



U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) -
Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Annuitant Open Season

*Providing Innovative Business Process
Outsourcing Services to Assist Federal Retirees*



Case Study

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The Challenge

Nearly 2 million retired U.S. federal employees depend on the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) for group health plan benefits through the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) program. Each year during Annuitant Open Season, a 2-month period between December and January, plan participants have the opportunity to make changes to their health care plans or request additional benefits information. To provide these services timely and efficiently, OPM needed a scalable environment that could accommodate high-volume beneficiary support services.

The Solution

For more than 20 years, Vangent has provided innovative business process outsourcing services to successfully administer the FEHB Annuitant Open Season on OPM's behalf. During our long partnership with OPM, we have worked to continually improve the services provided to OPM's customers, while also increasing efficiency and cost-effectiveness for OPM. Over time we have transformed the way OPM delivers its Open Season services, offering federal retirees the convenience of telephone- and Web-based services.

Each year, Vangent designs, prints, and distributes more than 4 million Open Season informational documents, including 2 million personalized letters. Other documents include plan comparison charts, follow-up letters, brochures, survey results booklets, and special mailings.

Prior to 1997, we processed federal retirees' health plan enrollment changes using paper-based scannable forms. In 1997, we encouraged OPM to adopt an interactive voice response (IVR) solution that would allow retirees to make enrollment changes using a touch-tone telephone. The following year OPM agreed to add a call center associated with the IVR system, allowing users to speak with a live customer service representative (CSR) when necessary.

Case Study

We currently respond to more than 195,000 IVR calls and nearly 70,000 live CSR-answered calls annually. Approximately 5 percent of the calls are from Spanish-speaking callers. The call center, staffed with more than 25 trained CSRs, is operational during a 2-month period each year, with an average answer speed of 8 seconds and an answer rate greater than 98 percent.

In 1998, Vangent designed and developed Open Season Online, which gives retirees the option of making enrollment changes via the Internet. This user-friendly Web site was developed in strict compliance with U.S. Department of Defense functional C2 security level protocols, and is Section 508-compliant. The number of retirees choosing to make changes to their health care plans online has increased each year, while paper-based filing and IVR systems continue to provide retirees with a range of options.

The Results

By successfully transforming the way OPM delivers its Annuitant Open Season services, Vangent has increased customer satisfaction, operational efficiency, and cost-effectiveness.

End-user satisfaction with the Open Season Online Web-based service has been evidenced by a steady increase in the number of users since its introduction in 1998. This increase in Web site usage, combined with the IVR system, has increased efficiency and reduced processing costs, while supporting the Government Paperwork Elimination Act.

According to a survey of 23,000 users of the Web-based service, 92 percent rated Open Season Online “easy to navigate.” In addition, in a survey of more than 7,900 callers to our Open Season call center, 99.4 percent rated our CSRs as courteous.

Since its inception in 1998, the Open Season Online service has garnered the following awards:

- E-Gov Trailblazer Award, 2002
- E-Gov Pioneer Award, 2001
- E-Gov Trailblazer Award, 2000

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