

## Top College of Pharmacy Uses IBM Mainframe and Linux to Manage Big Data Growth

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ARMONK, N.Y., Oct. 30, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- IBM (NYSE: [IBM](#)) today announced [The University of Arizona College of Pharmacy](#) is using an IBM [zEnterprise](#) mainframe running [IBM DB2 database software on Linux](#) to analyze and process three million medical claims per week. [IBM Business Partner Sirius Computer Solutions, Inc.](#) helped the college move from a Mac OS-based system to a mainframe environment, reducing the time it takes to process medical claims by 60 percent, and help increase the quality of healthcare while reducing healthcare costs for its patients.

(Logo: <http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20090416/IBMLOGO>)

Headquartered in Tucson, The University of Arizona College of Pharmacy provides professional programs aimed at acquiring the Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) degree, as well as a variety of PhD programs in the studies of pharmaceutical sciences, pharmacology and toxicology. Its first-of-its kind, pharmacist-run Medication Management Center (MMC) provides personalized medication therapy management designed to optimize health outcomes for individual patients.

With over 2.5 million members, the ability to quickly and efficiently analyze an influx of [big data](#) such as medical records, medication information and claims is imperative. Previously, the college relied on a Mac Pro server to manage data; however, the system's input/output capabilities were insufficient to accommodate a growing amount of data in the system, resulting in critical delays when updating patient medical profiles.

As the system began to slow, it became clear that a new IT infrastructure would be necessary to accommodate the exponential growth of data flowing into the system. The college expects its membership to grow from 2.5 million to over 10 million members in the next few years.

"Among the number of reasons we chose the IBM's zEnterprise platform was its reliability and almost unlimited scalability," said Kevin Barber, associate director, MTM Center, UA College of Pharmacy. "zEnterprise allows us to focus on the applications and service we deliver to our patients and not on the constant maintenance of our hardware and software technology." By working with IBM Premier Business Partner Sirius Computer Solutions to implement a higher performing IT infrastructure solution, the college gained the ability to enhance many functions and pass the benefits on to its patients, such as:

- Significantly reducing data load times to approximately one-third less than previously possible
- Performing batch processes during normal business hours without disrupting operations
- Providing a more scalable, higher performing IT infrastructure to support and facilitate future growth
- Infrastructure enhancements translated into over 160,000 medication changes for improved treatment, and more than \$65,000,000 in savings for customers and health plans served

According to Rick Bailer, senior vice president of Sales and head of the System z brand at Sirius, "This solution highlights the performance, flexibility and affordability of the IBM System z platform. Many small but growing clients still think that 'mainframe' means a huge, expensive box that's too big for their operation. But Sirius is showing them that a solution like the IBM zEnterprise offers reliability, scalability and performance that other server platforms can't touch, at a surprisingly affordable price point."

"The University of Arizona College of Pharmacy is building a smarter infrastructure to tackle its most pressing big data analytics and data management challenges," said Pat Toole, GM, IBM System z. "The scalability of IBM's zEnterprise platform allows them to grow without compromising the large processing capabilities they incur to keep important medical records up to date on a daily basis."

#### **About IBM**

For more information on IBM System z, go to <http://bit.ly/ibmsystemz> or [ibm.com/systems/zdata](http://ibm.com/systems/zdata) and follow us on twitter @IBM\_System\_z.

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