet platform.

In response, the company shifted to a Customer Success model designed to further improve customer satisfaction and retention. A top priority was finding a Customer Success platform that would allow for evidence-based, system-generated performance interventions to help customers achieve value on the platform.

Solution: Gainsight Onboarding Consultants Enable Fast Phased Launch

As it considered options for a Customer Success solution, athenahealth prioritized the vendor's onboarding process, experience and capability to handle an enterprise-scale deployment, and confidence managing a custom implementation. Gainsight checked all the boxes.

Harnessing expert resources to enable a fast, enterprise-level deployment

The ultimate goal was to bring 300 CSMs and close to 100 operations personnel onto the Gainsight platform. Hayley Jean Farr, Director of Customer Success Operations for athenahealth, noted in addition to the implementation and onboarding, the company was in the midst of creating new Customer Success Manager (CSM) roles, defining Customer Success values, service-tier and compensation models, and mapping out CSM responsibilities.

With so much in process, Farr had outlined a three-month timeline to get up and running with Gainsight to ensure both parties were working together in the most efficient manner. In Farr's mind, the size, structure, support, and experience of the Gainsight professional services team were unmatched—and essential. "Just three days after we signed the contract, Gainsight's professional services team was engaged with us. Without their expert hands-on assistance and guidance, we never would have been able to go live in three months to meet our hard and fast deadline," she said.

Just as vital was the noticeable executive engagement throughout. "Everyone from Gainsight—including top executives—showed strong desire, intent, and follow-through to resolve any concern raised," continued Farr.

Ensuring a successful phased implementation

athenahealth took a phased approach to implementation, focusing first on equipping the CSMs serving smaller practices and larger independent practices, as both would benefit the most from the automation and transparency of the Gainsight platform. In the first three weeks, athenahealth handled essential preparation for adopting the Gainsight platform. This included developing about 50 user stories and use cases, and identifying its most important CSM workflows supported up until then in athenahealth's CRM and data visualization tools.

Using Customer 360, Farr and her team surfaced relevant customer data and defined a handful of data-driven calls to action (CTAs) to improve customer performance. Working closely with Gainsight consultants, they also established an initial health score based on customer engagement, support experience, ROI, and NPS/CSAT.

Addressing complexity head on

Recognizing the sophistication of athenahealth's workflows, Gainsight's Professional Services team—including its Strategic Advisory Services team—conducted discovery and design workshops that surfaced priorities and paved the way for an effective implementation. "The Gainsight team helped us through the workflow design challenges we had anticipated. Their readiness and experience gave us full confidence in tackling our unique implementation needs," explained Farr.

Gainsight's expertise was especially valuable when it came to replicating athenahealth's incredibly complex rule chains within Gainsight. "These rules drive one-time tasks to our CSMs, and Gainsight's consultants were able to grasp the complexity of these workflows and replicate them as CTAs on the Gainsight platform," explained Farr.

While Gainsight designed the workflows, athenahealth trained its CSMs to manage them on the Gainsight platform. Within 89 days of project kickoff, 170 CSMs and 50 Ops users were live on Gainsight.

As far as Farr was concerned, CSM confidence in the platform was key to a successful transformation. “For adoption, it was essential to consolidate and replicate our high-usage workflows onto Gainsight so our CSMs could spend the majority of their time in the new platform. Our up-front preparation, close collaboration with Gainsight consultants, and structured training based on user stories made it possible to achieve our vision,” continued Farr.

Smoothly onboarding all users

After a debriefing between athenahealth and Gainsight to identify opportunities for improvement going forward, Phase Two of the implementation kicked off. This focused on bringing 100 CSMs onto the platform so they could provide high-touch support to academic medical centers and large, multi-state organizations. Gainsight’s consultants helped athenahealth determine the right approach for enabling these teams of CSMs to track and report on customer issues, creating relevant workflows as CTAs.

Within three months of those CSMs going live, athenahealth brought another 30 CSMs onto the platform without assistance. In eight months total, athenahealth had moved over 300 CSMs and 100 or so other users onto the Gainsight platform.

Impact: athenahealth Raised its NPS and Increased Customer Satisfaction

In the short time since going live with Gainsight, athenahealth has seen a sizable increase in its NPS. Prior to using Gainsight, athenahealth lacked a strong closed-loop process when it received an NPS result. Now, as each survey result comes in, Gainsight creates an NPS CTA with its own playbook, guiding the CSM to proceed with specific outreach based on the score.

Additionally, practices must manage many steps in the claim workflow and can easily fall short in collecting money from patients. Through Gainsight, athenahealth’s CSMs can see such issues in real time and intervene, offering guidance to athenaNet users. “Our CSMs feel more engaged and able to support customers, and our customers are thankful for the outreach and opportunity to improve their performance on athenahealth’s platform,” explained Farr.

In fact, athenahealth is starting to prove the value of each CTA. Extracting CTA data from Gainsight and loading it into its data visualization tool, the company has been able to demonstrate that actioning triggered CTAs within a certain time frame has had a meaningful impact on its customers’ revenue.

“Gainsight was a transformational tool as we shifted from an account management model to a Customer Success model. The combination of data-driven CTAs, playbooks, and a health score empowers our CSMs to proactively manage the customer base and easily deliver services,” concluded Farr.

About Gainsight

Gainsight is the Customer Success company. Our best-in-class software platform helps your business grow faster by cutting churn, driving upsell, and fueling customer advocacy. With our product and data-based best practices, you’ll communicate with customers more effectively, anticipate risk proactively, and transform your company around your customers’ outcomes. Gainsight provides a 360-degree view of customers across Customer Success, Sales, Marketing, your executive team, and Product Management. Learn how leading companies like Adobe, Box, DocuSign, HP, Glassdoor, Marketo, and Workday use Gainsight to increase retention with provable results at www.gainsight.com.

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