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Achieve Your Goals Faster with Case Management

A guide to better understanding case management and the technologies that enable effective case work.

Contents

"Work is case-like when each work item–each case–requires unique handling, involving complex interactions between content, people, transactions and business or regulatory policies in order to deliver an optimal outcome."

Gartner Peer Insights™,
What is BPM-platform-based case management software (BPMS)?,
as on 10 February, 2022

What is case management?

The term "case management" can mean a lot of different things depending on who you are and what industry you're working in. Doctors and lawyers are very familiar with the concepts of medical cases and legal cases—basically, they know "cases" as the sum total of a patient's or client's experience across time in a given situation (or combination of situations). But IT help desk trouble tickets are also known as cases. Customer service and support teams managing customer inquiries and issues are cases. The federal government buys the goods and services it needs through procurement cases. Pharmaceutical companies track drug compliance cases. A "case" can sometimes be a person (e.g., a medical patient), a physical object (e.g., a car), or just a collection of data (e.g., tax numbers).

So what is case management? Case management is knowledge work that requires a high degree of flexibility and adaptability. In short, case management work has these traits:

- Less structured processes.
- Interactions that are more ad hoc.
- Events and milestones that are difficult to place on a timeline.

It is a type of work where an array of data from different sources must be collected, parsed, summarized for decision-making, and acted upon—often in the absence of prescribed process steps.

Consider how complex making the right decision can be when there are so many interlocking variables to manage.

This is why case management exists—to make the results of complex decisions as fair, fast, and effective as possible.

**The four types of case work.**

Case management work is done across many different job functions, each with its own unique requirements and complexity. However, you can generally break it down into four types:

What are the characteristics and components of these types of work? What are some use case examples? And, how can case management technology help?

Let's dive into each of the four types of case work a little more deeply so you have a better understanding of how case management is applied in different circumstances.
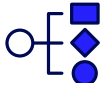
Process to decision.

What is it?

Process to decision case work relies heavily on structured rules and processes.

Characteristics.

- Requires making informed decisions that depend on having a high degree of context and completing a set of known rules and processes.

- Follows a predictable, reliable path.

- Requires compliance with changing rules, policies, and procedures.

Examples.

Regulatory compliance (federal compliance, compliance with organization or industry regulations, etc.)

- Ensure organizations are handling cases to remain compliant with laws, policies, and procedures.

- Measure compliance of case handling.

- Manage the rules and procedures for compliance in light of frequent regulation changes.

Routine patient care (exams, immunization shots, etc.)

- Instruct healthcare workers on implementing routine health care.

- Measure patient outcomes.

- Inform the adjustment of procedures based on medical expert input.

Pharmacovigilance (life sciences, pharmaceutical product management, etc.)

- Provide detailed tracking and reporting of outcomes.

- Measure aggregate outcomes to impact future design.

- Drive adherence to regulatory requirements for product offerings.

Service requests.

What is it?

Service request cases revolve around making decisions related to services, such as:

- Approval cycles.

- Proactive maintenance across large fleets, geographies, etc.

- Complex customer service interactions requiring conformance to service level agreements (SLAs).

Service request case work also deals with ensuring contractual obligations are met.

Characteristics.

- A relatively high degree of structure is required.

- Actors have a limited understanding of context, especially in the beginning of a case.

- Stakes are evolving (and sometimes escalating).

Examples.

Claims management (insurance claims fulfillment, etc.)

- Fulfill complex claims.

- Collect and consider many pieces of information.

- Ensure compliance with insurance contracts.

Ongoing maintenance (wind power, oil drilling, fleet management, check-in and check-out, etc.)

- Maintain complex, large-scale assets, potentially across broad geographies.

- Identify issues and potential issues to be addressed proactively.

- Promote warranty fulfillment.

Customer service (customer issues, customer retention, etc.)

- Manage the life cycle of activities to address customer requests.

- Navigate customer issues that require many steps to rectify.

- Manage long-term customer relationships across populations.

Incident management.

What is it?

Incident management case work is an organizational process to mitigate risk by identifying and resolving incidents. It is largely proactive but can be reactive.

Characteristics

- Proactive high-level process.
- Requires flexibility to manage rare and special incidents that require unique workflows.
- Relies on cross-team or cross-organization collaboration.
- Requires mobile and field engagement.

Examples

Facility management (airport security, stadium operations, etc.)

- Identify potential issues.
- Automate steps to proactively address issues.
- Maintain comprehensive records and measures for risk mitigation.

Emergency response (fire responders, hazard response, etc.)

- Engage field workers on incidents.
- Act quickly on system-generated notifications.
- Quickly route incident responses for fast resolution.

HR grievances (equal employment opportunity, workplace dispute management, etc.)

- Guarantee all incidents are handled according to policies and procedures.
- Apply rules and regulations equally across cases.
- Resolve disputes, measure outcomes, and improve future incident handling.

Investigations.

What is it?

Investigation case work is typically a reaction to a specific event or circumstance. It involves collecting and processing evidence and capturing and analyzing information from documents, research, interactions, perspectives, etc.

Characteristics

- Reactive—it takes place over a long period of time.
- Low-structure process—context must be built from across many variables.
- Involves dynamic business goals.

Examples

Accident investigation (insurance claims, medical malpractice, etc.)

- Gather information from a wide variety of sources.
- Determine cause.
- Analyze results and change future behavior.

Legal investigation (financial, regulatory compliance, employment, etc.)

- Analyze areas of rules and regulations that are less clear.
- Collaborate with experts.
- Recommend changes to rules.

New product development (financial, manufacturing, retail, campaign, etc.)

- Measure potential growth of new product offerings.
- Analyze and collaborate on data.
- Measure execution towards business goals.

A business need for speed.

With the ever-growing volume of information, complex business processes, and evolving regulations, case work today is tough. And unless process discipline is in place, replicating the positive results you do manage to achieve can be difficult. Additionally, many organizations discount the importance of collaboration in case management work to provide context to ad hoc situations.

It has become clear in recent years that organizations need more speed and agility across all business functions. Whether because of the shift in customer expectations or the need to digitize archaic internal processes, all organizations need to digitally transform—and fast. Speed used to be a competitive advantage for many businesses, but now it's a necessity to survive. And the standard approach to case management hasn't kept pace with this need for speed. Below are some of the reasons why:

Legacy systems.

Legacy systems, while often necessary, can be a headache for those working on case management. Legacy systems are difficult or even sometimes impossible to integrate into newer solutions. They typically don't offer the APIs used today and lead to copy and pasting between old and new systems, which is extremely time consuming and carries a large risk of human error. Legacy systems are also difficult to customize and adapt in quickly changing environments. These systems require a lot of developer support and time to update, and with that, create mounting technical debt for an organization's IT teams. This makes new regulatory changes, information sources, and routing tough to update quickly.

> It has become clear in recent years that organizations need more speed and agility across all business functions.

Manual processes.

Perhaps the most crippling to your case management speed are paper-based, manual processes. A lot of time can be lost shuffling through information to find the right documents for your case work. And when it comes to complex routing of case work that takes place across multiple systems and/or departments, these manual processes become increasingly inefficient, error-prone, and in some cases a compliance risk.

Siloed data.

Data living across multiple core systems that don't connect creates error-prone reporting and dramatically increases the amount of time business personnel spend searching for information. This is incredibly important in incident management and investigation case work, which requires informed actions based on a wide set of data. Data silos also hamper visibility into case management, making it difficult to come to informed, data-driven decisions and actions. Ultimately, siloed data creates a poor experience for both employees and customers because it makes data retrieval inefficient and slows decision-making.

How dynamic case management software enables better business.

If your organization does case work with old technology, spreadsheets, and/or paper, you are more exposed to risk than you may be aware. With the deluge of electronic data generated today and the multiple processes that typically must be managed for any particular case, if you're not using modern technology to enable your staff, the case-backed decisions you're making are based on information that is incomplete, inaccurate, or both.

Dynamic case management software is the answer. In this section, we'll take a look at some of the essential components of case management software and how they make the results of your case work as impactful as possible:

Efficient and effective tools for your workforce.

- **Simple interface for faster work:** Make sure anyone can use your dynamic case management software without training. You want technology that adapts to how your staff works, rather than requiring your staff to adapt to the technology.

Our world has changed. A 2021 McKinsey survey indicated that only 11% of business executives believe their current business models will be economically viable through 2023, and 64% say they need to build digital businesses to stay economically viable.

- **Collaboration for added context:** Collaborate on case events and share information for added context. Business personnel working on cases need to receive updates, collaborate, and initiate tasks and actions all in one place, which will help them get more done in less time.

- **On-demand reports for ultimate visibility:** Easy-to-read reports need to be available on demand for immediate visibility into case status. The technology should stream real-time data to reports, dashboards, and even event feeds in context with business rules to deliver insights and prompt actions.

Powerful capabilities to manage any type of case work.

- **Dynamic workflows for complex decision-making:** Case management software should handle dynamic and ad hoc workflows through event management, business rules, and complex event processing scenario support and automatically route case events for review and action. Workflow capabilities will allow you to be more efficient in each step in your case process.

- **Rules and policies that adapt to changing environments:** Adherence to business policies and procedures is important. Case management software should seamlessly tie together process and data, allow the creation and management of business rules, and empower business personnel to make immediate changes to their business processes to adapt to any situation.

Everything unified for smarter decisions.

- **Converge all information:** Allow business personnel to access the most current, complete information without having to search for it. Take advantage of powerful integrations to converge information across all systems so your staff gets the complete picture, all in one place.

- **Address any circumstance with flexible deployment models:** In today's connected world, there should be no reason to have to choose between a cloud or on-premise solution. Make sure your chosen case management software is available in—and portable between—any environment.

- **Work anywhere with enterprise mobility:** Make sure information can be accessed and work can be accomplished on any device, so case work can be just as effective in the field as in the office.

- **Analytics:** Real-time case analytics and reports should be available so business personnel and management can have immediate case visibility in any situation no matter what changes.

Discover, design, and automate your case workflow in a single platform.

- **Process mining:** The first step to making your processes better is understanding what is actually happening. Process mining allows you to find bottlenecks and discover patterns of behavior inside your case work so you can optimize.

- **Use low-code to rapidly build new workflows:** Easily build and manage any type of workflow, from simple to highly complex, in a visual, drag-and-drop development interface.

- **Complete automation:** Use automation features like robotic process automation (RPA) to connect legacy systems or IDP to process documents and reduce your time to case completion. The key here is to have a set of unified technologies with the right capability for every step of your case processes.

These are just some of the characteristics and components to be mindful of before you declare your current case management system—whether paper, email, and spreadsheets, or an off-the-shelf legacy solution—"good enough."

Enable better business.

Our world has changed. A 2021 McKinsey survey indicated that only 11% of business executives believe their current business models will be economically viable through 2023, and 64% say they need to build digital businesses to stay economically viable.

When change is the new normal, how can you prepare for whatever comes next? Don't rely on how it's been done in the past. Connect with the latest technology and devices to give your staff the most modern capabilities to manage their case work.

Here's how a modern case management solution can benefit the four main types of case work:

Benefits of a case management solution.

Process to decision.	• Single, unified view into all tasks, actions, data, files, collaborations, and history. • Enforcement of business rules that provide needed guardrails to processes. • Flexibility of control over how cases are handled with rules and processes developed with low-code that can be easily and quickly changed over time.
Service requests.	• Provide instant access to complete, current information to speed up decision-making. • Keep stakeholders informed with alerts. • Give management full visibility across geographies, product lines, etc. with unified reporting. • Help office and field workers accomplish necessary tasks while out of the office and/or without a stable internet connection with mobile capabilities.
Incident management.	• Drive full compliance to regulatory rules with a consistent approach to similar types of incidents through automatic, repeatable processes and business rules. • Provide transparency and speed contextual action with social collaboration capabilities in the context of the case. • Maintain and analyze the history of all content, process events, and collaborations in the context of the case with audit trails.
Investigations.	• Unify all information, including data and processes, in a single location. • Merge all internal collaboration between business personnel in one application for simplified and streamlined communication. • Reach faster, more informed decisions with seamless, simple access to the complete picture. • Optimize business goals over time with robust case reporting and analytics that provide key performance indicators and metrics.

10 signs you need case management software.

If you're reading this, it's likely you could benefit from case management software to update the way your organization handles case management. But how can you be sure?

Here are 10 signs you should consider new tools for case management:

1. **You are using spreadsheets to manage case work.**

2. **You are drowning in paper from each case.**

3. **When working in the field, you are hamstrung if you lose internet access and forced to fall back on manual, paper processes.**

4. **You deal with swivel chair syndrome: bouncing from different screens and tabs to find the information you need across different systems.**

5. **You spend a substantial amount of your time searching for that one right piece of information.**

6. **There is a lack of consistent visibility across cases.**

7. **You don't have a productive way to collaborate on details and information and resort to email, messaging, meetings, or calls.**

8. **Compliance is a real concern, and you don't have reliable logs to go back to in support of a case.**

9. **Data is siloed across several different systems and is often outdated or inaccurate.**

10. **Your reporting is scattered across different systems.**

What does case management success look like?

How can you know your case management solution will make a positive impact? In this section, we'll take a look at how others have used case management technology successfully to address their challenges.

Leading organizations use dynamic case management technology to achieve demonstrated success. Here are some of their stories:

US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is a federal agency within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The FDA is responsible for protecting public health by ensuring the safety, efficacy, and security of human and veterinary drugs, biological products, and medical devices and ensuring the safety of our nation's food supply, cosmetics, and products that emit radiation.

Goal.

Modernize and accelerate the drug application review and safety monitoring process.

Challenge.

- 3,700 investigational drug applications and 2,000,000 adverse events reports received by the FDA each year.
- Inefficient data retrieval and data management.
- Data living across multiple core systems that aren't integrated.

Results.

- Developed a one-stop shop to access regulatory review and safety monitoring applications.
- Unified critical business data, analytics, and reporting tools in a single platform.
- Achieved consistent and on-time delivery of informed regulatory decisions.

Watch this video to hear more about the FDA's experience with dynamic case management.

FirstBank

FirstBank is a Colorado-based, privately held bank and financial services company that has more than $15 billion in assets and more than 120 locations across Colorado, Arizona, and California.

"Appian gave us a performant, secure, and reliable cloud platform on which we can quickly implement our AML case management."

– Ryan Buerger, IT Director, FirstBank

Goal.

Ensure compliance and safety for Anti-Money Laundering (AML) Act of 2020 case management.

Challenge.

- Inadequate controls leaving banks vulnerable to money laundering.
- Siloed IT systems causing gaps in processes.
- Manual work, spreadsheets, and email jeopardizing compliance.

Results.

- Quickly implemented an automated, intelligent AML case management solution to rapidly identify and resolve potential money laundering schemes.
- Saved 1,000 work hours annually across the bank's AML efforts.

Watch this video to learn more about FirstBank's experience with AML case management.

Merck

Merck & Co. is a leader in the pharmaceutical industry with about 69,000 employees across more than 140 countries. Backed by research-intensive processes, Merck develops medicine, vaccines, and animal health products to drive innovation.

"We're trying to create an environment where we could better manage our information . . . that will enable us to get our important discoveries . . . to the people who need it."

– Chris Lee, VP of Global Regulatory Affairs Operations, Merck & Co.

Goal.

Create a holistic view of its end-to-end product life cycle by consolidating 10 legacy systems into a single interface.

Challenge.

- Unable to work off a standard platform across the enterprise.

- Too many specialized, siloed technology solutions.

- No accountability and lack of insight into mobile fleet utilization.

- Latency and connectivity issues associated with generating repair estimates with customers present.

Results.

- Consolidated 10 legacy systems into a comprehensive case management solution for regulatory information management (RIM).

- Provided employees the data they need in a single location with a unified solution.

- Improved efficiency of work steps through end-to-end digitization of the product life cycle.

See more about Merck's experience with comprehensive case management.

Flowserve

Flowserve Corporation (NYSE: FLS) is one of the largest suppliers of pumps, valves, and services to power, oil, gas, and chemical industries. Headquartered in Irving, Texas, with more than 16,000 employees in more than 50 countries, Flowserve combines global reach with a local presence to deliver the best quality service offerings.

According to Achal Augustine, IT Manager for Services and Solutions at Flowserve, "We had a number of separate systems that all served different roles within our supply and product management. In order to deliver excellent services to our customers, we needed a way to access all projects in one location to reduce time-consuming data collection and reporting."

Goal.

Improve dispute management for aftermarket pump repair business.

Challenge.

- Business units that act as independent entities.
- Data scattered across hundreds of systems at more than 50 locations worldwide.
- Lack of collaboration and minimal standardization across business units.

Results.

- Converged information from all systems across the business.
- Measured productivity gains of 200% across the global workforce.
- Saved an additional 200,000 person hours by eliminating the need to search for information.

"Mobilizing our field services teams and improving collaboration to resolve finance and repair issues allows us to be more responsive to our customers while running the business more efficiently."
– Achal Augustine, IT Manager for Services and Solutions, Flowserve

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See more about Flowserve's experience with dynamic case management.

Conclusion.

In case management, data is king and work processes and collaborations tend to be less structured and more ad hoc. Case management touches many types of industries and business personnel, from repair technicians to health care providers to government regulators.

Regardless of context, finding ways to optimize data management and improve loosely coupled processes leads to better results. Understanding the components of effective case management will help you optimize information use across your business, aligning it to drive informed decision-making. A modern and flexible platform that integrates data, process, mobility, social collaboration, and content management is the key to accelerating intelligent decisions and turning them into rapid action for successful case resolutions.

Partner with Appian for your case management needs to make smarter decisions and resolve issues faster. **Request a demo** of Appian case management capabilities today.

Learn more at appian.com
Contact us at info@appian.com

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Appian is the unified platform for change. We accelerate customers' businesses by discovering, designing, and automating their most important processes. The Appian Low-Code Platform combines the key capabilities needed to get work done faster, Process Mining + Workflow + Automation, in a unified low-code platform. Appian is open, enterprise-grade, and trusted by industry leaders. For more information, visit **appian.com**.