

MICROSOFT: A SUCCESS STORY IN SCALABILITY

ABARCA'S DARWIN PLATFORM OPTOMIZED WITH SQL AND AZURE FEATURES TO BETTER DELIVER PBM HAPPINESS

Abarca, a healthcare technology company and full-service pharmacy benefit manager (PBM) has adopted SQL Server and Azure to power its software-as-a-service (SaaS) platform, Darwin. The company built Darwin from scratch to streamline day-to-day operations and deliver PBM Happiness to the US healthcare market. Not only does Darwin serve as the engine behind all of Abarca's service offerings, but it also provides one of the most modern and advanced resources for its partners, clients, and members.

CASE STUDY

Abarca was founded in Puerto Rico in 2010 bringing with it a completely different approach to business and technology. The company's clients include health plans, government entities, and self-insured employers.

In 2015, Abarca's leadership team doubled down on its technology strategy and created Abarca Tech, a subsidiary focused on driving innovation. Since then, Abarca has begun serving other PBMs through its digital platform—enabling users to manage financial, administrative, and operational transactions all in one place. The platform, developed with the help of Microsoft DevOps (formerly known as Visual Studio), is fully integrated, flexible, and is a licensed SaaS.

Nearly a decade since its founding, Abarca now employs more than 300 people nationwide and is expected to reach 500 team members by 2020, thanks in part to the implementation of solutions like SQL Server and Azure.

SQL Server: Abarca's Transactions Engine

Of the Microsoft solutions that have been part of Abarca's journey to scale, SQL Server has proven to be particularly successful organization-wide. Abarca has found bold ways to leverage this powerful tool, including its implementation as Darwin's database. It also serves as a platform for the Abarcan leadership team to promote organizational development and map-out growth strategies.

As of 2017, the company has updated its version of the SQL Server and begun enjoying the robust infrastructure it provides. Abarca's primary system to administer benefits and process pharmacy claims is SQL-server based—which has supported exponential growth, processing more than 40

million transactions per year.

SQL also helped Abarca fine-tune its High Availability and Disaster Recovery position which requires ensured continuity 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with 400 servers located at top tier data centers across the country. Now, Abarca can trigger a failover of its entire operations within 10 minutes or less with zero disruptions to operations.

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“We have tried other high availability solution providers, and we are doing far more for our SLA (service level agreements) through our current Microsoft technology.” — Juan Carlos Ruiz, Chief Technology Officer at Abarca.

Azure: Toward a Robust Infrastructure

Though the company has the benefits of cloud-based environments since its founding, Abarca Tech was able to take these capabilities to the next level by migrating all of the company's back end business and reporting processes to the cloud with Azure architecture.

"Before implementing Azure, we did a lot of research about the product. Microsoft made the process of migration, version updates, and adaptations exceptionally easy," said Ruiz.

Azure significantly changed the way Abarca implements its entire strategy for data management, Data Mining, and Business Intelligence.

As the largest PBM serving members across Puerto Rico, one of Abarca's highest priorities was to develop a Disaster Recovery system that would ensure the continuity of services even in the face of an adverse event. The company was looking for a solution that was reliable, consistent, and provided the flexibility to move their site from one geographic location to another without issue. Using Azure, Abarca built an "always-on" geolocation mirroring solution that compiles data from four different locations: the Caribbean, Florida, Virginia, and Texas.

"Azure allows us create virtual systems that are more flexible than an in-house data center, and redundant infrastructure," added Ruiz.

More Technology, More Growth

Abarca is always looking for new ways to stay on the cutting-edge of PBM technology. The company continually evaluates solutions to make their processes and service offerings even more advanced.

"Much of the PBM industry relies on systems built on technology that is decades out of date. We leverage Microsoft solutions to enhance our platform, run with leading-edge security and redundancy, and operate entirely from the cloud," — Juan Carlos Ruiz.

"This has not only made a difference in our day-to-day operations, but it has enabled us to grow and deliver increasingly advanced capabilities to our clients."

TRANSACTIONS PER YEAR

40 MM +

ABARCANS

500

A SUCCESS STORY FOR

