



Protecting children – Digital Pen and Paper enables caseworkers to spend more time in the field

FACTS

Customer: Jefferson County Division of Children, Youth, and Families, Colorado, USA.

Challenge: To streamline data entry into the state case management system and significantly reduce the time and cost of capturing and managing paperwork in order to maximize casework time with families, meet government audit standards, and improve overall job satisfaction.

Solution: PenData Solutions' Transcribe™ Enterprise solution based on Anoto Digital Pen and Paper technology.

Benefits: Streamlining data entry into the Colorado case management system freed up over 580 hours a week for 145 caseworkers, which translates into over 29,000 hours and \$560,000 worth of caseworker time and salaries annually. The time savings created a greater sense of job satisfaction, enabling employees to focus on working with families instead of doing data entry. In addition to this, audit scores significantly improved one month after implementation.

“Assuming an average weekly time savings of four hours and an average hourly salary of \$20, then the PenData solution has freed up \$560,000...”

Barb Weinstein, Finance and Resource Manager, Jefferson County CYF

The fourth largest county in Colorado, Jefferson County is home to more than 538,000 residents. The Division of Children, Youth, and Families (CYF), part of the Department of Human Services, provides protective services to children and youth who are at-risk or are victims of child abuse or neglect.

To provide the best service to its clients, Jefferson County CYF strives to maximize the time that its 145 staff members can spend in the field meeting with families instead of duplicating data entry documentation in the office. Whenever caseworkers have contact with someone involved in a case, they are required to enter a Report of Contact into the State of Colorado's case management application, called Colorado Trails.

Data entry problems reduces productivity

After performing a workload analysis of its caseworkers, Jefferson County CYF discov-

ered that they were spending nearly half of their time in front of a computer doing data entry for their case reports. This led to diminished returns in supporting the agency's overall objectives as a human services agency. In addition, the process of typing handwritten notes into the case management system proved to be time-consuming and tedious, providing a source of frustration for caseworkers who wanted to spend more time in the field working with families.

“Our caseworkers were documenting their contacts with pen and paper in the field, but they were not always able to enter the documentation into the state case management system in a timely manner”, says Barb Weinstein, Finance and Resource Manager for Jefferson County's Division of Children, Youth, and Families (CYF).

Capturing case information on a timely basis also impacted the agency's audit status. As a governmental agency, Jefferson County CYF faces bi-monthly audits by state, local and federal agencies, underscoring the priority of more timely data entry.

Jefferson County CYF needed to transform the way that caseworkers captured case information to alleviate data entry procedures and to free up more time for actual case work, while providing a more timely data entry process that would facilitate the continual audits that the agency was facing.

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Going digital to focus on the families

Jefferson County CYF tried to provide documentation relief by providing caseworkers with wireless laptops, but quickly discovered that the presence of a computer made people feel uneasy or inhibited in sharing personal information. "Our mission is human services, and our interactions are supposed to be about relationships", says Weinstein. "Having someone type into a laptop made our clients uncomfortable."

After a referral to digital pens from another department in Colorado, Jefferson County CYF investigated implementing digital pen and paper in their agency. After conducting a pilot test, the agency selected PenData Solutions TransScribe™ Enterprise solution, based on Anoto Digital Pen and Paper technology.

"PenData Solutions stood out because of its commitment to customer service", says Weinstein. "They were very flexible about meeting our unique needs for form development, and for collaborating with the State of Colorado's IT group to link TransScribe with the state case management system." In addition, the agency's caseworkers liked the PenData solution because of its ease of use, and the IT group appreciated the ease of installation and administration.

Jefferson County CYF immediately began using the new solution, consisting of 180 digital pens in the field, for the agency's Report of Contact form – which caseworkers are required to fill out every time they have contact with someone in a case. Caseworkers were given a digital pen, a USB docking station for their PC or laptop, and a supply of contact forms that were printed with Anoto's unique dot pattern.

Caseworkers simply fill out the form as normal and the digital pen and PenData's software do the rest of the work. The digital pen writes in ink, but also saves the ink strokes and remembers where they were written on the form. Clients use the pen as well to sign the form. When caseworkers return to the office, they place their pen in the USB docking station, and all form notes are automatically transferred into the TransScribe Enterprise client software on the caseworker's PC or laptop, and then sent for processing on the County's installation of the TransScribe Enterprise server software, eliminating the need for typing. From there,

caseworkers can simply cut and paste the text into the state's case management system, which only takes a few seconds.

The PenData TransScribe solution also meets Jefferson County CYF's requirement to comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) for case documentation. The information is protected throughout the entire process – in the pen, on the employee's PC, and on the server. Even if someone loses a pen, the person who finds it cannot read the information unless they have a docking station, the owner's PC, username, and password, and access to the Jefferson County CYF TransScribe server.

Achieving great results

The solution has transformed the way that the Jefferson County CYF manages its documentation, improving service effectiveness and caseworker productivity. Caseworkers immediately began saving four to six hours a week by not having to type handwritten notes into the case management system.

"Assuming an average weekly time savings of four hours and an average hourly salary of \$20, then the PenData solution has freed up \$560,000 worth of caseworker time annually", says Weinstein. "Our division has increased its value by reallocating staff resources from data entry to developing treatment plans for children and their families."

Along with the tremendous cost and productivity savings, the PenData solution has significantly improved the agency's audit scores. Jefferson CYF underwent an audit just one month after the program was implemented, and the documentation scores improved dramatically.

On the horizon

Since completing the successful pilot with the Report of Contact form, Jefferson County CYF has now begun using the PenData solution for five more forms and has another four in the pipeline. The agency also plans to start using TransScribe Enterprise to capture clients' electronic signatures, including the date and time. This will enable CYF to begin phasing out physical storage of paper documents, saving expensive storage space.

Partner profile:

PenData Solutions was established to develop software applications that directly address the real needs of organizations that extensively use pen and paper to capture critical data. Almost all industries use paper forms as part of their data collection process and this is a major cost component in many businesses. The intensive manual labor required for the data input and document management of handwritten notes and forms averages \$2.50 per page. Every organization strives to reduce expenses and increase productivity. Our solution gives you back hours of productive time each week and reduces your data entry costs by at least 60%.

www.pendatasolutions.com

Customer profile:

The Division of Children, Youth and Families investigates allegations of child abuse and neglect. The Division provides protective services to children and youth who are at-risk, or are victims of child abuse or neglect. Jefferson County uses Family-to-Family practice to provide services and support for the children, youth and families in the child welfare system.

Anoto Digital Pen and Paper technology

A digital pen looks and feels like a normal ballpoint pen. However, it contains an integrated digital camera, an advanced image microprocessor and a Bluetooth® transmitter. Any paper can be used with a digital pen, if the Anoto dot pattern is added to the layout before printing the paper. The Anoto dot pattern consists of numerous black dots that can be read by the digital pen, but are almost invisible to the naked eye. The pen reads the pattern and registers what and where the user writes.