



Success Story

Health Plan Comparison Tool for HMO

Health care providers can use VisualCalc's Health Plan Comparison to provide existing and prospective customers with a easy-to-use web-based tool that lets them easily compare alternative health plans and make the optimal choice.

- *Improves customer and member satisfaction*
- *Reduces administrative time and expenses*
- *Improves member retention rates*
- *Helps with custom acquisition efforts*

Project Background

VisualCalc has developed a custom calculator and customer service tool that helps consumers evaluate and select the optimal health plan for their specific needs. This tool, called the Health Plan Comparison Tool, is a customizable web-based tool for health care providers that enables their customers to easily compare different health care plans. This comparison can be performed across plans offered by a single health care provider, or across plans offered by a variety of different providers.

The VisualCalc Health Plan Comparison Tool is an interactive, graphical tool that can be deployed on a health care provider's website. The tool guides members and prospective customers through an easy, step-by-step process to gather information and help them compare the costs and features associated with different health care plans. The Health Care Plan Comparison Tool helps consumers choose the health plan that is best suited for their needs, reducing their health care costs and maximizing their coverage for a given spending level. The tool benefits health care providers by helping their members make the right health care choices, and improving customer acquisition efforts. In addition, because it is a "self service" tool offered on the health care provider's website, it automates many of the tasks currently performed manually by customer service representatives, thereby reducing the health care provider's administrative expenses.

VisualCalc recently completed a project with one of the country's largest Health Maintenance Organizations (HMO) to implement the Health Plan Comparison Tool for their organization.

The Challenge

Health care providers have a significant incentive to provide accurate estimates of the costs and benefits associated with their health plans. First and foremost, helping customers choose the best plan for their needs improves their customer satisfaction rates, and, correspondingly, their customer retention rates. Ensuring that customers sign up for the right plan also alleviates the hassle and expense of having to switch them to a different plan at a later date.

Accurate, convenient plan comparisons also help health care providers highlight the features, benefits, and advantages of their plans versus plans offered by other health care providers. This, in turn, helps improve their customer acquisition rates and overall revenues.

One of the nation's largest HMO's wanted to develop a tool that automated this process. Prior to this, health plan comparisons and proposals were manually developed by customer service representatives. This was a time-consuming and expensive process, and the quality and accuracy of the comparison was often dependent on the skill level of the representative.



The Solution

In an effort to improve the quality and effectiveness of this process, the HMO contacted VisualCalc to develop a custom tool that automated the health plan comparison process.

Based on the HMO's requirements, VisualCalc created a custom Health Plan Comparison Tool that the HMO was able to deploy on their website. This tool was customized to include the details specific to the HMO, such as plan types, cost structures, etc. This tool enables both existing and prospective customers of the HMO to easily compare alternative health plans. Customers are able to compare different health plans offered by the HMO, as well as health plans offered by other competing health care providers.

The Health Plan Comparison Tool provides consumers with this comparison across two cost dimensions: 1) the fixed cost of the monthly premiums; and 2) the variable costs of the services the consumer expects to use.

The Health Plan Comparison Tool generates its comparison by collecting information from the consumer using a set of intuitive, easy-to-use web pages. These web pages first collect details on the consumer's family, including the number of people who will be covered by the plan, and their ages. Next, the consumer chooses the types of plans they would like to see included in the comparison (including their associated deductibles, co-payments, premiums, etc.). Finally, the tool has the consumer estimate how much of various health services they expect to use in the coming year, including things like office visits, exams, prescriptions, procedures, etc.

Based on all of this information, the Health Plan Comparison Tool then calculates the estimated net cost to the consumer of each health plan, including both fixed premium payments and variable out-of-pocket expenses. Using this data, the consumer can determine which health plan is the most cost effective given their specific needs.

The results of the analysis are displayed in a report that is available both as a HTML webpage and as a PDF document that the consumer can save or print.

The Results

The VisualCalc Treatment Fee Tool has helped the HMO reduce the administrative time and costs required to manually prepare these health plan comparison for consumers.

More importantly, however, by helping existing members and prospective customers properly evaluate their health plan offerings, the HMO has improved their overall member satisfaction ratings, and bolstered customer acquisition rates.

While this specific tool was customized for the needs of this HMO, it can be easily adapted for use by other health care providers. Please contact us to find out how we can develop a similar tool for you!

	Recommended Plan		
	Plan 1	Plan 2	Plan 3
Plan type	HMO	HMO	
Your annual premium contribution	\$6,000.00	\$8,400.00	
Out-of-pocket healthcare expense	\$10.00	\$0.00	
Out-of-pocket Rx drug expense	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Subtotal (premium+out-of-pocket expenses)	\$6,010.00	\$8,400.00	
HRA contribution (employer)	N/A	N/A	
HSA contribution	N/A	N/A	
Net amount you pay annually	\$6,010.00	\$8,400.00	

The VisualCalc Health Plan Comparison Tool can be customized to the needs of any health care provider. Contact VisualCalc for more information.



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