



Henry M. Jackson Foundation

Medical researchers advance military medicine through secure internal and external collaboration, with Accellion.

“I would recommend this product to other organizations without hesitation. The Accellion solution is the best method I’ve found to collaborate on medical data.”

Mike Wilson
Director of IT Infrastructure

The Henry M. Jackson Foundation for the Advancement of Military Medicine is a private, not-for-profit organization dedicated to improving military medicine and public health. Since 1983, HJF teams have helped military personnel conduct quality medical research and education programs. The Foundation employs more than 2,400 doctors, researchers and staff who together serve 1,000 medical research programs around the world.

Challenge

HJF supports more than 1,000 research projects. Not surprisingly, these projects often require researchers and government agency partners to exchange and collaborate on research data, reports and presentations. Because most of this information contains sensitive medical data, such as proprietary research and patient information, it is subject to privacy protection under laws such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). As a result, all content collaboration must be done through a secure channel to ensure data integrity as well as data privacy.

Michael Wilson, Director of IT infrastructure for HJF, dismissed the idea of using FTP or even SFTP as a means to share and collaborate on data. “FTP might be the obvious solution, particularly for exchanging large files, but the fact is FTP poses too many problems. It’s not very intuitive for people to use, and IT has to spend too much time fielding support calls, creating new accounts, and purging old files from the server.”

HJF workers gravitated toward putting content onto CDs or DVDs and sending them via a courier service to their external research partners. Unfortunately, this practice added time and expense to their processes, as well as increased the risk of data loss or a data breach.

Neither practical nor secure, this method of collaboration would not work. The Foundation’s IT team began a search for a truly secure and HIPAA-compliant solution that would be easy enough for everyone to use, while at the same time require little intervention from the IT department.

“Rather than take a strictly technical approach to finding a collaboration solution, we took our users’ preferences into account as we began our search,” says Wilson. “We figured we’d speed up the rate of adoption and increase our probability of success if we implemented a solution that people felt really comfortable with.”

Wilson’s team outlined several attributes for a solution that would allow the Foundation to meet their ease-of-use requirements while also meeting or exceeding the mandated requirements for security and compliance.

Quick Facts – Henry M. Jackson Foundation



Deployed Since
2006



Number of Users
**625 internal
unlimited external**



Custom Web Interface
Yes



Email Integration
Yes



Mobile Integration
Yes

The IT team believed HJF staff would be most comfortable with an email-centric user interface. But IT also wanted a web interface so sharing could be available to all users, regardless of the researcher's location or device being used.

The collaboration solution also had to be accessible and easy to use by the numerous external partners that do business with HJF. "Collaboration is a two-way street," says Wilson. "And by extending collaboration capabilities to external users, we knew we could really enhance our workflows and productivity."

Solution

After an extensive search, HJF selected Accellion for a pilot project to ensure Accellion met HJF's requirements for ease of use, ease of administration, and security and compliance.

"As part of the pilot, instead of holding training sessions on how to use Accellion's platform, we decided to test our hypothesis of selecting a solution that proactively meets user preferences by providing access to just a few 'heavy collaborators' and held our breath," shared Wilson. "To our joy, and as validation of our hypothesis, the solution performed as promised and, as word spread throughout the internal and external user communities, we quickly began receiving access requests." HJF wrapped up the pilot program and rolled out Accellion to all of its employees and a select group of authorized external partners.

Since deployment, Accellion has improved work processes

and data security in a number of ways. Proprietary data can be sent to and received from internal or external colleagues efficiently and securely. Since all content is encrypted, the risk of a data breach is significantly mitigated.

Accellion also provides HJF staff a receipt notifying when content has been received and by whom, an important audit feature to support HIPAA compliance. In addition, files can be assigned an "expiration date" to ensure sensitive content isn't available after a project concludes. This lifecycle management feature is automatic and does not require any involvement from IT to clean up the file storage server, as was required with an FTP server.

"This was the best overall setup of any system I have worked on in the past five years," said Wilson. "Accellion integrated 100 percent perfectly with our Novell eDirectory. This is usually a challenge as most folks use Microsoft Active Directory, which we don't. There were no problems with the Lotus Notes integration, either. This proved to us that Accellion has a broad enough development team to cover integration with a variety of products. This is perhaps the first appliance/software/hardware that we deployed that didn't have any shortcomings or baggage. That's very impressive from my standpoint."

"I would recommend this product to other organizations without hesitation," concluded Wilson. "If an organization needs to easily and securely share and collaborate on sensitive content, then the Accellion solution is the best solution for the job."

TOP-SELLING POINT

A more efficient and secure alternative to FTP or shipping CDs/DVDs via courier.

STAND-OUT FUNCTIONALITY

Integration with existing content systems and applications, alleviating concerns about workflow disruption.

COOL USE CASE

Researchers share and collaborate on large data – some exceeding 60MB – efficiently, enhancing collaboration between internal staff and external partners.

About Accellion

Accellion, Inc. enables enterprise organizations to collaborate on content with external partners securely via private cloud. Enterprises can leave existing content where it lives today, and extend it outside the firewall without having to migrate content or disrupt their business workflows. Accellion's solutions are used by more than 15 million users and 2,500 of the world's leading corporations and government agencies including Procter & Gamble; KPMG; Kaiser Permanente; Latham & Watkins; National Park Service; Umpqua Bank; Cargill; and the National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST).

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