



### Industry

Healthcare

### Overview

Idaho's oldest health insurer serves approximately forty-four percent of the state's population through its traditional, PPO and managed care programs.

### Results with Axiom EPM:

- Implemented a flexible and multi-dimensional budgeting and planning platform
- Established a granular auditing trail
- Reduced time spent updating budget reports from 30 minutes to under a second
- Owned by non-technical Finance team

"Axiom definitely shines above the rest. It has so much capability built in, it's Finance owned and the customer service is great."

— Crystal Sittser, Manager, Cost, Budget & Payroll



### Setting the Stage

Blue Cross of Idaho has been providing exceptional health and wellness programs to Idahoans for nearly 70 years, longer than any other health insurer in the state. The company's 886 employees serve approximately forty-four percent of the state's population through its traditional, PPO and managed care programs, generating over one billion dollars in annual revenue. Finance depended on its previous system, SRC, for budgeting and planning software, but a looming software sunset and the need for more flexibility to comply with regulatory changes instigated a search for a new provider. Of the 35 vendors considered, Axiom EPM delivered the ease of use, flexibility and continuous product development the company required.

### Why Axiom EPM

#### Excel-based user interface

Finance and upper management spend the majority of their days working in Excel, so it was a huge benefit that Axiom is built on Excel syntax. Finance found it easy to create and edit reports without having to pull in IT, and management had no problem adjusting to the new solution. In fact, right after implementation everyone was able to use it throughout the budgeting process and hit every deadline. "The user interface was really important to us; people had to get in and out without really questioning what they were looking at," says Crystal Sittser, Manager, Cost, Budget & Payroll, Blue Cross of Idaho. "With Axiom, Finance can create any report we want without getting IT involved and it's very easy for all levels of management to use."

## Flexible budgeting and planning platform

With big regulatory changes on the horizon, the company required a highly flexible budgeting and planning platform that accommodated granular detail and analysis. Axiom includes expanded budgeting comments, drill down capabilities and the ability to reference past budget workbooks, all from one plan file. Finance can create any report it needs without pulling in IT, and read data with the click of a mouse.

The solution is powered by a multi-dimensional database that makes it easy for finance professionals to build reports that are variable both horizontally and vertically. This explosion of capabilities is matched with an increase in efficiency that is saving time every day. Says Sittser, "Axiom gives us so many possibilities when it comes to creating reports, tracking expenses and categorizing our spending. Plus it's saving us so much time. It's taking spreadsheets that before would have taken us at least 30 minutes to update and whittled that down to the click of a mouse."

Finance has also seen a big improvement in its forecasting process. Instead of sending out multiple spreadsheets to management, asking for comments and rolling that information into a master spreadsheet, it created a plan file on top of its basic forecast. As a result, Finance can see actual G/L transactions and code these actuals to the budget on behalf of management. Now it can build variance explanations without having to wade through a huge complex process that invariably contained lots of errors because it was so intensively manual. As Sittser says, "Our forecasting process is much easier and more accurate. At the end of the day, we have more insight, fewer errors and comments aren't lost."

## Continuous product development

Blue Cross of Idaho doesn't take success for granted. The company is constantly improving and growing its business, and it wanted a software provider with the same mindset. Axiom fit the bill. Axiom is known for soliciting feedback from customers about how it can improve, build and develop its product, and then releasing upgraded versions at no extra cost. Says Sittser, "Axiom listens to what you need, and if they don't have it yet you're probably going to see it in an upgrade in six months to a year. And they don't nickel and dime you for suggested changes, they build it into the product for everyone to use. You can call them up and talk about changes versus holding back information because you think you're going to get billed for it."

## Results

With Axiom, Blue Cross of Idaho has gained a true partner in its success. The Axiom solution has streamlined the budgeting and planning process, introduced advanced capabilities that are helping the company comply with regulatory changes, and injected transparency and accuracy into the forecasting process. Finance truly owns the system, easily building reports, adding fields and creating categories as need dictates. Axiom also listens to the needs of Finance and builds suggested changes into future versions at no extra charge. In the future, Blue Cross of Idaho plans to expand its use of Axiom for forecasting and benchmarking. It is also beginning to transition its system for tracking how much time employees spend on various activities into the Axiom EPM platform.



## Axiom EPM application offerings include:

- Budgeting & Reimbursement Modeling
- Financial & Strategic Planning
- Capital Planning & Tracking
- Productivity Tracking & Analytics
- Financial & Management Reporting
- Costing & Service Line Profitability
- Scorecards & Dashboards

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