netconsent
Automating Compliance

Optimax

NETconsent helps Optimax see policies more clearly

Compliance and control are key concerns in the healthcare industry. Managingan organisation that provides treatment to members of the public carries numerous regulations over and above the standard controls that are required within less regulated industries. Corporate policies are essential for communicating acceptable standards of corporate behaviour by which all employees must abide.

Optimax, the UK's number one laser eye treatment company, recognised the opportunity to bring automation and control to this time-consuming and important area of the business.

"NETconsent's product enables us to communicate policies to users easily and have real-time knowledge of which policies users have agreed to. It has really taken over the management of policies and removed the burden from the team responsible. I would definitely recommend it to others."

Nick Russell, Head of Technology, Optimax

Simplifying policy management

- NETconsent has made business practices more efficient for both management and employees.

Demonstrating compliance and best practice

- Regulated by the Healthcare Commission, Optimax has shown its commitment to keeping ahead of regulations and with NETconsent it can guarantee that the right practices and procedures are in place to adapt to any further requirements.

Mitigating legal liabilities

- Creating and maintaining a complete record of user policy agreements through electronic signatures, Optimax is in a strong position to avoid legal conflicts regarding policy content.

Optimax
EXCELLENCE IN VISION CORRECTION

Case Study

Optimax

Founded in 1991, Optimax is the UK's number one laser eye treatment specialist, offering a wide choice of procedures at 18 clinics nationwide. To date, Optimax's specialist eye surgeons have performed over 225,000 procedures offering the best value for money while maintaining the highest standards of medical care.

Optimax is at the forefront of technology and has recently invested over £4.5 million bringing Intralase, the best treatment available in the world, to the UK market.

Changing Times

Optimax used to have to manage almost 40 policies to over 200 users. Policies were written up and distributed using a manual paper based system. Just the printing and binding for this process would take one day and cost at least £8 per policy per user. Once distributed, the team responsible for policy management spent further hours following up to ensure complete acceptance by all users. All signed and accepted policies were stored on file. When a policy required updating, the entire process needed to be repeated. Regulated by the Healthcare Commission, in the instance that they requested a policy status report, all records had to be thoroughly checked. Whilst the procedure was effective, it was slow and inefficient and despite the time-consuming nature of policy management, Optimax was unaware of a solution to help ease the burden of policy management.

By chance, Nick Russell, Head of Technology at Optimax, was introduced to the concept of automated policy management during a technology briefing run by one of his IT security suppliers: Nexus Technology. The NETconsent software demonstrated was an obvious opportunity to reduce the management hours spent administering policies. "My interest was captured immediately as I could see that NETconsent was a product capable of filling the gap we had for managing policies. Moreover it was a unique product available at a realistic price," recalls Nick Russell.

Getting to grips with policy management

The NETconsent software was purchased and installed immediately to manage IT and HR policies. With no further requirements to IT infrastructure, installation was straight forward and required little follow up. NETconsent provided complementary training workshops to prepare Optimax for policy automation.

Immediate time savings were realised by the IT department who quickly adopted the new technology. Due to staff changes in the HR department shortly after installation, the management of the HR policies was slightly delayed. "The whole process – from the time we became interested through installation to policy management and product support has been extremely straightforward," reveals Nick Russell. "We had an unexpected hitch in our HR staff changing, but NETconsent was fully supportive and happily provided us with extra training. The nominated management team has adopted the solution with no further problems, all thanks to the intuitive nature of the solution."
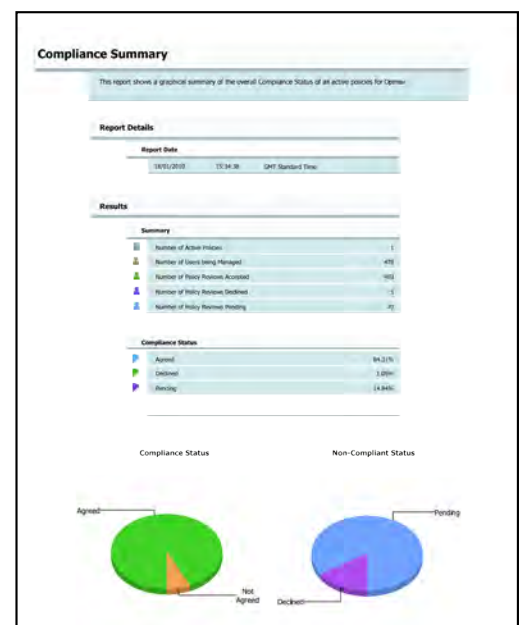
"Optimax has already demanded the best technology for its clinical procedures. Its back office processes are considered just as important. The IT department in Optimax helps to drive business efficiency by always looking to streamline business processes. NETconsent provided Optimax with the opportunity to make business practices more efficient for both management and employees."

Clear compliance

NETconsent has provided Optimax with the means to reduce the strain of ensuring its policy management process delivers compliance. The solution helps to ensure that all users understand and accept the policies they are given. "Using NETconsent I can quickly and easily identify which users haven't accepted policies," stated Nick Russell. "Understanding who hasn't accepted policies and who has taken a long time to read them allows me to identify who may need additional training in specific areas."

Nick Russell believes that the solution is a key step in keeping Optimax compliant in the future. "Compliance is an area that is becoming more and more demanding. We need to be able to make evident all the actions that we take to stay ahead of the regulations. Auditing is a standard part of business practice that is becoming more and more commonplace. Adopting NETconsent now guarantees that we have the right practices and procedures in place to adapt to any further requirements."

Nick Russell is also confident that the technology brings further benefits to the organisation. "Communicating policies and updates to users has more benefits than just protecting Optimax." Nick Russell continues, "It also shows users that Optimax has an interest in them and wants to keep them informed of how their company is being managed. Keeping them updated gives them confidence in Optimax and provides them with the knowledge to act according to company policy."
Nick Russell concludes, "NETconsent provides peace of mind. Whether it is for the CEO, Care Quality Commission or a tribunal, I know I can provide a report in a matter of minutes. Plus, I can be confident that by using NETconsent, no un-signed policies will have slipped through the net."

"The NETconsent product demonstrated the ability to reduce the hours and resource required to maintain control over the policies. It was everything we could have asked for in one package."

Achieving policy excellence

NETconsent has provided Optimax with significant benefits. It is used by a small management team to manage policies across both IT and HR. At review, to print and bind policies across all 18 clinics used to take one person approximately one day per policy. This time doesn't include following up either, which is even more time consuming. "NETconsent has given us back time which we can now use more constructively in our jobs," explains Nick Russell. "All the policies were previously managed using paper documents, which was a hugely time-consuming process. Documents had to be sent to appropriate individuals, and then followed up using a manual checklist until they all were received back, and inevitably some would always go missing. If a change needed to be made to a policy, regardless of how small, the entire process had to be repeated. Now, distributing to a relevant group or new user is simple and if we need to update a policy the process is straightforward. Plus we can see the history of all policies and user acceptances at the click of a button."

Nick Russell continued, "The Healthcare Commission can drop by whenever they choose and demand to know policy status. Previously we would have had to leaf through files. Once we have rolled out NETconsent across all departments within Optimax, we will be able to reach our goal of printing out real-time reports for policies across the whole company. It is an essential tool. NETconsent looks after the policies, enabling Optimax to focus on the business and improving patients' lives. NETconsent would be an asset to any company interested in streamlining its business processes."

"NETconsent gives Optimax, our employees, our customers and our regulators the confidence that we are fully compliant."

Additional benefits of using NETconsent

- Intelligent and accurate distribution – Policies can be distributed to different user groups depending on their relevance, if a user is part of multiple groups, they will only receive it once.

- Easy to create and edit policies – Provides Optimax with the means to keep policies up to date.

- Record read-time – Identification of policy read-time highlights users who haven't read the document and are therefore likely to have low understanding. This can be used to tailor additional training in specific areas.

- Clear reporting – Fast and high standards of reporting demonstrate levels of compliance across policies.

- Easy to implement – Simple and straightforward implementation across IT systems.

  No additional infrastructure was required by Optimax to support the product.

- Employee education – Keeping employees updated through NETconsent gives staff confidence in how Optimax is managed and provides them with the knowledge to act according to company policy.

- Fast Return on Investment.

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