

Non-Provider Price: \$8,850

AN INDEPENDENT REPORT FROM
HEALTHCARE EXECUTIVES AND PROFESSIONALS

Transcription Services: Steady Demand in a Volatile Market



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Transcription Services: Steady Demand in a Volatile Market

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■ HOW DO THE VENDORS STACK UP?

| Overall Performance Scores | RANK | MTSO | PERFORMANCE SCORE | | 1 YEAR TREND |
|---|---|-------------------|-------------------|------|--------------|
| | ↑ Positive Trend – Performance score increase of 3 or more points above previous score. | 1 | Webmedx | 91.2 | |
| ↔ No Significant Change – Performance score is within 3 points of previous score. | 2 | Precyse Solutions | 90.4 | | -- |
| ↓ Negative Trend – Performance score decrease of 3 or more points below previous score. | 3 | Encompass | 89.2 | | ↑ |
| | 4 | TransTech | 89.0 | | ↑ |
| | 5 | Transcend | 87.9 | | ↔ |
| | 6 | DTS America | 86.9 | | ↔ |
| | 7 | Heartland | 85.1 | | ↔ |
| | 8 | Acusis | 83.1 | | ↔ |
| | 9 | MedQuist | 81.1 | | ↑ |
| | 10 | Focus | 80.2 | | ↑ |
| | 11 | Superior Global | 78.5 | | ↓ |
| | 12 | Sten-Tel | 77.1 | | ↔ |
| | 13 | CBay | 76.5 | | ↑ |
| | 14 | SPi | 74.7 | | ↔ |
| | 15 | Spheris | 73.2 | | ↔ |

* Preliminary scores do not meet KLAS' minimum confidence level

■ WORTH KNOWING

MOVE OVER: NEWLY RATED WEBMEDX AND PRECYSE TAKE FIRST AND SECOND PLACE. MTSOs cannot keep their place in this competitive market by merely maintaining performance. Transcend, for example, kept its score steady but dropped from first to fifth place, pushed out by Webmedx and Precyse and passed up by TransTech and Encompass, who both improved this year.

OFFSHORE IS CHEAPER, BUT DOES IT PAY IN THE END? When comparing onshore and offshore transcription, onshore receives higher marks for both quality and turnaround time. In fact, the top-five MTSOs are doing their work predominantly onshore.

SPEECH RECOGNITION & EMR: SILVER BULLETS? While speech recognition and EMR technologies are starting to make a dent, their impact to date on dictation volumes has been insignificant. However, when dictation volumes do decrease because of these technologies, providers mention Epic more than any other EMR vendor and Nuance more than any other speech recognition vendor.

BACK-END SPEECH RECOGNITION SOFTWARE IS INFLUENCING MTSO DECISIONS. Of providers choosing a new MTSO, more than one-quarter said that the relationship between the MTSO and speech vendor (mostly Nuance) influenced the choice of their new transcription vendor.

■ THE BOTTOM LINE ON VENDORS

ACUSIS: A smaller player, Acusis struggles to meet the needs of those providers who have spikes in workloads. Acusis falls in the middle of the pack in performance, showing strong marks for TATs and quality but with room for improvement with their administrative tools. With their acquisition of DRC in 2007, Acusis now provides both onshore and offshore work.

CBAY: While CBay still struggles to meet customer expectations for quality, many clients have complimented strides made in customer service and willingness to respond to issues. One of the larger players, CBay remains a low-cost MTSO.

DTS AMERICA: While some providers have had challenges coming online, the company has made several changes for the better in account management and customer service. This is a smaller MTSO in this report, but Clients feel that the executives are involved and build solid relationships.

ENCOMPASS: Encompass consistently performs well and is continuing to grow and expand. The president works personally with many clients, who appreciate the personal touch. All their work is done onshore. Larger accounts may be concerned about this vendor's scalability.

FOCUS: Focus is inching its way back to the middle of the pack by zeroing in on the concerns of its clients. This vendor climbed 5 points since last year, but will need to address lingering quality issues to continue to move up. One of the larger MTSOs, Focus is owned by Nuance and appears to be doing more speech recognition editing than any other MTSO.

HEARTLAND: A mid-sized vendor, Heartland does a lot of offshore work and provides great TAT. Quality has been an issue, but Heartland strives to resolve problems and provide a positive customer experience. Most of their clients have fewer than 200 beds.

MEDQUIST: MedQuist is the largest MTSO in the world. A soup-to-nuts vendor, they offer voice capture, speech, and transcription solutions. Meeting customer's quality expectations has been a challenge for MedQuist. They have been making improvements to their operations and customer service, such as in account management, and their performance has increased significantly over the past year.

PRECYSE SOLUTIONS: In a virtual tie for first, this mid-sized player receives high marks for both onshore and offshore services. The overwhelming majority of clients say positive things about Precyse's staff, with some calling the vendor's account management "perfect." Some feel Precyse needs to iron out some kinks with the implementation of its speech tools.

SPHERIS: Receives praise from many clients for quick turnaround times. Spheris continues to struggle with quality and technology, dropping 2 points in the past year. Spheris has made some leadership and organizational changes to address these issues.

SPI: Performance has fallen almost 8 points in the last three years. While this mid-sized vendor works to improve its TAT and account management, many providers are not yet completely comfortable with the changes. Executives are reaching out to clients to try and resolve issues.

STEN-TEL: A smaller, low-cost provider, Sten-Tel has been grappling with issues, which appear to have distracted them from delivering high-quality transcription. These issues include TAT, quality, and account management. Since 2007, Sten-Tel's scores have dropped about 9 points.

SUPERIOR GLOBAL: This mid-sized company's layered service model has sparked kudos from providers. Superior Global has low costs, does a lot of editing work, and has partnerships with several speech-recognition vendors; however, their scores have dropped noticeably over the past year.

TRANSCEND: Transcend is one of the few large transcription companies delivering consistently solid performance for a sizeable client base. The company's drop from first to fifth in one year illustrates that they must continually improve to remain at the top.

TRANSTECH: TransTech appears to be a player on the rise. One of the smaller MTSOs, the vendor provides a personal touch and quickly addresses customer issues. TransTech has the highest ratings for TAT, account management, and administrative tools.

WEBMEDX: A mid- to large-sized MTSO, Webmedx has landed in first place from their willingness to accommodate customers. While some have complained about Webmedx's costs, others claim the vendor is a competitive, cost-effective provider that delivers outstanding service. All Webmedx's work is done domestically.

| MTSO Ratings Comparison ● Above Average ● Average ● Below Average | | Report Turnaround Time | Report Quality | Account Management | Administrative Tools | |
|---|-------------------|------------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------------|---|
| | Acusis | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| | CBay | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| | DTS America | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| | Encompass | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| | Focus | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| | Heartland | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| | MedQuist | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| | Precyse Solutions | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| | Spheris | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| | SPi | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| | Sten-Tel | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| | Superior Global | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| | Transcend | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| | TransTech | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| | Webmedx | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |

Figure 2

INTRODUCTION:

Stimulus. Meaningful use. The push for technology. While healthcare providers are trying to wrap their minds around Washington’s economic package, many are also getting wrapped up in ever-increasing dictation volumes. Hospitals and clinics are scrambling to implement electronic medical records (EMRs). However, when it comes to medical



Figure 3

transcription, will the technologies that provide stimulus eligibility also impact the strain from increased dictation? This market is more competitive than ever, with transcription quality, account management, and technology making or breaking vendors. How has this competition impacted providers? What factors are influencing dictation and transcription volumes?

62%

Percent of respondents who have switched MTSOs at least once

KLAS reached out to more than 500 providers to address these questions by highlighting both the performance of medical transcription services organizations (MTSOs) and the key market issues that are driving transcription decisions today.

MUSICAL CHAIRS: COMPETITION IN THE MTSO MARKET

Loyalty is low in this market, with two-thirds of respondents reporting that they have switched MTSO vendors at least once. Why the instability? Providers most commonly cited quality and turnaround time (TAT), followed by cost, as reasons for switching. The biggest variance among vendor scores is in the area of quality, where scores range from Webmedx's 4.4 to CBay's 3.4 out of 5. Quality issues generally concern blanks, grammar errors,

and misspelling. Additionally, colloquialisms are the biggest challenge for offshore MTs.

To avoid being forced from this game of musical chairs, MTSOs must continually push for better performance, not just maintain current standards. Transcend, for example, dropped from first to fifth place in the last year, without losing a single point. TransTech and Encompass passed up Transcend, as did two newly rated MTSOs, Webmedx and Precyse.

Some of the biggest surprises come from Webmedx and Precyse, who placed first and second. MedQuist, the market-share leader, improved their score significantly, while Spheris wound up in last place.

Webmedx. Webmedx is one of the larger MTSOs, and their customers report that this vendor delivers solid performance all

Performance Score vs. Estimated Hospital Market Share

Market share numbers are best estimates based on number of sites verified by KLAS research along with information provided by the MTSOs and other industry sources.

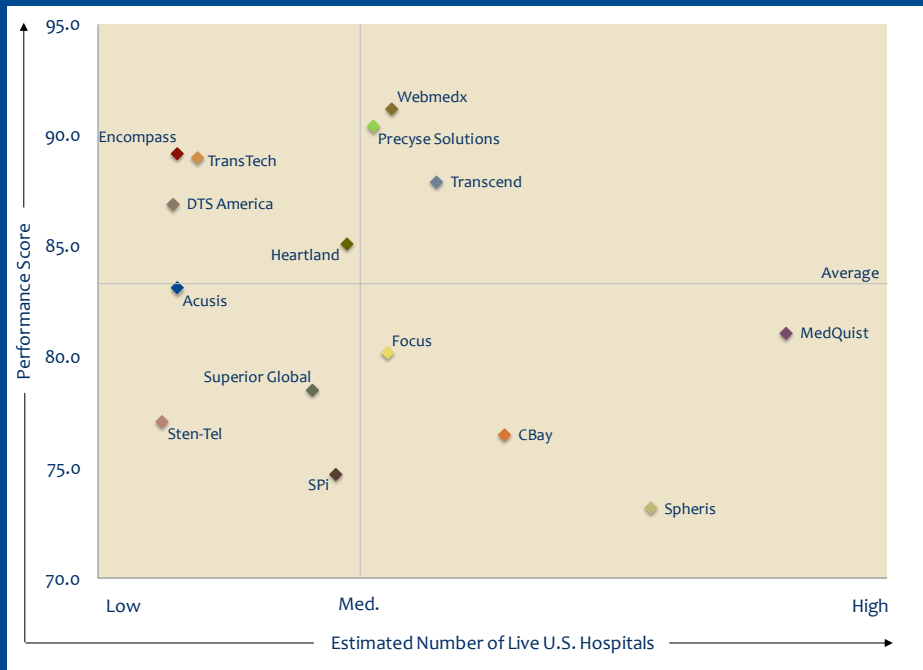


Figure 4

44%

Percent of organizations that reported their dictation volumes are increasing

around. When customers have difficulties, Webmedx is quick to address them.

Precyse. Precyse scores a close second. These high marks were driven largely by Precyse's excellent relationship with clients. One HIM director commented, "I have worked with Precyse for many years. One of the things that I have valued about Precyse is that they are truly a partner."

MedQuist. Also shaking up the MTSO lineup, MedQuist has improved their scores significantly in the last two years. Some clients still report ongoing issues with quality and problem resolution. However, MedQuist appears to be addressing these problems, increasing scores by 4 points since last year's report and 10 since 2006.

Spheris. Illustrating the rougher side of MTSO competition, Spheris has fallen to last place in this year's report, displacing CBay. Spheris has dropped 2 points in the past year. Some customers have expressed frustration with the vendor's inability to resolve quality and technology issues; as one HIM director reported, "We have a great representative who does a good job and tries his best to get things fixed... [But] he is at the mercy of other people." Clients indicate Spheris is making a number of changes to address these issues. Only time will tell if the changes have an impact.

Other major changes. Few MTSOs dropped significantly in this report; however, in addition to the strong performance of Webmedx, Precyse and MedQuist, many other MTSOs achieved improvements, largely due to enhanced

customer service. This year sees a continued level of improvement, as a number of vendors are serious about keeping existing clients and winning new business. Since 2006, overall market scores have improved from 75 to 83.

- TransTech rose 7 points. Customers report that the executives are engaged and that quality and TAT are excellent.
- CBay is up 4 points, improving in customer service and issue resolution.
- DTS America improved by 2 points due to improved executive involvement and customer service.
- Encompass is up 3 points. Customers feel that their relationship with this MTSO is better than in the past.
- Focus increased their score by 5 points for their renewed emphasis on customer service.

■ DICTATION VOLUMES: PATIENT NUMBERS OUTPACE TECHNOLOGY

Dictation volumes continue to grow. Of the respondents, 44 percent indicated that dictation volumes have increased as compared to last year, while another 40 percent said they stayed the same. Why the growth?

Most respondents (82 percent) attribute growth to a swell in patient volume. Also, physicians are dictating more per report than in the past, and some organizations are requiring their physicians to document more. Referring to this, one respondent commented that "We implemented a clinical documentation improvement (CDI) program, and we are documenting more

Turnaround Time and Quality Trending – Onshore vs. Offshore

Average 1–5 rating for Report Turnaround Time and Report Quality, split out by onshore only sites and offshore only sites



Figure 5

as a result.” To handle this growth, many hospitals are turning to MTSOs and/or technology such as speech recognition and EMRs.

Why are some volumes decreasing? Of the 16 percent indicating that dictation dropped, many attribute the decline to technology. Front-end speech recognition was the most commonly cited technological reason for the decline, followed by physicians documenting more in their EMRs.

With front-end speech technology, doctors do their own editing, which reduces the number of dictations received by the hospital information-management department. Back-end speech (BES) recognition is also a factor in reducing dictation volumes because, while an initial dictation is still created, this technology reduces the amount of transcription

required and moves to more of an editing model.

One-third of those indicating a drop in dictation levels attributed this change to front-end speech recognition. Nuance has the biggest influence of any front-end speech vendor: Ninety percent of those attributing a drop in dictation to speech recognition are using Nuance.

Among providers documenting into EMRs, clients using Epic appear to be having the most physician adoption. Of those that attributed their dictation decrease to their physicians documenting more in the EMR, thirty-three percent were using Epic, which percentage was nearly double that of the next closest EMR vendor. Additionally, Meditech has historically had low physician usage of their EMR. KLAS interviewed 45 acute-care sites using the Meditech EMR—more sites than any other

vendor—and none indicated that their Meditech EMR helped reduce dictation.

■ THE (NOT SO) SECRETS TO SUCCESS

Quality, turnaround time (TAT), account management/customer support, and cost play major roles in client satisfaction. Four of the top-five MTSOs rated above average in all of these areas. There is a clear correlation between these criteria and customer satisfaction.

Quality. Webmedx, TransTech, and Precyse have the happiest customers when it comes to quality, and CBay and Heartland have the least satisfied. Work done onshore produces overall higher-quality marks than does work done offshore, where language barriers are most often an obstacle.

TAT. For the first time since KLAS began tracking the MTSO market, onshore services are scoring higher than offshore for TAT. TransTech and Webmedx, both predominantly onshore MTSOs, received the highest marks, while Sten-Tel received the lowest.

Account management. With knowledgeable and responsive service, frequent customer communication, and, most importantly, quick issue resolution, TransTech, Webmedx, Transcend and Heartland do an exceptional job with account management. Sten-Tel has the most room for improvement.

Expense. On average, work done offshore is \$0.02 lower than work done onshore (\$0.13 versus \$0.15 per line). Focus and Acusis, which both do a lot of offshore

work, have some of the lowest rates in the industry, averaging \$0.12/line. For good performance at a lower cost, Precyse, TransTech, Encompass, and Transcend provide the best bang for the buck, all scoring an 88 or above and charging \$0.15/line or less.

■ BACK-END SPEECH: ADDING CLIENTS AND INFLUENCE

With patient volumes driving up dictation in this sample, some customers are looking to technology to handle the increase. Use of back-end speech (BES) technology is growing: 45 percent of organizations indicated that their MTSO is doing some BES editing, an increase of 22 percent since the 2008 report.

Nuance, whose products include eScription and Dictaphone, has a strong presence in the BES segment, interacting with approximately two-thirds of both BES customers and MTSOs. Pairing with Nuance is winning business for some MTSOs, such as Encompass and Superior Global, while others, such as MedQuist and Spheris, sometimes lose potential clients because some want to go with Nuance's tool set.

On the other hand, MedQuist, Spheris, CBay, Webmedx, Precyse, and Acusis sometimes win business because their transcription and speech recognition solutions are integrated instead of paired with a third-party vendor. One MedQuist customer related the benefits of implementing the MedQuist speech recognition product: "We used to outsource our transcription to MedQuist,

45

Percent of providers who indicate their MTSO is doing some back-end speech recognition

23%

Percent increase of respondents sending their work offshore from 2008

but we have implemented their voice recognition product. With that implementation, our turnaround time went from an average of 2,300 minutes to an average of 14 minutes, whereas with transcription the physicians were signing and editing reports for 2 or 3 hours a day.”

In addition to growing in the market, BES is becoming a differentiator in MTSO decisions, specifically for partnerships with MTSOs. For those choosing a new MTSO, 18 percent said that a BES partnership caused them to replace an MTSO, and 26 percent said this technology swayed their choice of a new MTSO. For example, one provider reported that their organization switched from MedQuist SR because this MTSO doesn’t work with eScription. This is a huge switch from last year, when not one provider mentioned BES as influencing their decision to choose, stay with, or leave a vendor. In addition, Nuance’s huge market share (75 percent of BES clients in this study) gives this vendor a degree of influence on MTSO selection.

■ **OFFSHORE GROWING, ONSHORE MORE SATISFIED**

An increasing number of providers are sending work offshore. Of the respondents, 43 percent reported offshoring transcription in 2009, up from 35 percent in 2008. Offshoring is attractive for those charged with reducing costs, but is less popular with those who have to deal with the issues of offshoring, such as reduced quality.

While offshore transcription is increasing, the perception of offshoring is getting worse. Of respondents not currently using offshore services, 81 percent have a negative opinion of the practice, up from 77 percent in 2008 and 74 percent in 2007. Many worry that foreign-language-speaking MTs might produce inferior work; some organizations are also apprehensive that sending transcriptions offshore risks the security and privacy of patients. In many cases, these concerns arise from either first- or second-hand experiences.

One provider summed up these concerns with this comment: “We are not interested in using offshore services. Everyone I have talked to that has had offshore transcription eventually reverted back to onshore service because of quality issues. I am concerned with not only the quality, but also the security and confidentiality of those records.” In addition, many providers are loyal to the domestic workforce, preferring to bolster the U.S. rather than a foreign economy. As one provider put it, “I am adamantly opposed to using offshore services. I think we have Americans who need jobs.”

For an increasing number, the cost savings of offshoring outweigh concerns over quality and security. Additionally, almost 20 percent of those who have their work done both onshore and offshore indicated they could not distinguish between the two.

Onshore services get higher marks for quality and TATs, but generally cost more than offshore work. Webmedx, Encompass, TransTech, and Transcend

have the highest percentage of customers who indicate their work is done onshore.

MOVING FORWARD

While EMR adoption and meaningful use are driving providers toward the adoption of clinical systems, technology is having a minimal impact in reducing dictation volumes. The MTSO market is handling more volume than ever, and competition is fierce. Providers are emerging as the winners, with MTSOs stepping up

performance to compete. Will current efforts be sufficient to manage future increases in dictation, or will technology play a bigger role? What will happen to the demand for technology when the opportunity to receive stimulus funds passes? In a market this varied, the future remains unclear. For now the MTSO market continues to be strong, competitive, and adaptive.

Vendor Performance Overviews

Download additional vendor information by clicking on a MTSO name.

| MTSO | Provider Feedback |
|----------------------------|---|
| Acusis | <p>BRAVO: High marks when it comes to TATs and transcription quality. Good job supporting customers. Clients commented on their account managers' attentiveness and quick follow-through. One of the lowest rates per line.</p> <p>OUCH: Scalability has been a challenge. Some clients indicate that Acusis can't take on additional work and get it turned around in a timely fashion. Scores below average when it comes to administrative tools. Should be more open when it comes to speech recognition options.</p> <p>BOTTOM LINE: A smaller player, Acusis struggles to meet the needs of those providers who have spikes in workloads. Acusis falls in the middle of the pack in performance, showing strong marks for TATs and quality but with room for improvement with their administrative tools. With their acquisition of DRC in 2007, Acusis now provides both onshore and offshore work.</p> |
| CBay | <p>BRAVO: Performance has improved over the past year. Clients indicate an increase in customer service and issue resolution. Customers praise their administrative tools.</p> <p>OUCH: Strides in customer service do not seem to be making up for continued struggles with quality. Clients complain that reports slip through the QA process.</p> <p>BOTTOM LINE: While CBay still struggles to meet customer expectations for quality, many clients have complimented strides made in customer service and willingness to respond to issues. One of the larger players, CBay remains a low-cost MTSO.</p> |

Vendor Performance Overviews

Download additional vendor information by clicking on a MTSO name.

| MTSO | Provider Feedback |
|--|---|
| DTS America  | <p>BRAVO: Has replaced several account managers to improve service. Predominantly onshore transcription with high marks for quality. Executives take an active role with their clients.</p> <p>OUCH: Higher than average costs with some complaining that challenges with the tools cause a slow ramp-up. Reports that “stupid” mistakes in terminology, grammar, and diction are being repeated.</p> <p>BOTTOM LINE: While some providers have had challenges coming online, the company has made several changes for the better in account management and customer service. This is a smaller MTSO in this report, but Clients feel that the executives are involved and build solid relationships.</p> |
| Encompass  | <p>BRAVO: Responsive and customer friendly. Great quality and tools make for a smooth process. High quality and solid TATs keep Encompass near the top of the pack for three years running.</p> <p>OUCH: Some complain costs are not competitive. On the smaller side, a good portion of work is done at community hospitals and clinics.</p> <p>BOTTOM LINE: Encompass consistently performs well and is continuing to grow and expand. The president works personally with many clients, who appreciate the personal touch. All their work is done onshore. Larger accounts may be concerned about this vendor’s scalability.</p> |
| Focus  | <p>BRAVO: Significantly improved its scores over the past year, and TATs and account management rate above average. Tied for the lowest costs. Customer service appears to be a renewed focal point.</p> <p>OUCH: Many clients still say that billing and QA need improvement. Quality is still a challenge for some.</p> <p>BOTTOM LINE: Focus is inching its way back to the middle of the pack by zeroing in on the concerns of its clients. This vendor climbed 5 points since last year, but will need to address lingering quality issues to continue to move up. One of the larger MTSOs, Focus is owned by Nuance and appears to be doing more speech recognition editing than any other MTSO.</p> |
| Heartland  | <p>BRAVO: Excellent TAT and personal customer service. Clients are almost universally complimentary of account management.</p> <p>OUCH: Quality issues continue to plague Heartland. Received the second lowest quality score of all MTSOs.</p> <p>BOTTOM LINE: A mid-sized vendor, Heartland does a lot of offshore work and provides great TAT. Quality has been an issue, but Heartland strives to resolve problems and provide a positive customer experience. Most of their clients have fewer than 200 beds.</p> |






Vendor Performance Overviews

Download additional vendor information by clicking on a MTSO name.

| MTSO | Provider Feedback |
|--|--|
| <p>MedQuist</p>  | <p>BRAVO: Scores increased 5 points since 2008 and 10 over the last four years. Clients noted an increased focus on resolving issues.</p> <p>OUCH: Most replaced MTSO, with 33 percent of those interviewed who switched, moving from MedQuist to another vendor. Quality is a challenge for some, who complain of repeat mistakes.</p> <p>BOTTOM LINE: MedQuist is the largest MTSO in the world. A soup-to-nuts vendor, they offer voice capture, speech, and transcription solutions. Meeting customer’s quality expectations has been a challenge for MedQuist. They have been making improvements to their operations and customer service, such as in account management, and their performance has increased significantly over the past year.</p> |
| <p>Precyse Solutions</p>  | <p>BRAVO: Gets a gold star when it comes to TAT, quality, account management, and tools. Over two thirds of its customers indicate Precyse is the best MTSO they have used.</p> <p>OUCH: Struggled with managing the development and implementation of its speech technology. Some complain about reports generated from speech recognition software.</p> <p>BOTTOM LINE: In a virtual tie for first, this mid-sized player receives high marks for both onshore and offshore services. The overwhelming majority of clients say positive things about Precyse’s staff, with some calling the vendor’s account management “perfect.” Some feel Precyse needs to iron out some kinks with the implementation of its speech tools.</p> |
| <p>Spheris</p>  | <p>BRAVO: This large MTSO can handle high volumes and can get reports turned around in an efficient manner. Praised for prompt and attentive service, which has improved.</p> <p>OUCH: Scores continue to drop, landing them in last place. Complaints about challenges with the Clarity platform and a lag in getting technical issues resolved. Costs more than the average MTSO.</p> <p>BOTTOM LINE: Receives praise from many clients for quick turnaround times. Spheris continues to struggle with quality and technology, dropping 2 points in the past year. Spheris has made some leadership and organizational changes to address these issues.</p> |
| <p>SPi</p>  | <p>BRAVO: Some clients say that customer service has improved significantly over the past year. Providers gave SPi’s TAT and staff their highest marks compared to their other scores.</p> <p>OUCH: Scores continue to drop, landing them in second-to-last place. Lowest offshore rating of all MTSOs, plus the lowest percent of positive commentary. Quality is a challenge as are technical issues and system downtime.</p> <p>BOTTOM LINE: Performance has fallen almost 8 points in the last three years. While this mid-sized vendor works to improve its TAT and account management, many providers are not yet completely comfortable with the changes. Executives are reaching out to clients to try and resolve issues.</p> |

Vendor Performance Overviews

Download additional vendor information by clicking on a MTSO name.

| MTSO | Provider Feedback |
|--|---|
| Sten-Tel  | <p>BRAVO: With the majority of work completed offshore, Sten-Tel's services have lower-than-average costs. Customers describe them as flexible.</p> <p>OUCH: Lowest marks of all vendors in a number of areas, mainly around quality. Low marks for administrative tools; for some, these problems negatively impacted quality.</p> <p>BOTTOM LINE: A smaller, low-cost provider, Sten-Tel has been grappling with issues, which appear to have distracted them from delivering high-quality transcription. These issues include TAT, quality, and account management. Since 2007, Sten-Tel's scores have dropped about 9 points.</p> |
| Superior Global  | <p>BRAVO: Ample layers of support. Praised for account management down to its IT staff. Customer centric, scheduling regular calls with clients and works to resolve issues. One of the less expensive MTSOs.</p> <p>OUCH: Performed below average in all service areas, such as TAT and quality. Had the second-lowest rating in offshore work.</p> <p>BOTTOM LINE: This mid-sized company's layered service model has sparked kudos from providers. Superior Global has low costs, does a lot of editing work, and has partnerships with several speech-recognition vendors; however, their scores have dropped noticeably over the past year.</p> |
| Transcend  | <p>BRAVO: One of the larger MTSOs, they remain a consistent player. Solid TAT and quality with exceptional customer service at a reasonable cost. Executives praised as responsive and willing to personalize service.</p> <p>OUCH: Dropped from first to fifth place due to new entrants and their performance level remaining the same while others improved and surpassed them.</p> <p>BOTTOM LINE: Transcend is one of the few large transcription companies delivering consistently solid performance for a sizeable client base. The company's drop from first to fifth in one year illustrates that they must continually improve to remain at the top.</p> |
| TransTech  | <p>BRAVO: With a very engaged executive team, overall score increased 7 points since 2008. Best in issue resolution, account management, and tools, and tied for highest-scoring TAT.</p> <p>OUCH: Some expressed challenges with generating or unlocking reports.</p> <p>BOTTOM LINE: TransTech appears to be a player on the rise. One of the smaller MTSOs, the vendor provides a personal touch and quickly addresses customer issues. TransTech has the highest ratings for TAT, account management, and administrative tools.</p> |
| Webmedx  | <p>BRAVO: Takes first place with the highest score ever in a KLAS MTSO report. Best in quality and tied for first in TAT. Praised for its Web tools and customer-oriented approach.</p> <p>OUCH: Some are openly dissatisfied with yearly cost increases.</p> <p>BOTTOM LINE: A mid- to large-sized MTSO, Webmedx has landed in first place from their willingness to accommodate customers. While some have complained about Webmedx's costs, others claim the vendor is a competitive, cost-effective provider that delivers outstanding service. All Webmedx's work is done domestically.</p> |

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KLAS data and reports represent the combined opinions of actual people from provider organizations comparing how their vendors, products, and/or services performed when measured against participants' objectives and expectations. KLAS findings are a unique compilation of candid opinions and are real measurements representing those individuals interviewed. The findings presented are not meant to be conclusive data for an entire client base. Significant variables including organization/hospital type (rural, teaching, specialty, etc.), organization size, depth/breadth of software use, software version, role in the organization, provider objectives, and system infrastructure/network impact participants' opinions, precluding an exact apples-to-apples vendor/product comparison or a finely tuned statistical analysis.

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OUR MISSION:

KLAS' mission is to improve the delivery of healthcare technology by independently measuring and reporting on vendor performance.



MTSO Briefs





▪ Acusis

Figure 6: Acusis: Size of Provider Facilities (n=18)

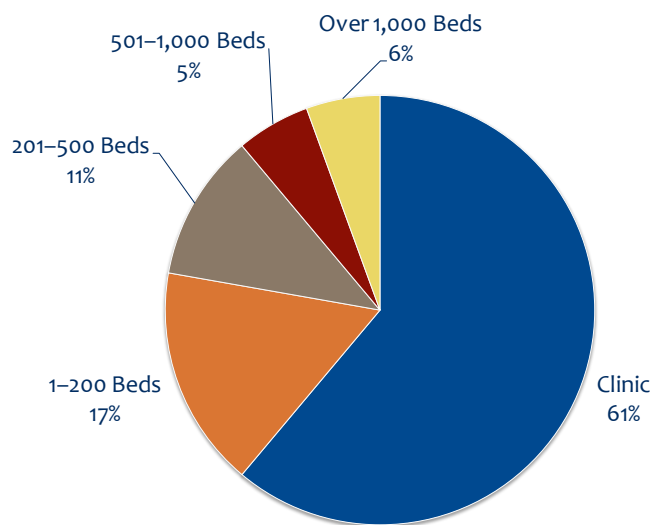


Figure 7: Acusis: Score Frequency

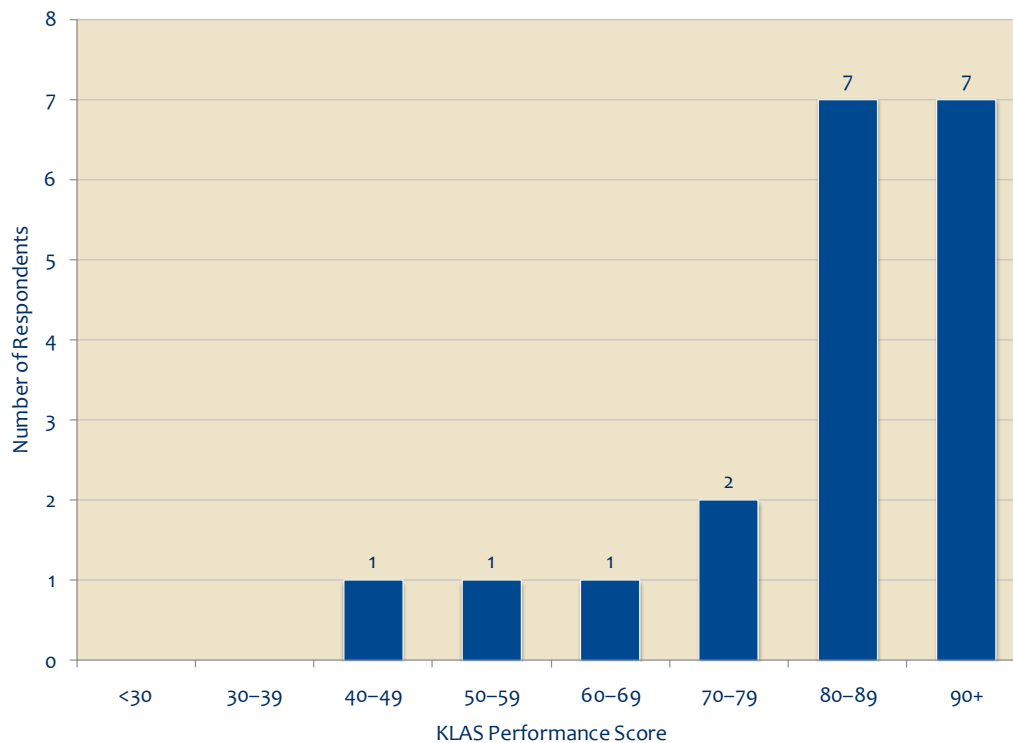


Figure 8: Acusis: Percentage of Positive Commentary

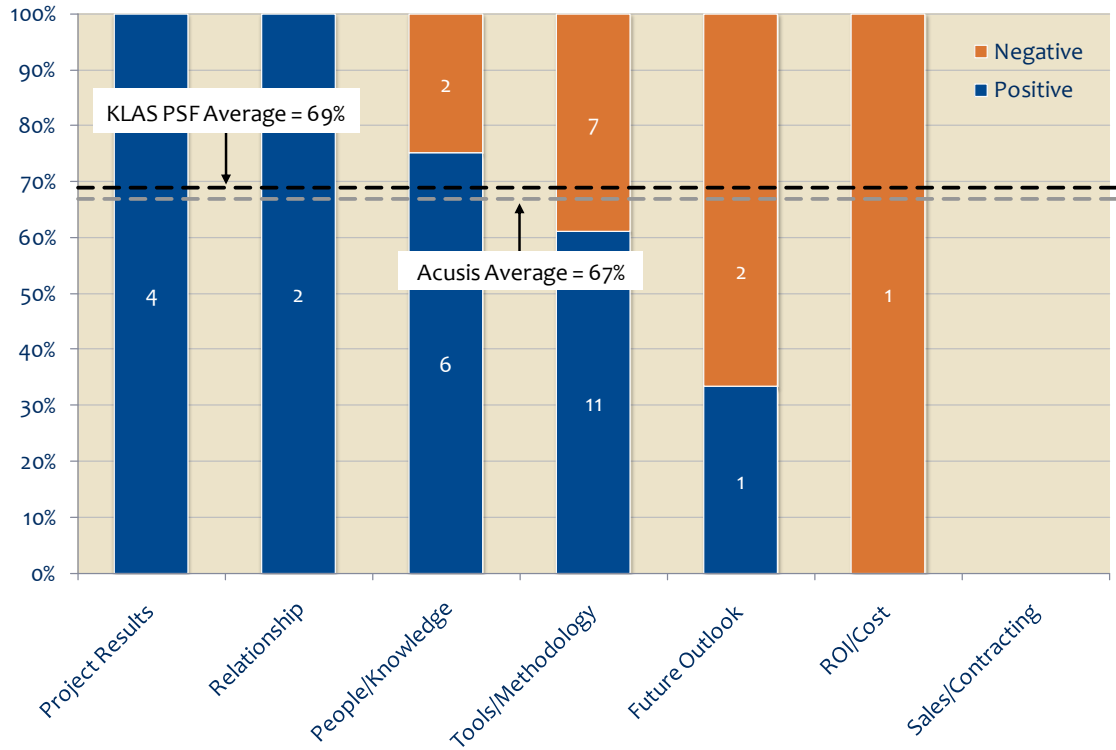


Figure 9: Acusis: Report Turnaround Time and Report Quality Service Ratings Trend

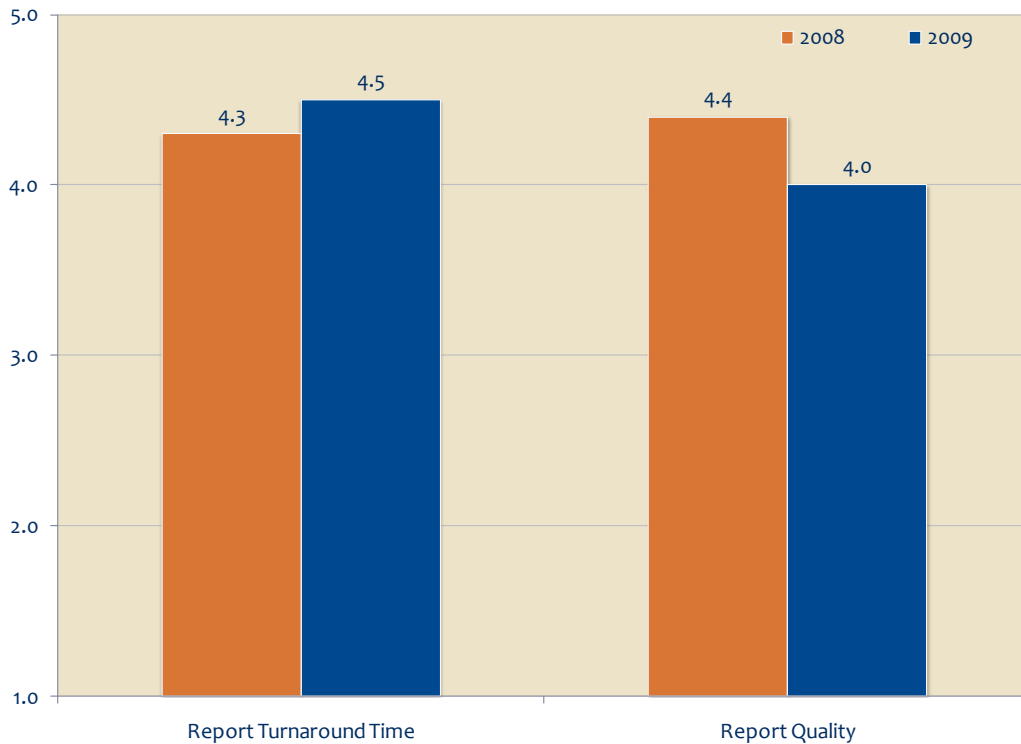


Figure 10: Acusis: Total Transcription Volume Outsourced (n=16)

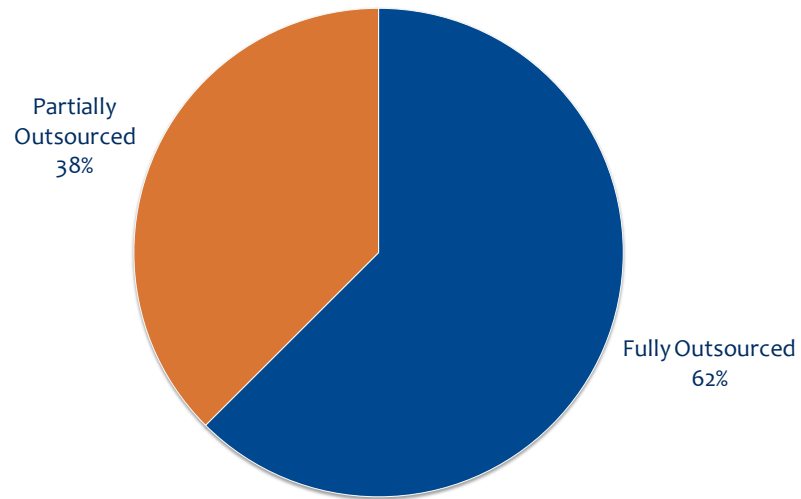


Figure 11: Acusis: Service Ratings (n=17)

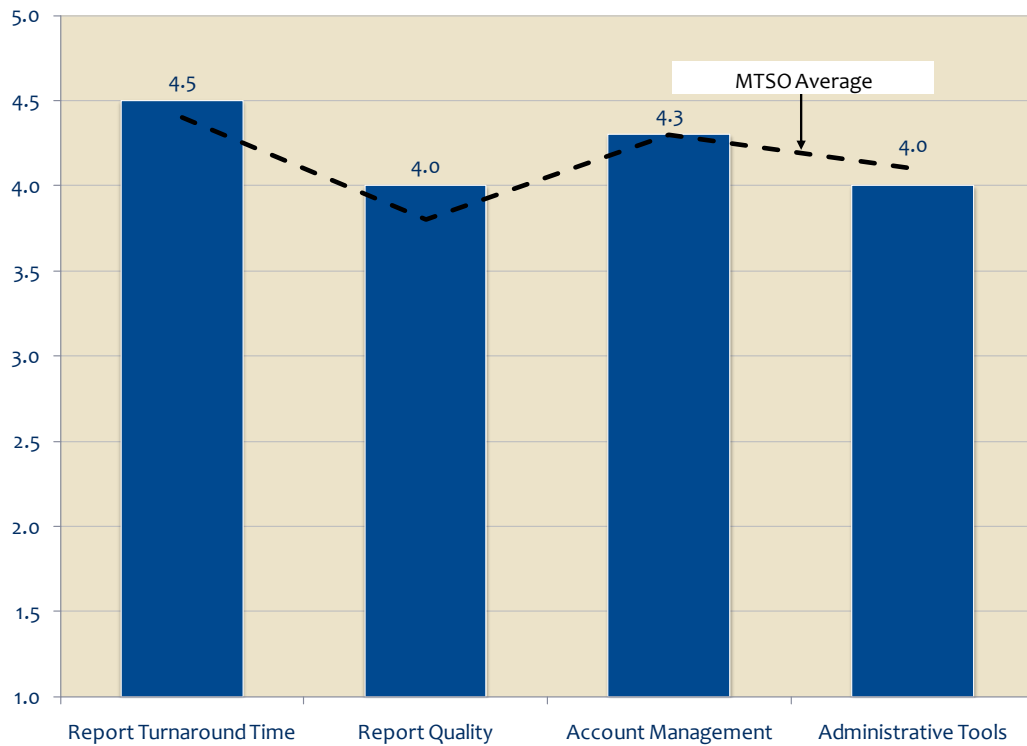


Figure 12: Acusis: Onshore vs. Offshore Ratings Trend

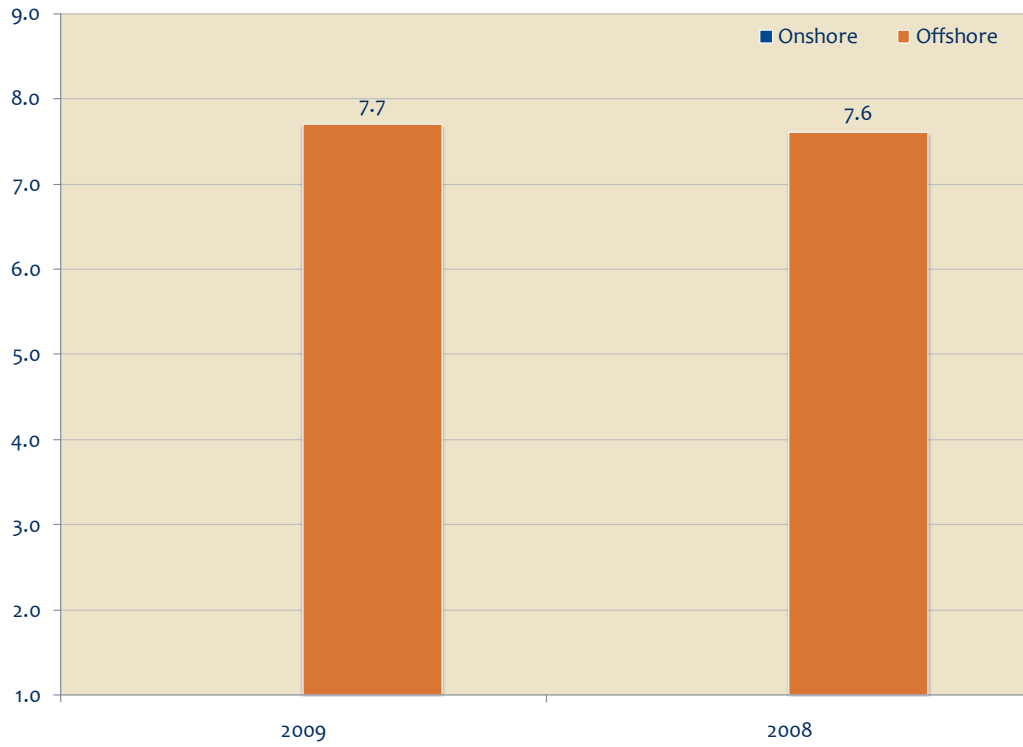
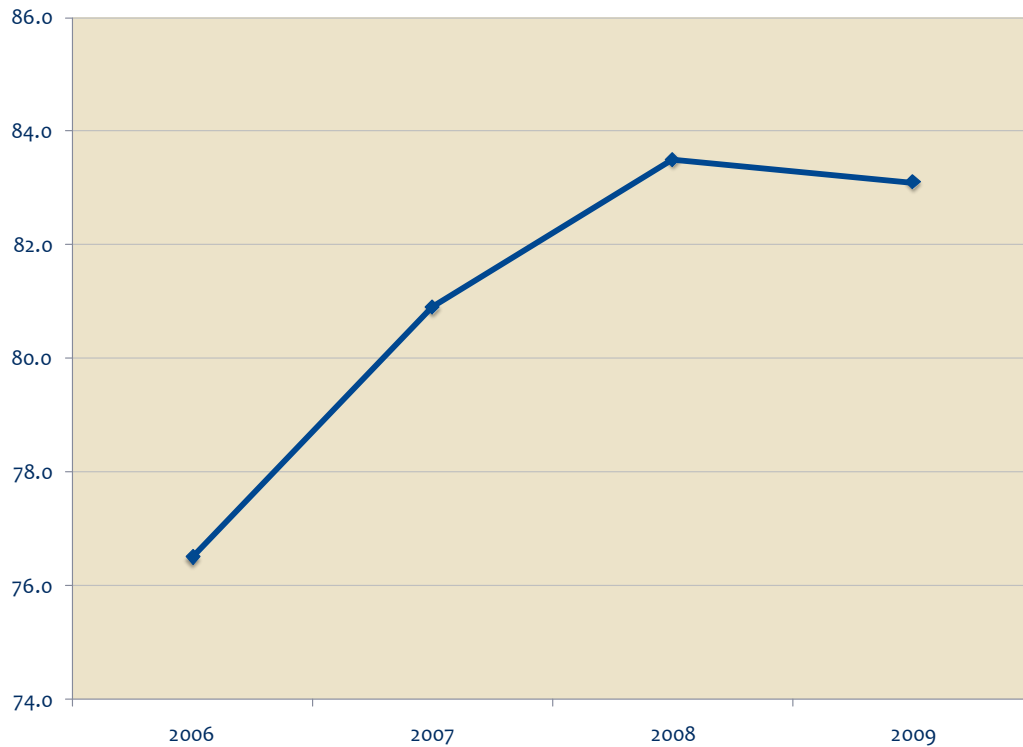


Figure 13: Acusis: Overall Score Trend





▪ **CBAY SYSTEMS LTD.**

Figure 14: CBay: Size of Provider Facilities (n=22)

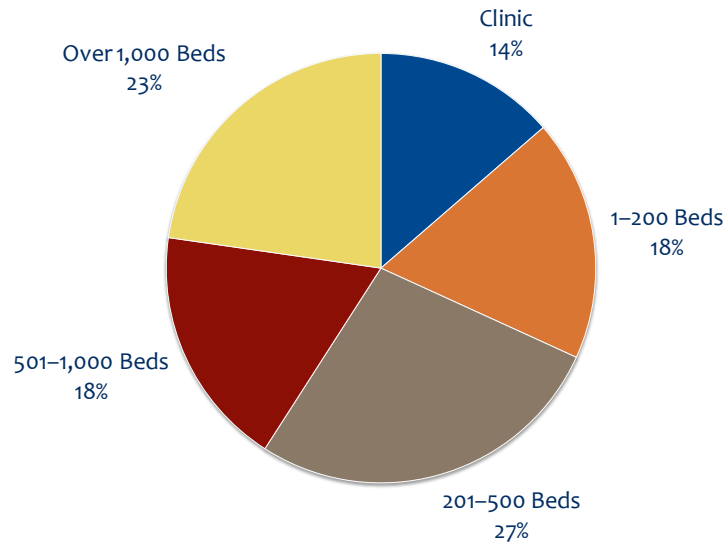


Figure 15: CBay: Score Frequency

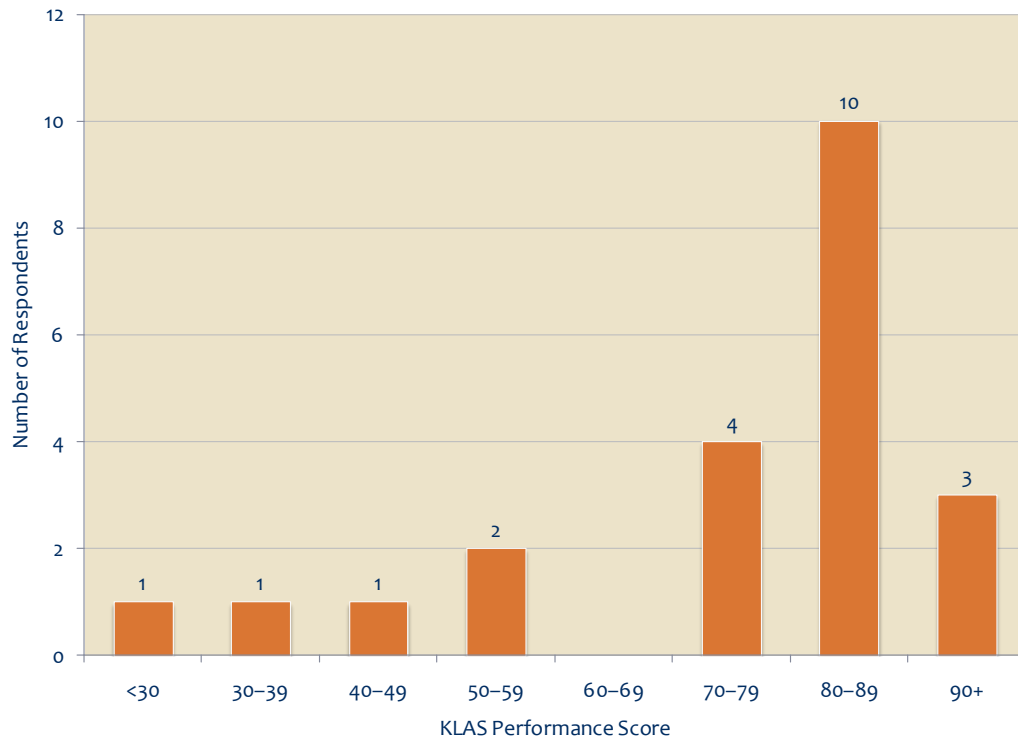


Figure 16: CBay: Percentage of Positive Commentary

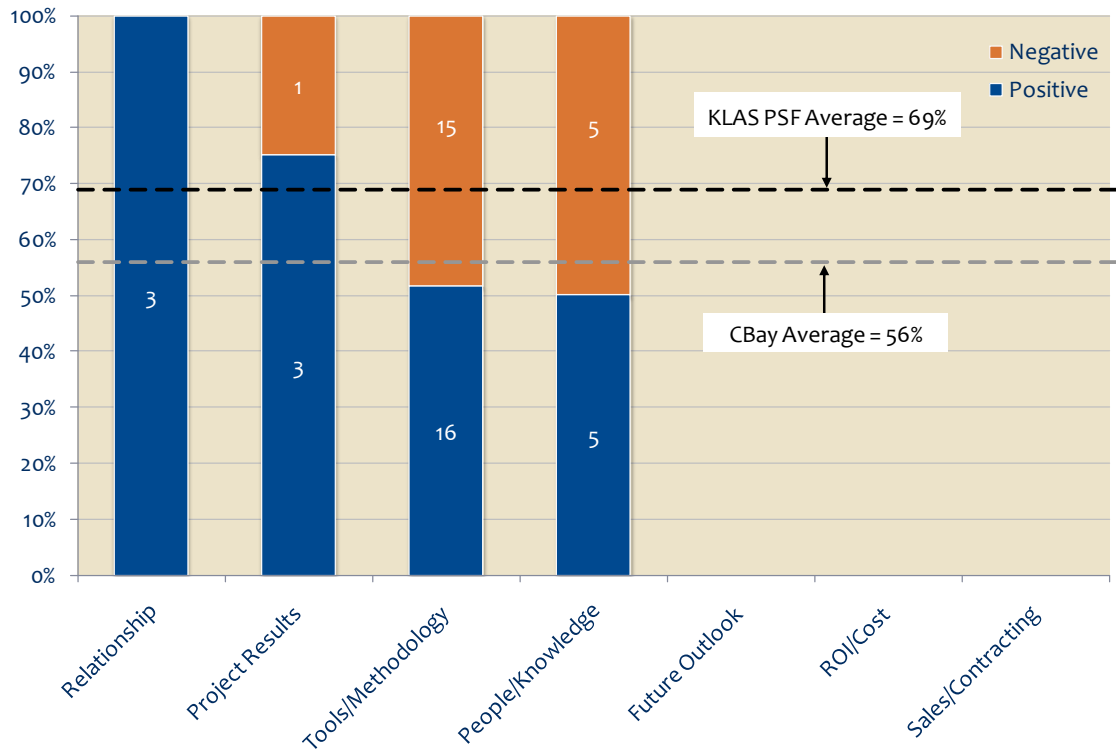


Figure 17: CBay: Report Turnaround Time and Report Quality Service Ratings Trend

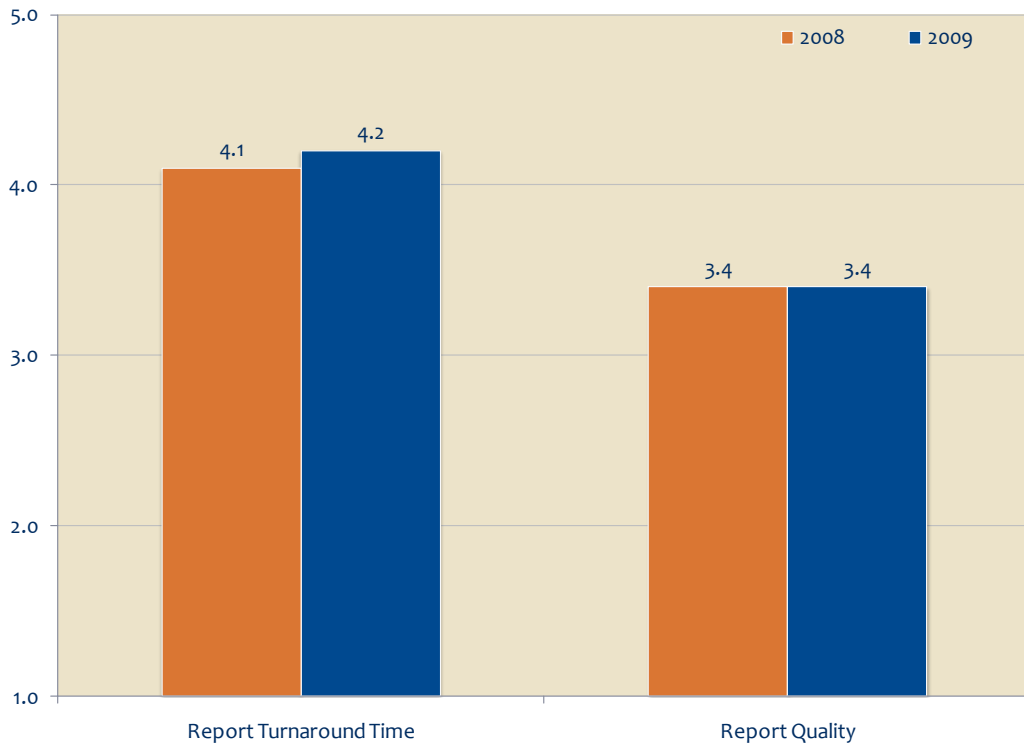


Figure 18: CBay: Total Transcription Volume Outsourced (n=17)

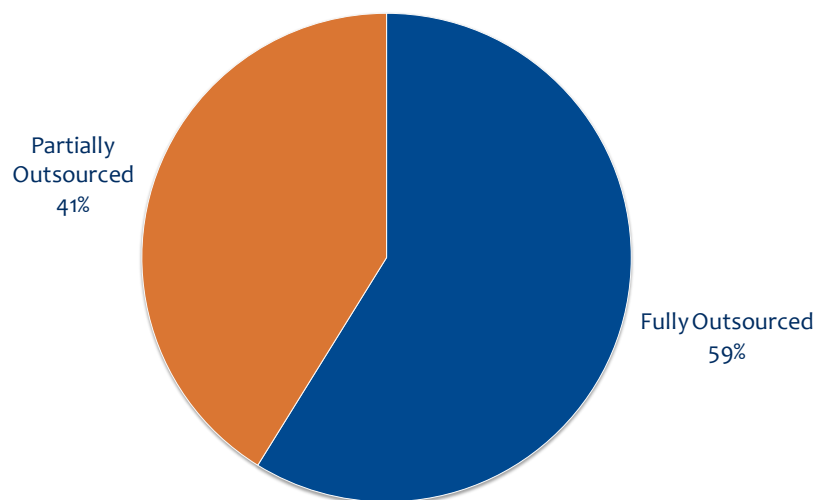


Figure 19: CBay: Service Ratings (n=18)

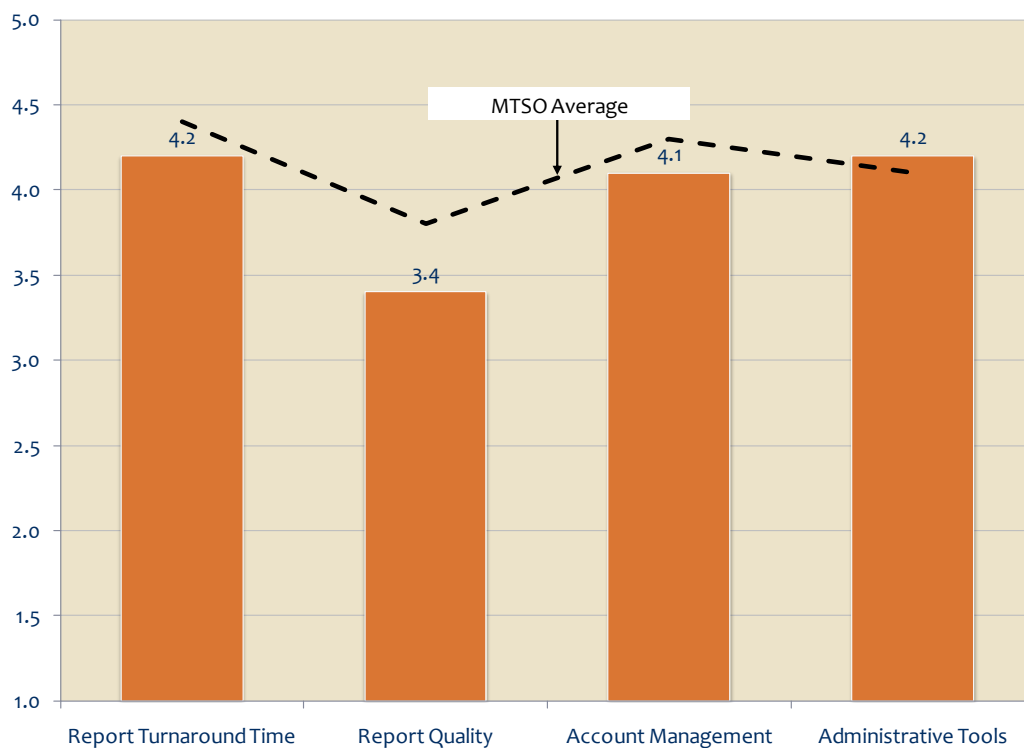
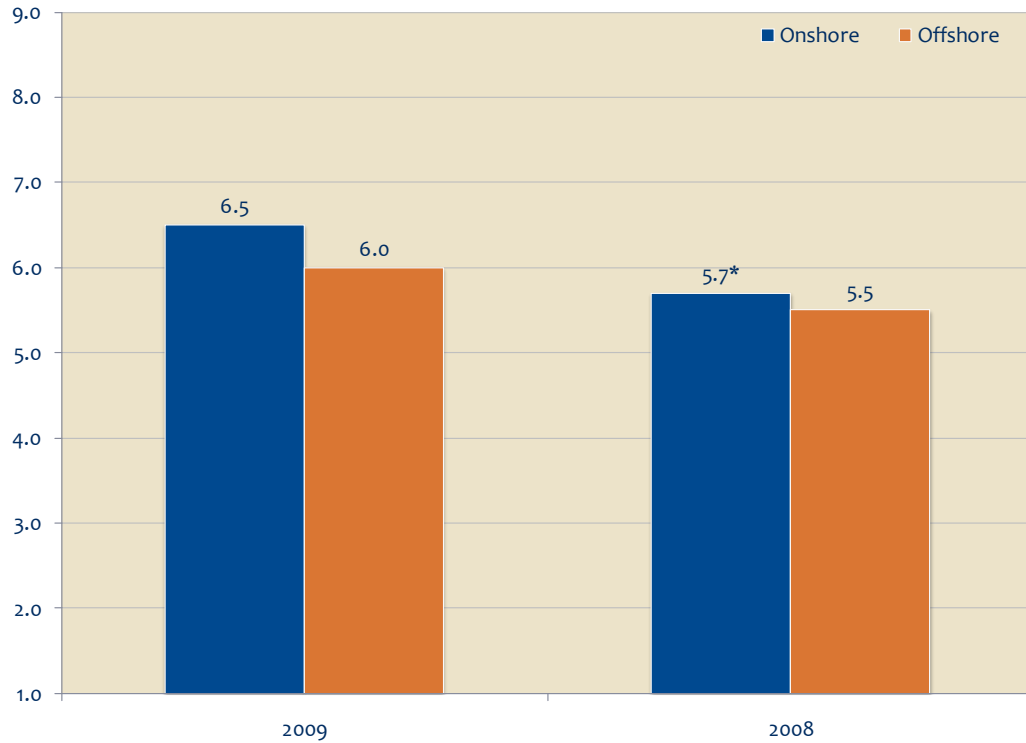
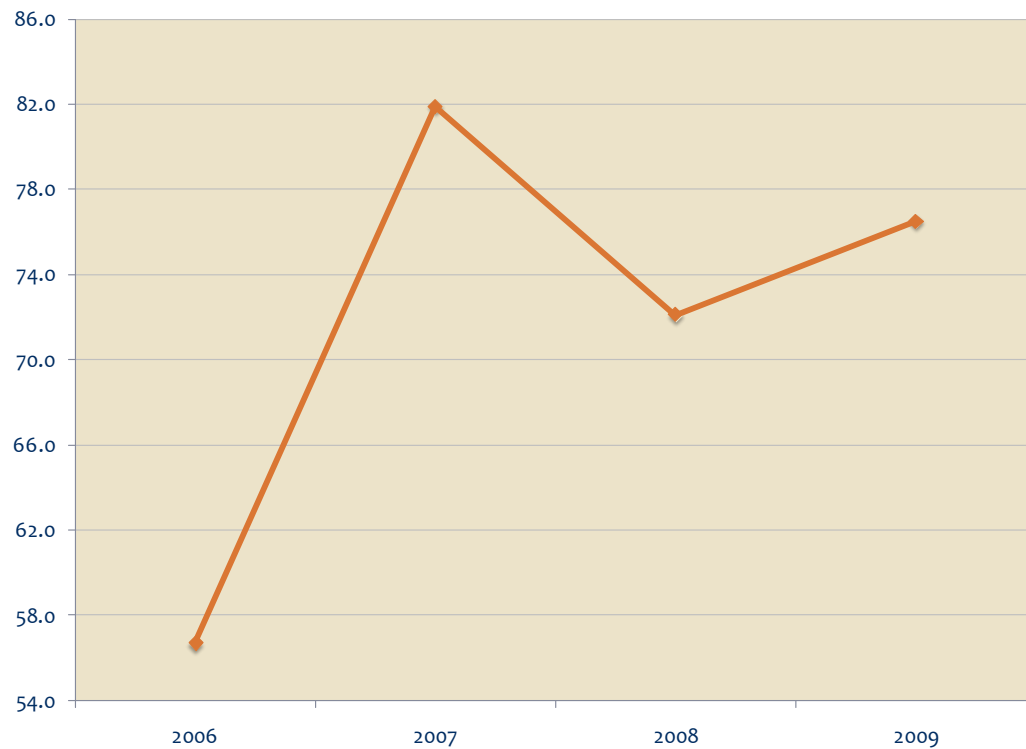


Figure 20: CBay: Onshore vs. Offshore Ratings Trend



* Indicates between three and five respondents.

Figure 21: CBay: Overall Score Trend





▪ **DTS AMERICA**

Figure 22: DTS America: Size of Provider Facilities (n=21)

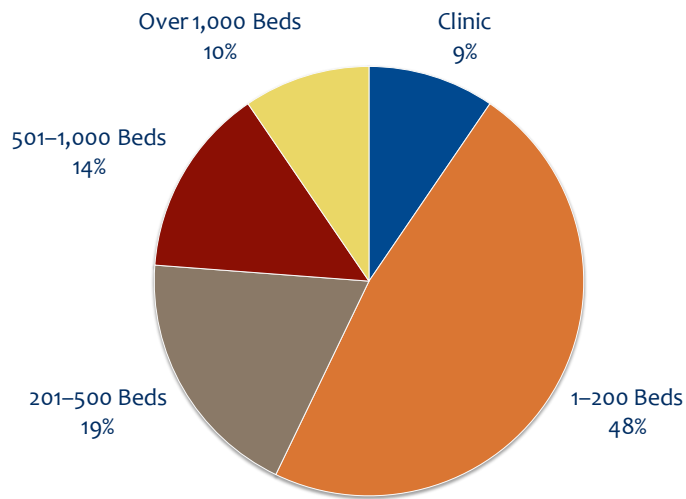


Figure 23: DTS America: Score Frequency

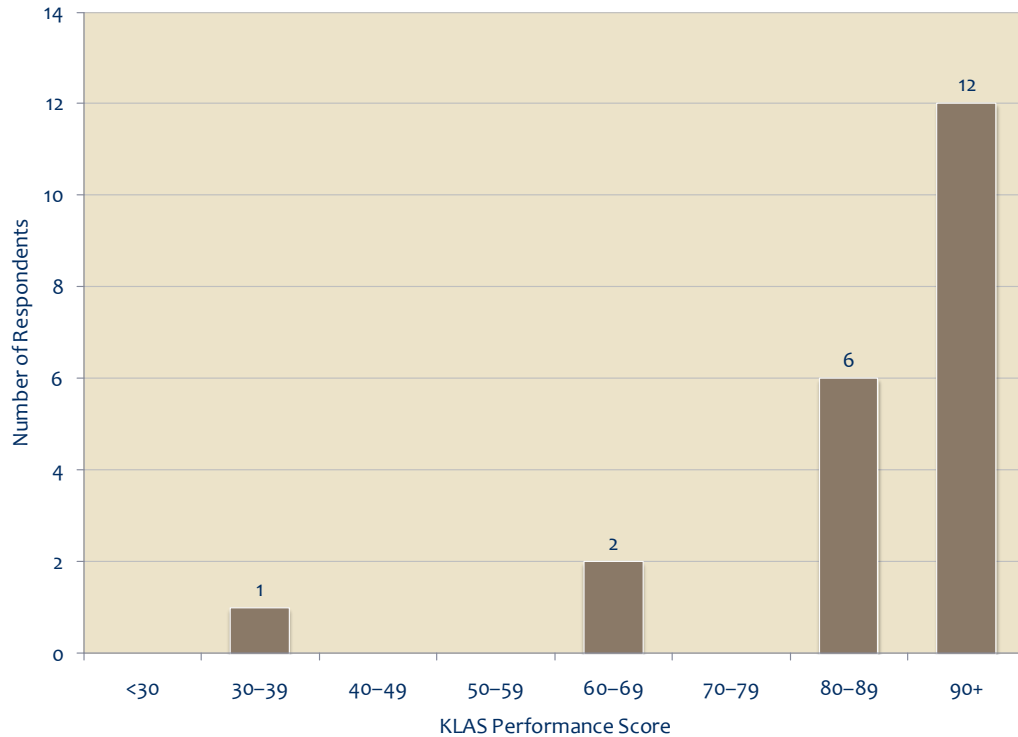


Figure 24: DTS America: Percentage of Positive Commentary

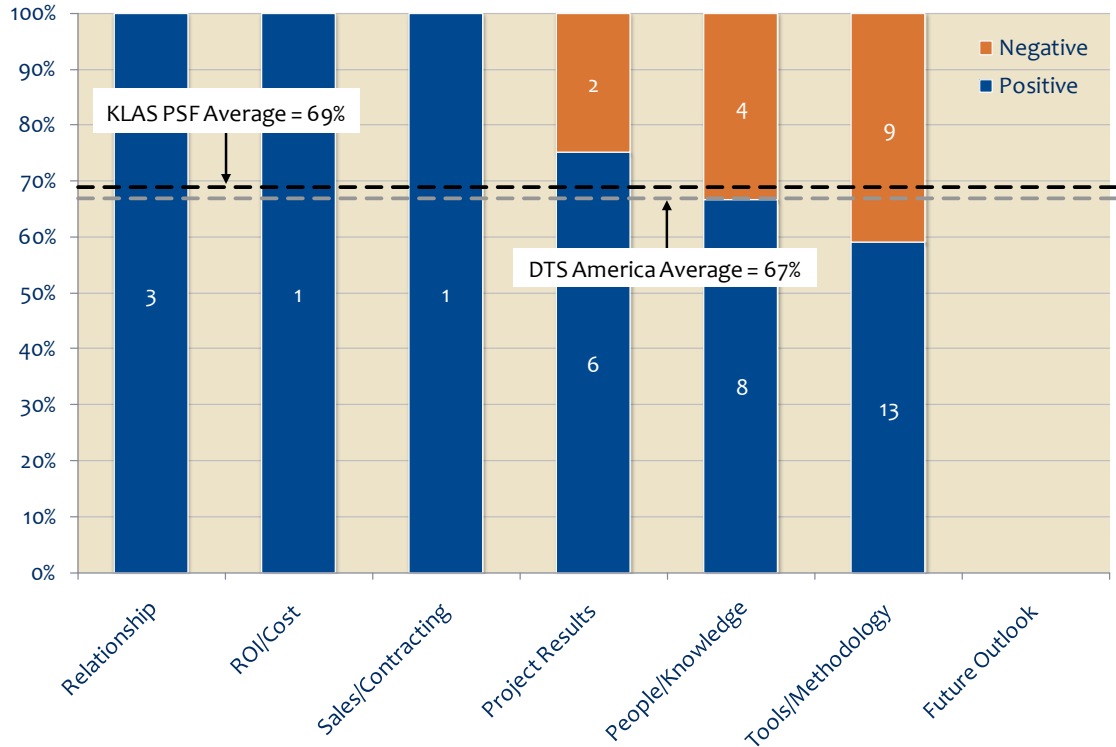


Figure 25: DTS America: Report Turnaround Time and Report Quality Service Ratings Trend

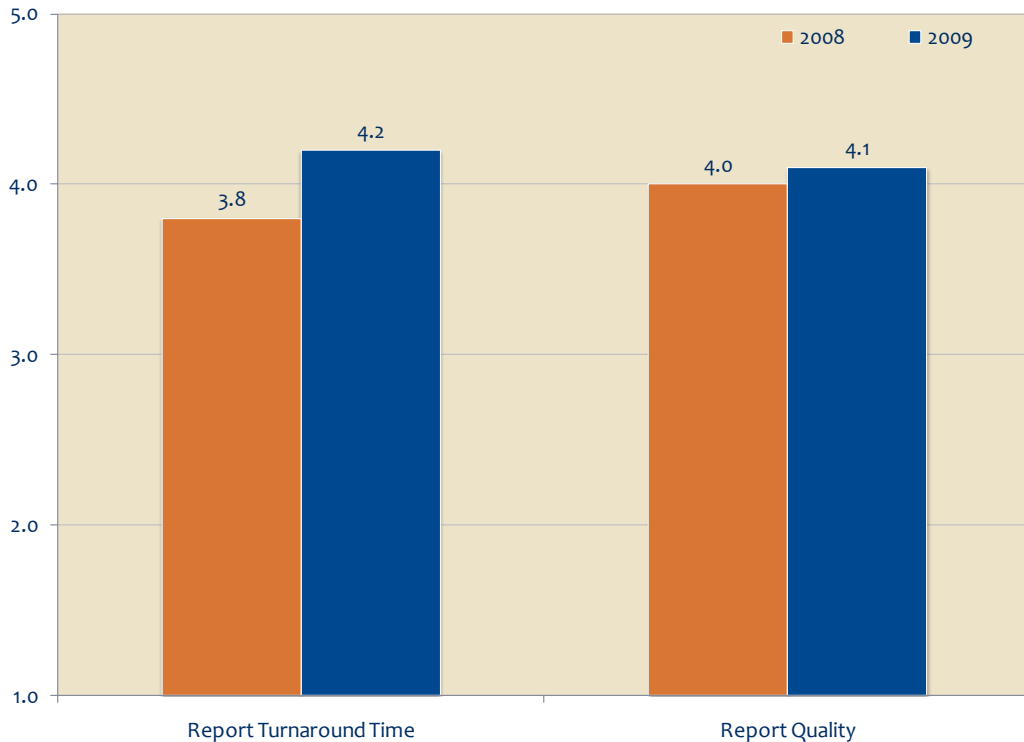


Figure 26: DTS America: Total Transcription Volume Outsourced (n=16)

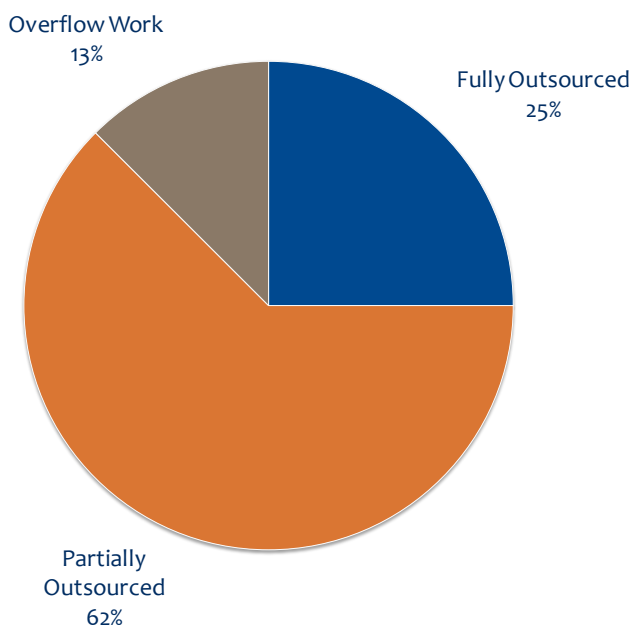


Figure 27: DTS America: Service Ratings (n=16)

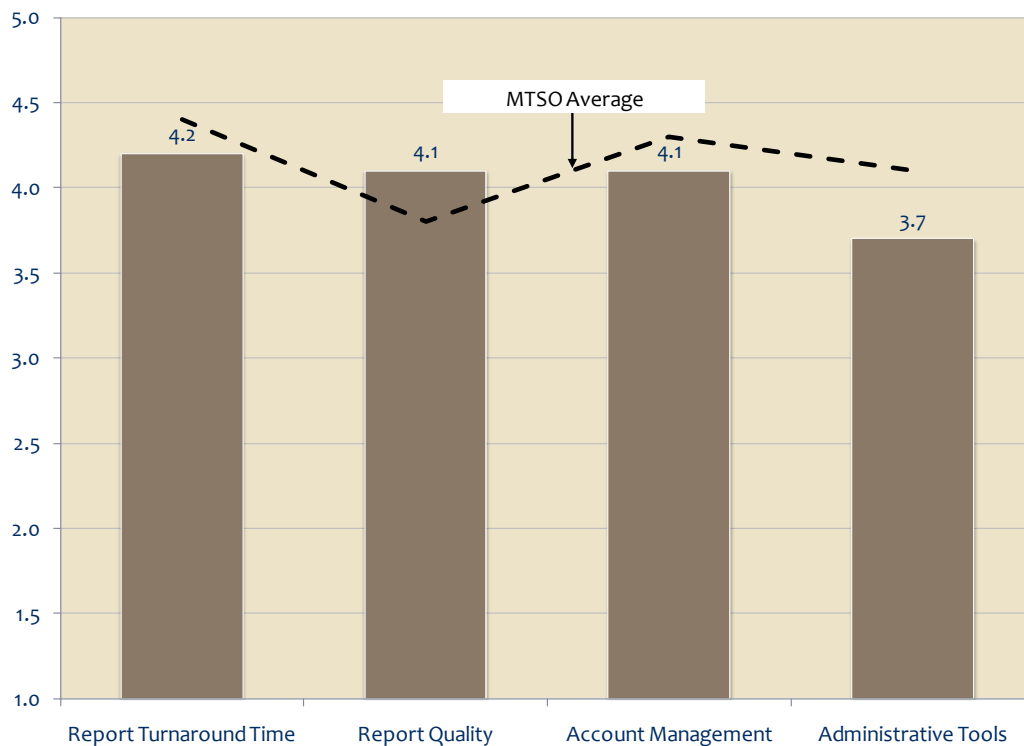
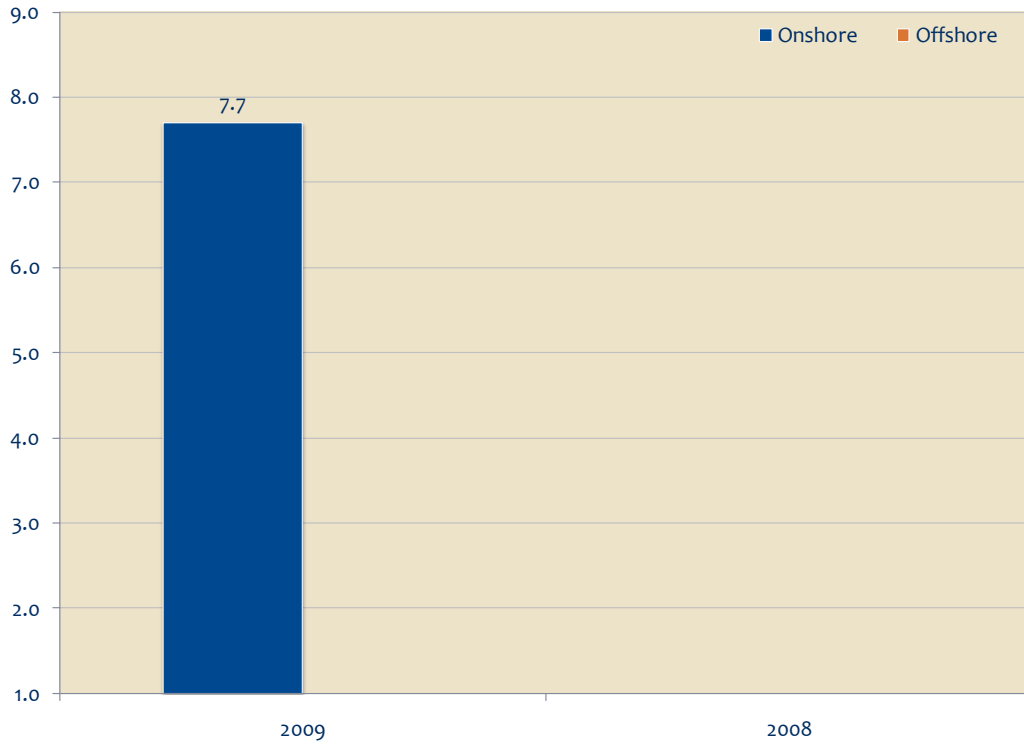
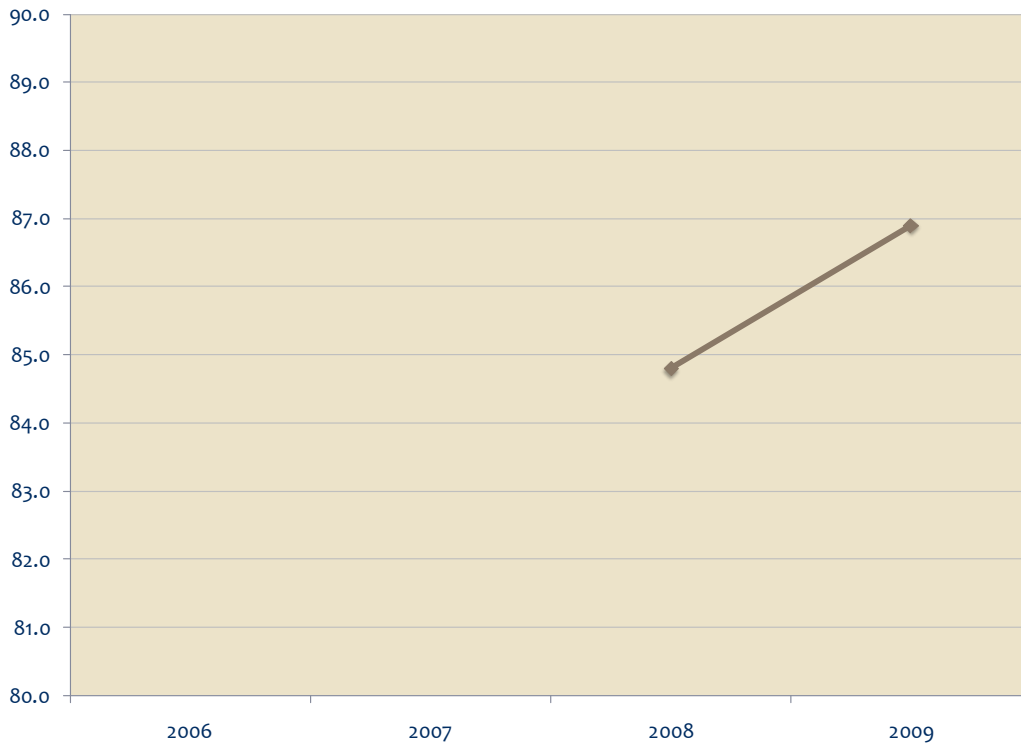


Figure 28: DTS America: Onshore vs. Offshore Ratings Trend



Note: No data is shown for any area with less than three respondents.

Figure 29: DTS America: Overall Score Trend





▪ ENCOMPASS

Figure 30: Encompass: Size of Provider Facilities (n=27)

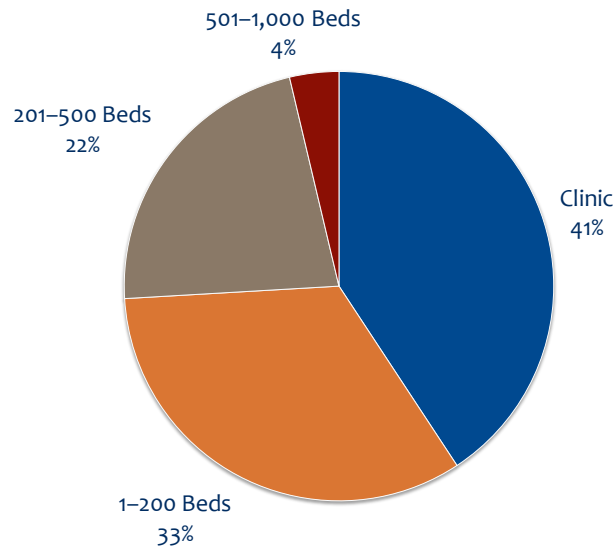


Figure 31: Encompass: Score Frequency

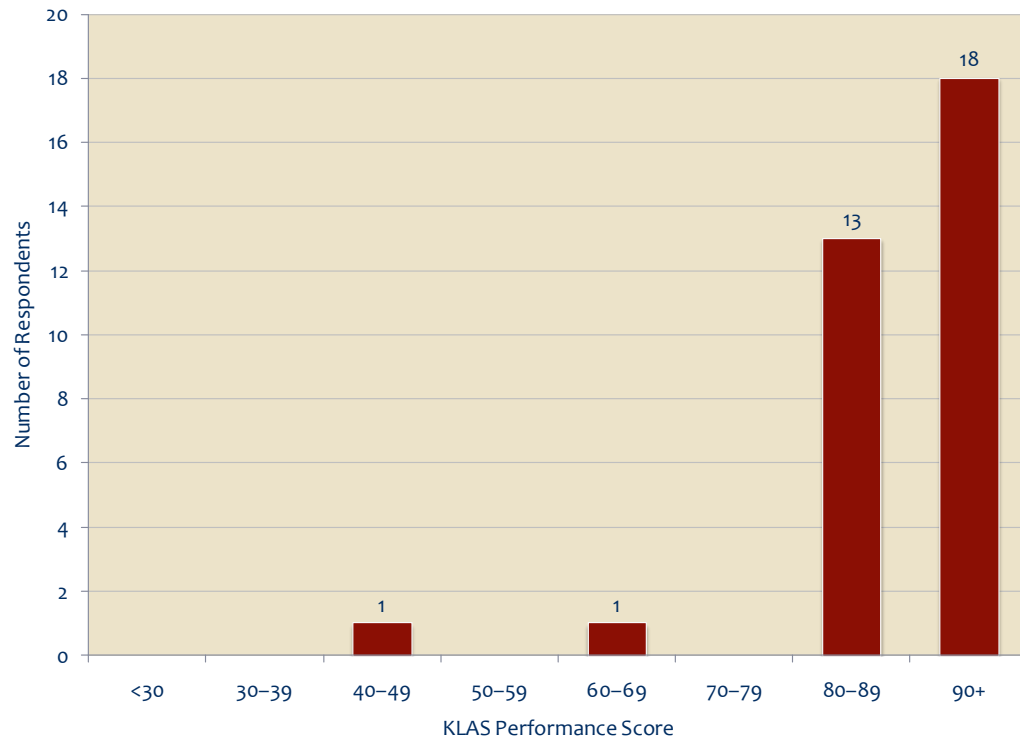


Figure 32: Encompass: Percentage of Positive Commentary

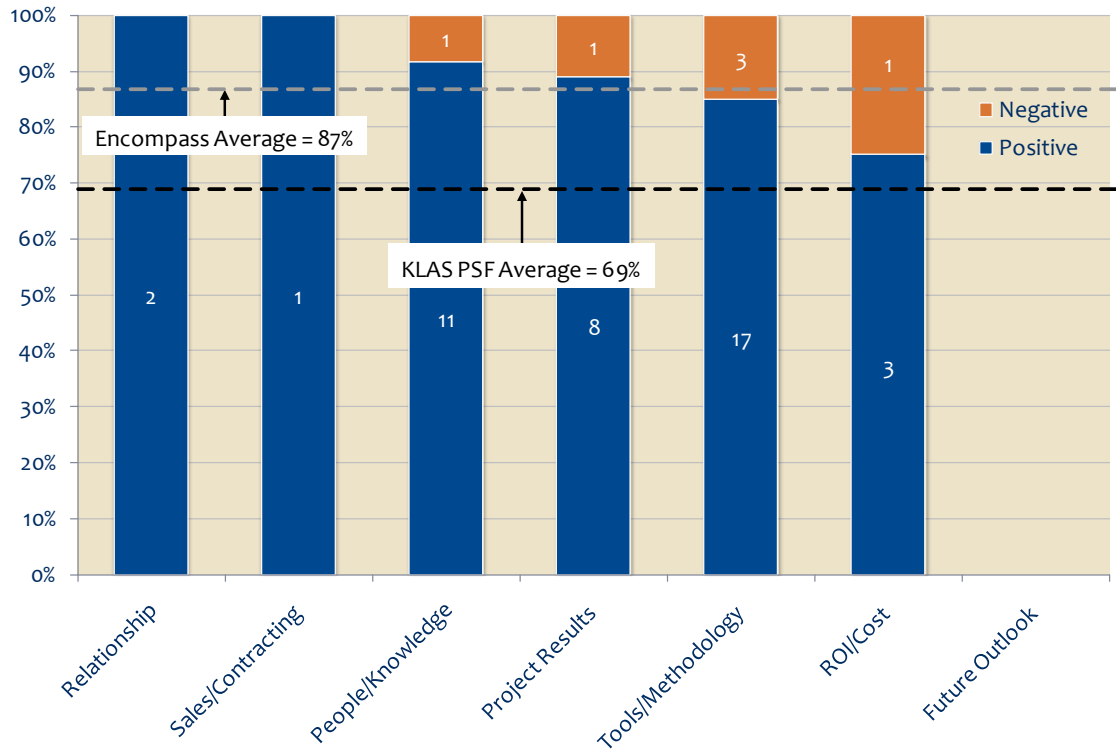


Figure 33: Encompass: Report Turnaround Time and Report Quality Service Ratings Trend

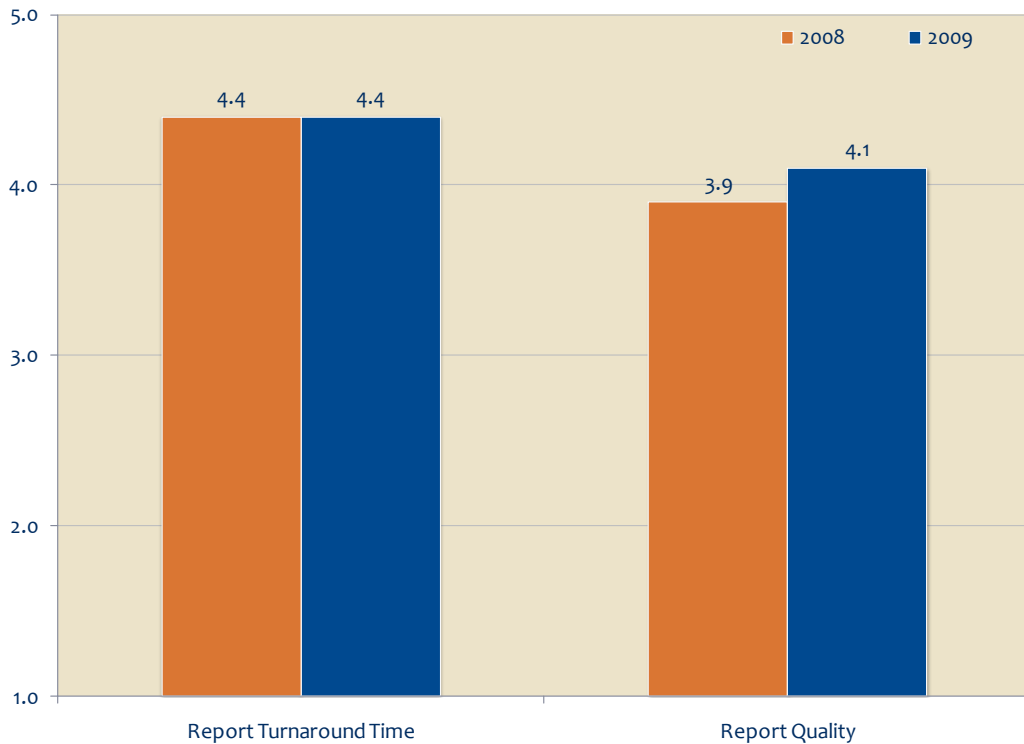


Figure 34: Encompass: Total Transcription Volume Outsourced (n=16)

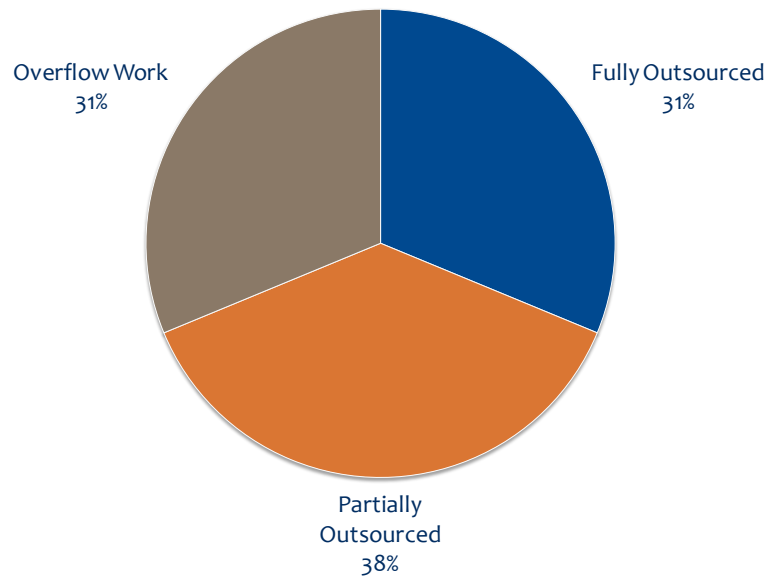


Figure 35: Encompass: Service Ratings (n=16)

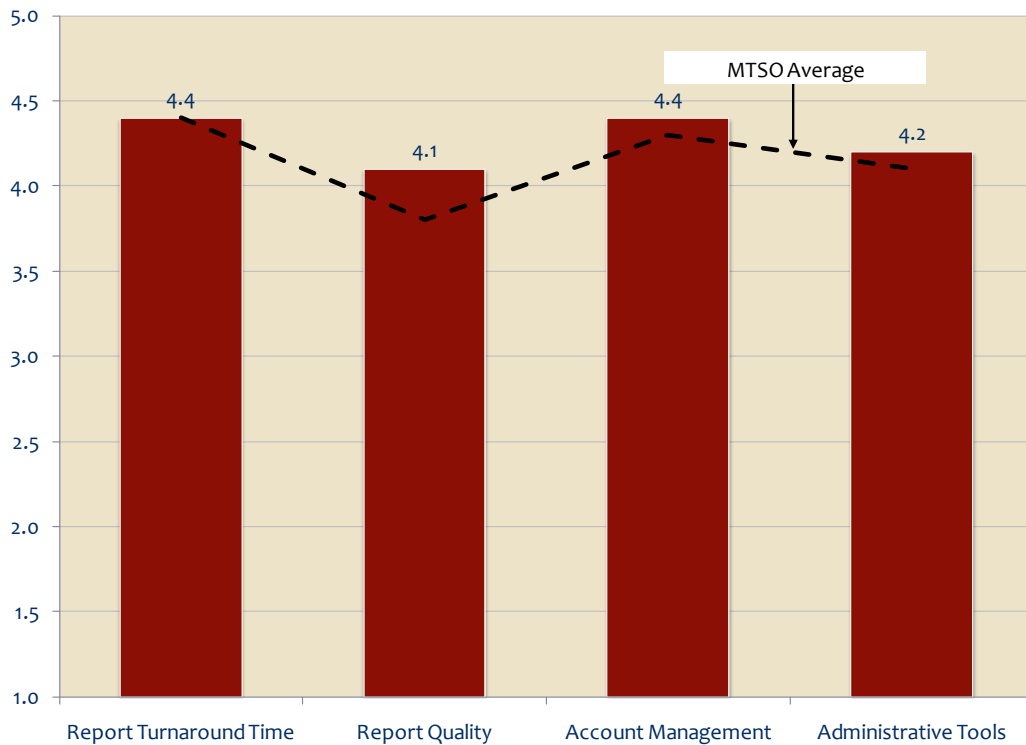
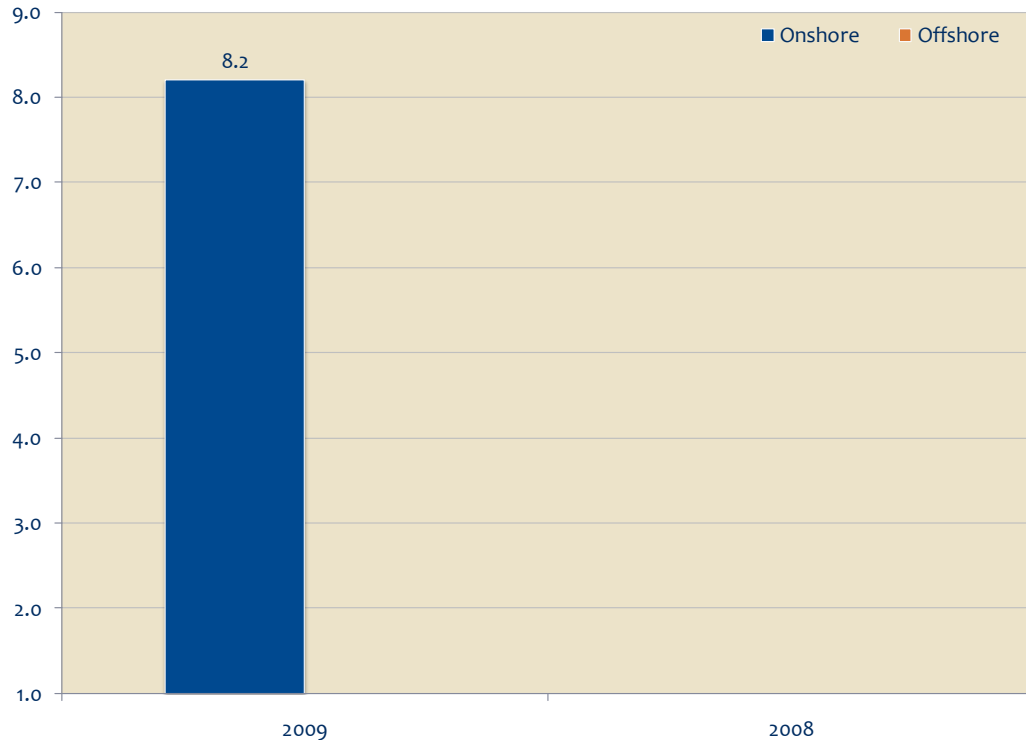
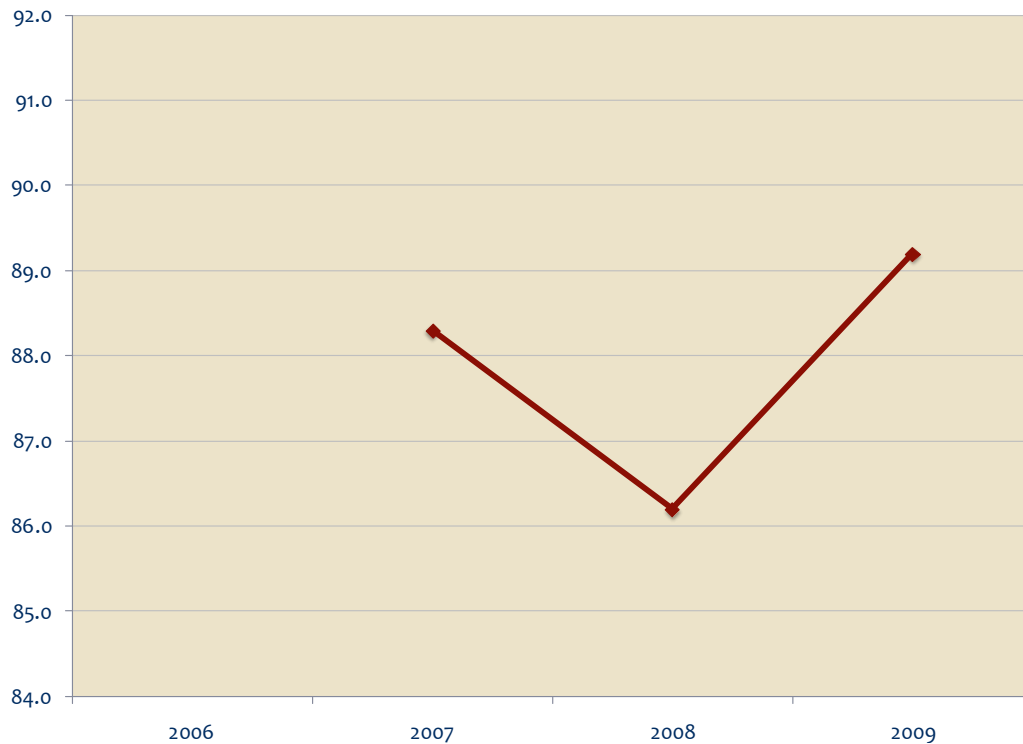


Figure 36: Encompass: Onshore vs. Offshore Ratings Trend



Note: No data is shown for any area with less than three respondents.

Figure 37: Encompass: Overall Score Trend





▪ FOCUS INFOMATICS INC.

Figure 38: Focus: Size of Provider Facilities (n=37)

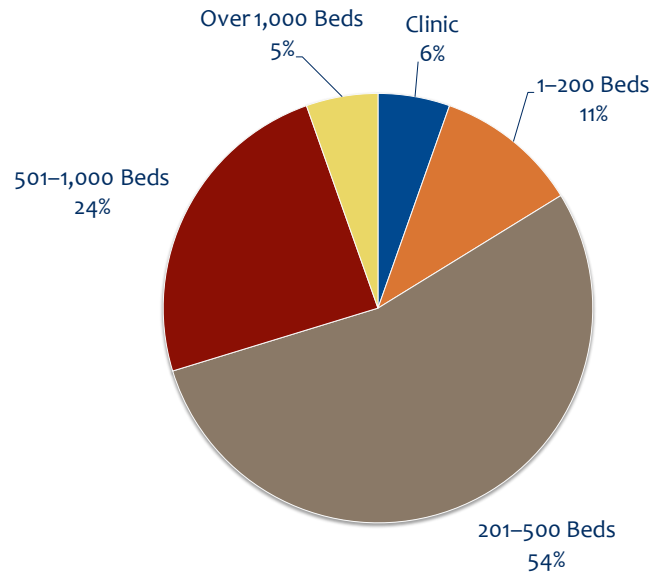


Figure 39: Focus: Score Frequency

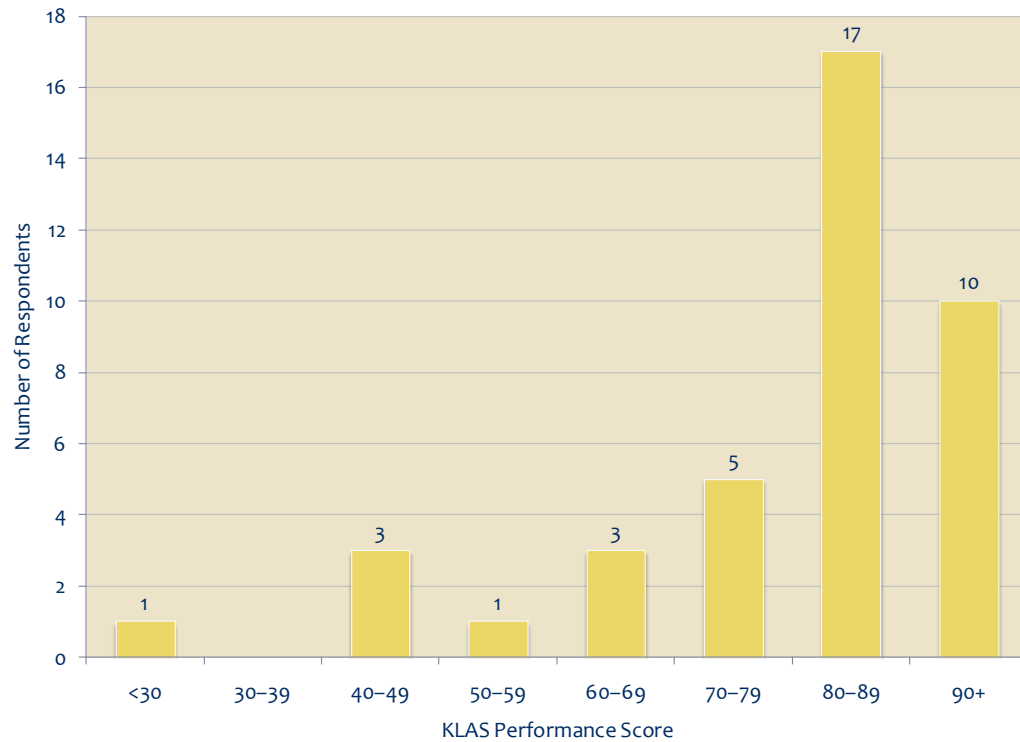


Figure 40: Focus: Percentage of Positive Commentary

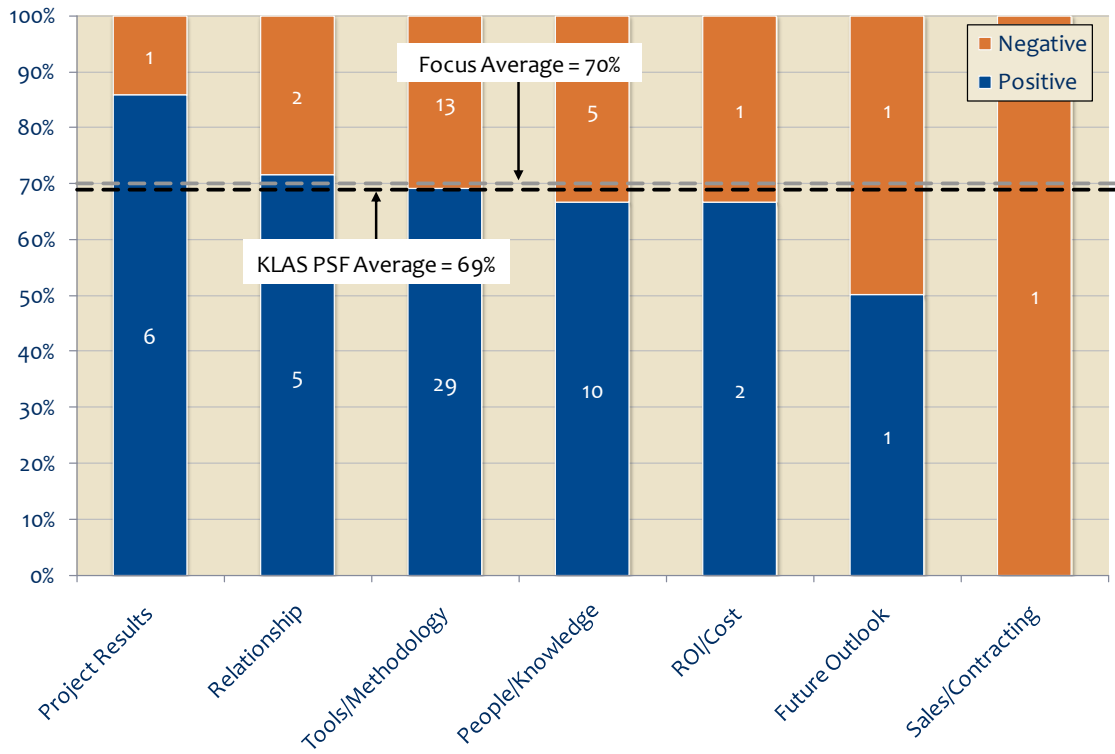


Figure 41: Focus: Report Turnaround Time and Report Quality Service Ratings Trend

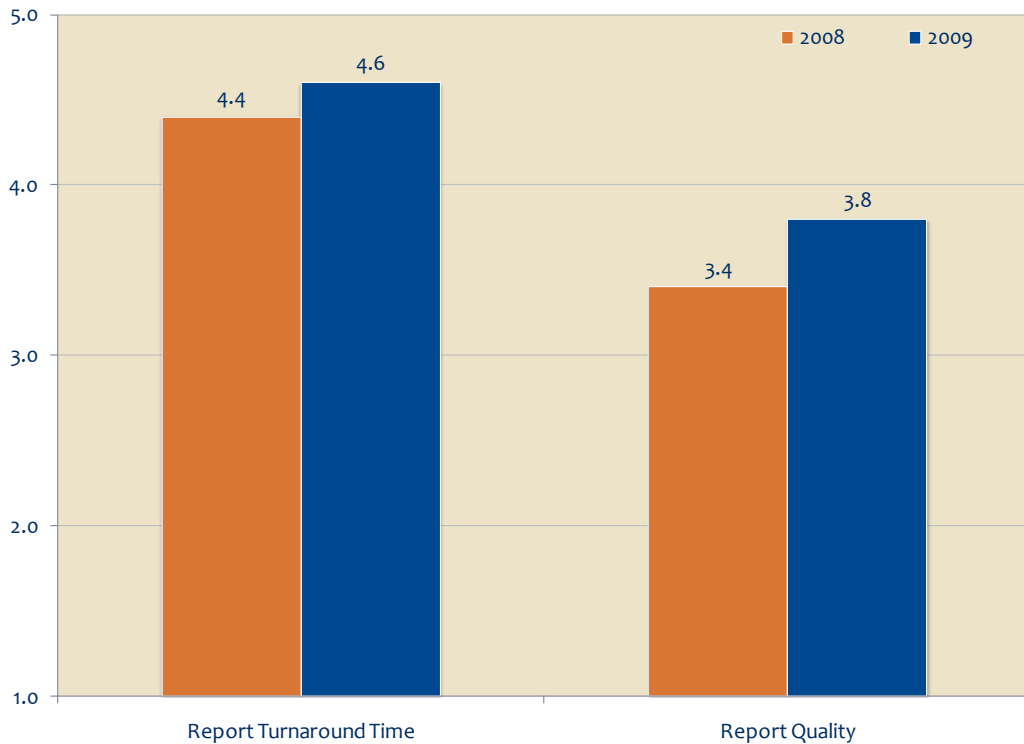


Figure 42: Focus: Total Transcription Volume Outsourced (n=24)

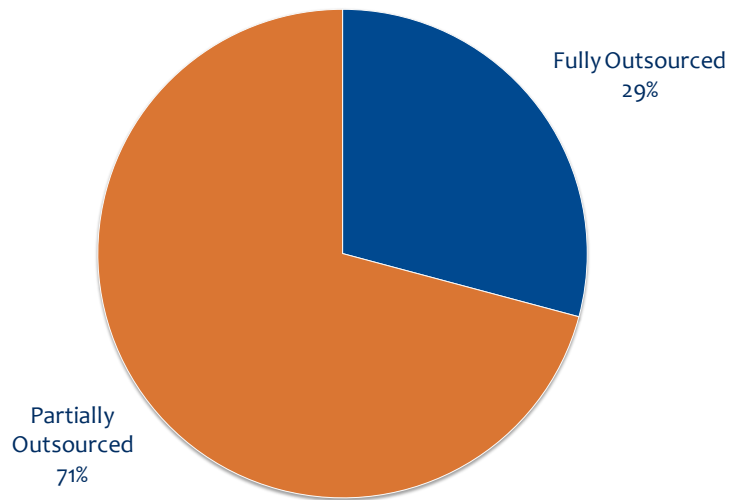


Figure 43: Focus: Service Ratings (n=25)

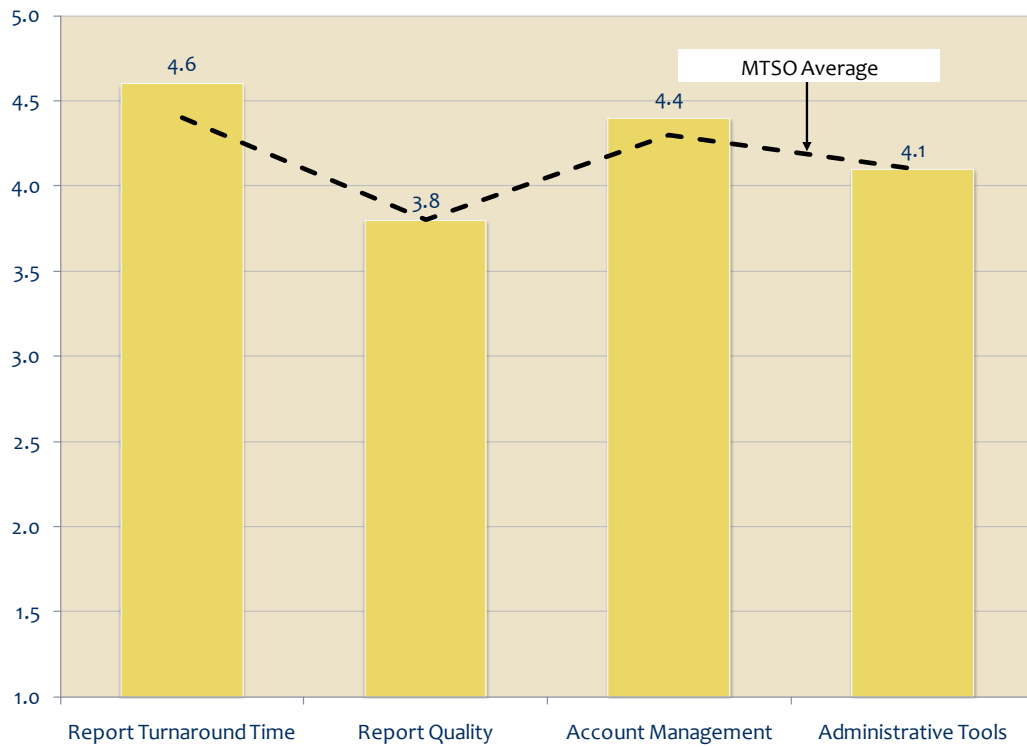
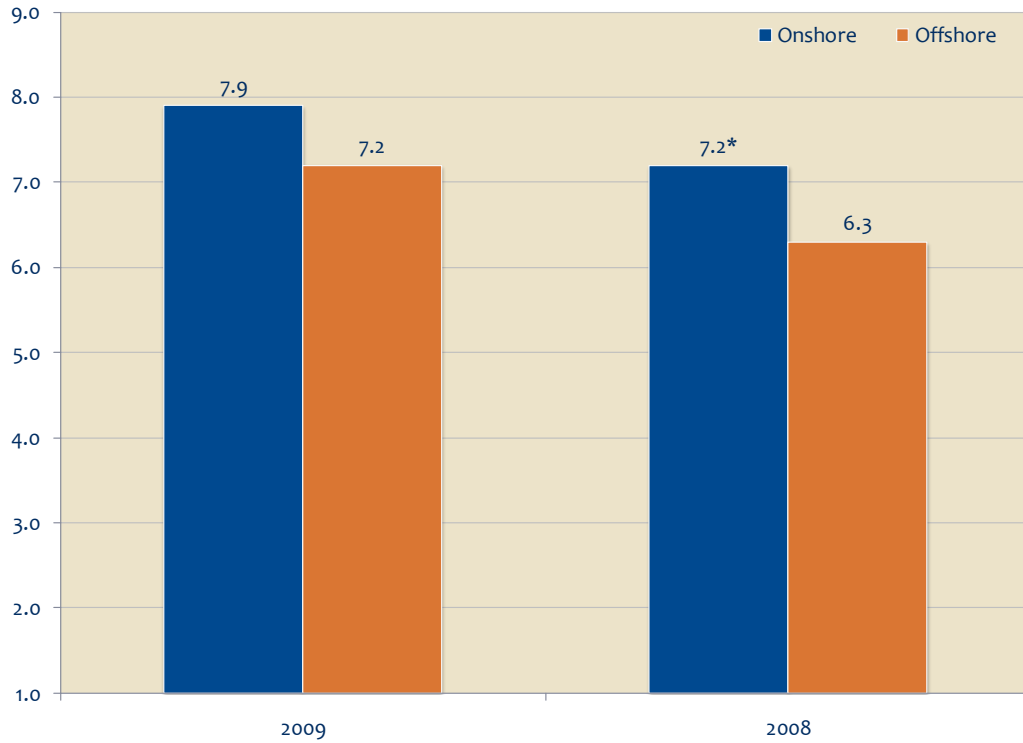
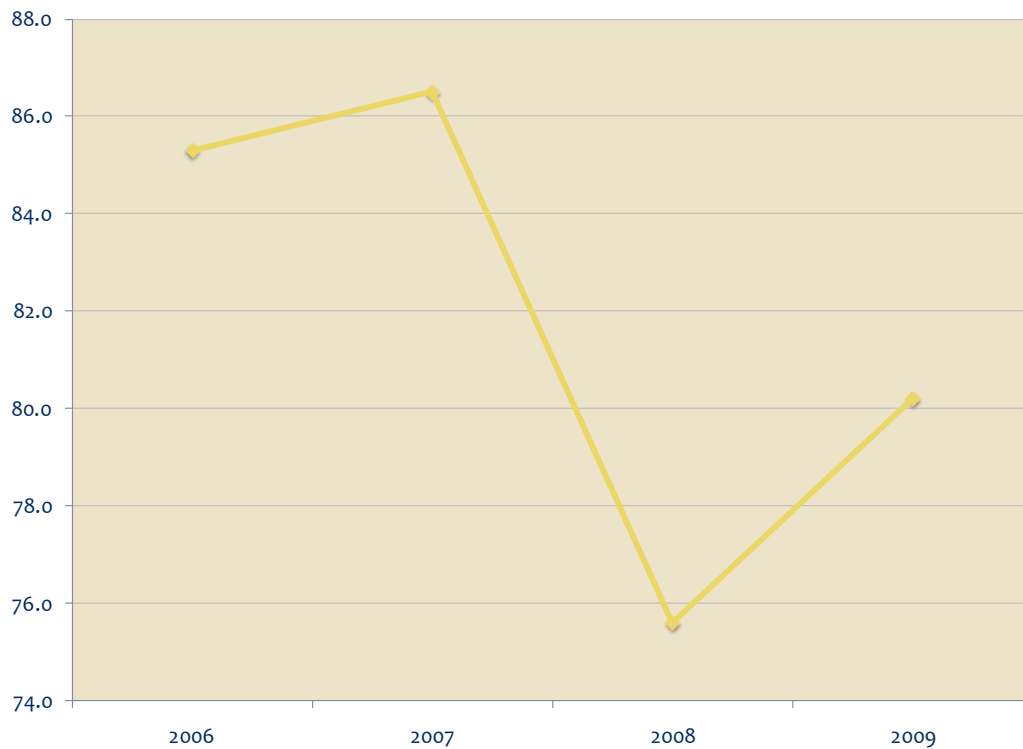


Figure 44: Focus: Onshore vs. Offshore Ratings Trend



* Indicates between three and five respondents.

Figure 45: Focus: Overall Score Trend





HEARTLAND

Figure 46: Heartland: Size of Provider Facilities (n=26)

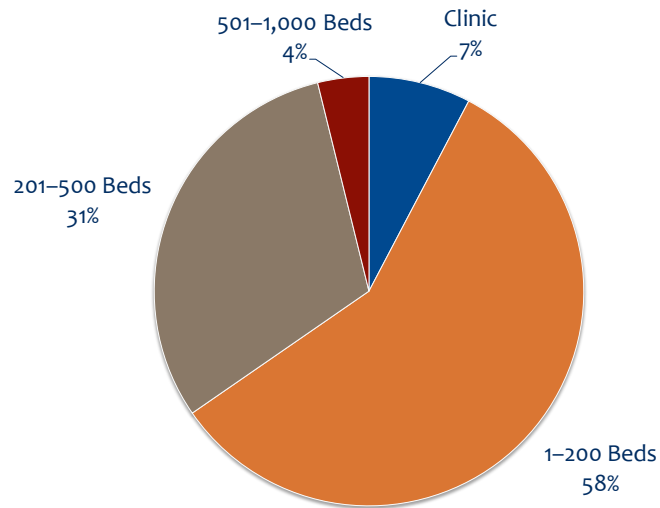


Figure 47: Heartland: Score Frequency

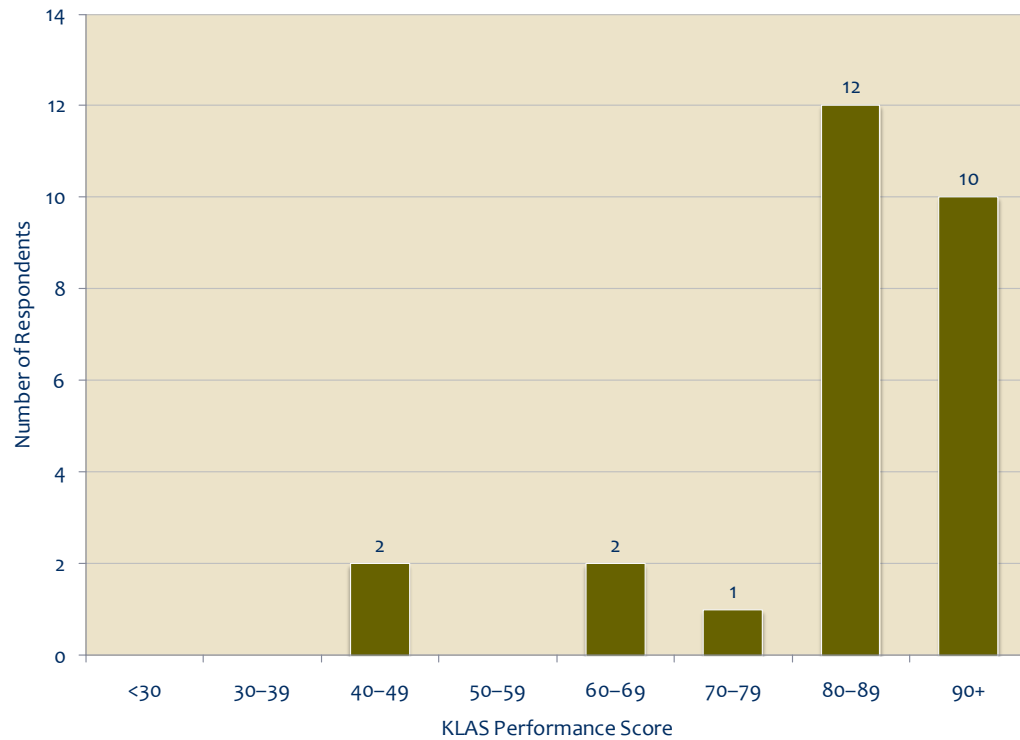


Figure 48: Heartland: Percentage of Positive Commentary

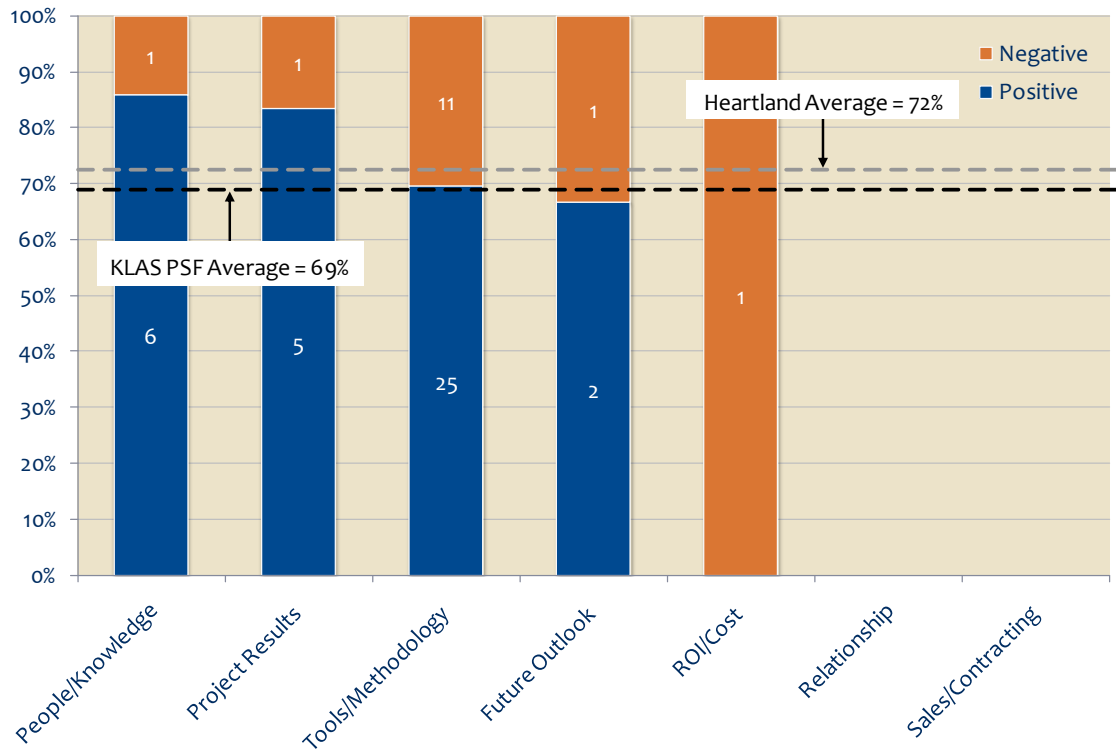


Figure 49: Heartland: Report Turnaround Time and Report Quality Service Ratings Trend

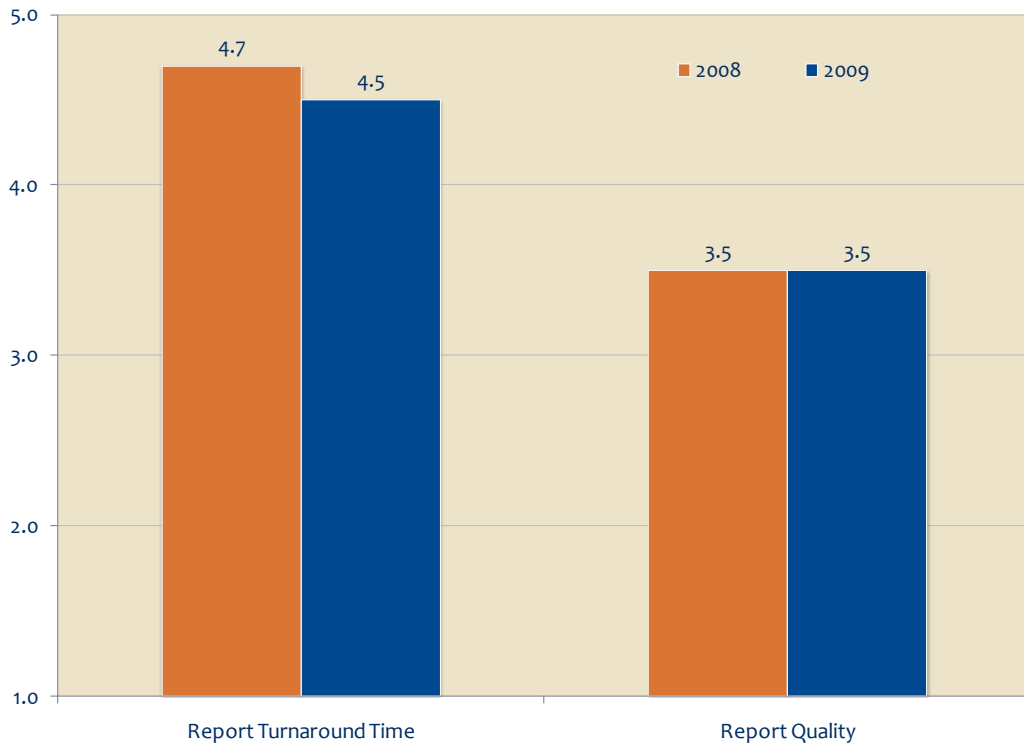


Figure 50: Heartland: Total Transcription Volume Outsourced (n=23)

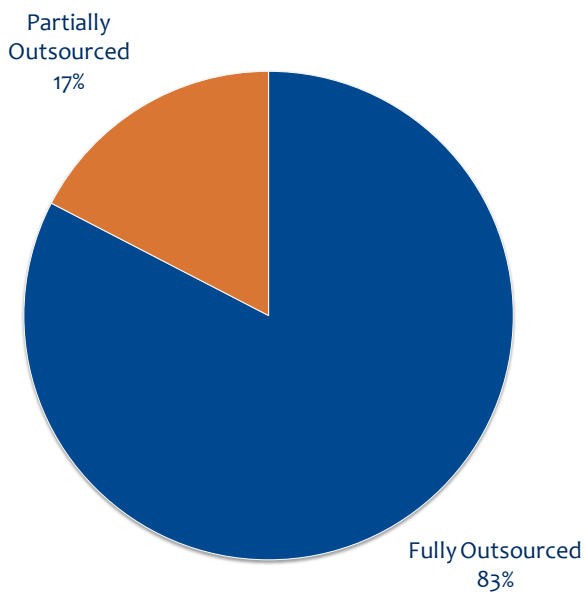


Figure 51: Heartland: Service Ratings (n=24)

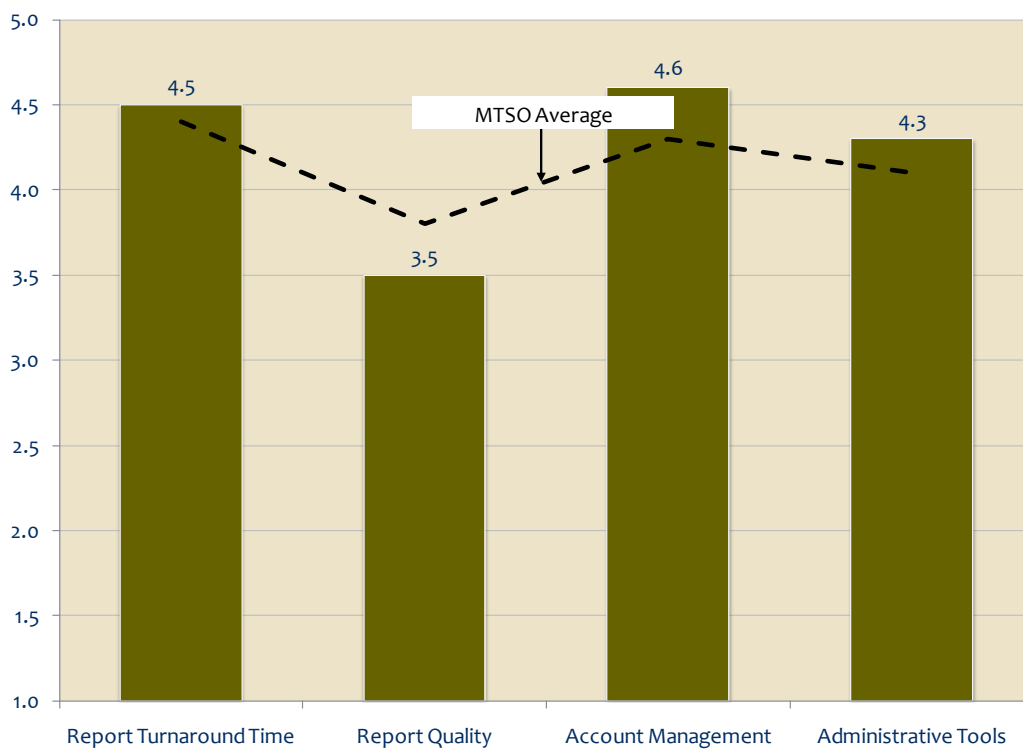
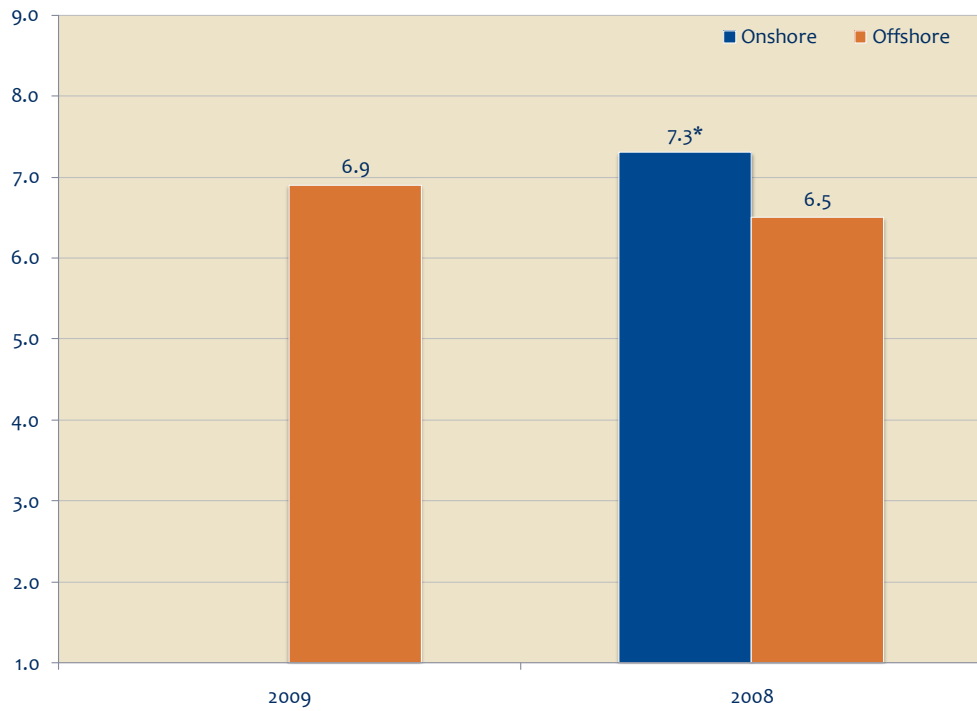
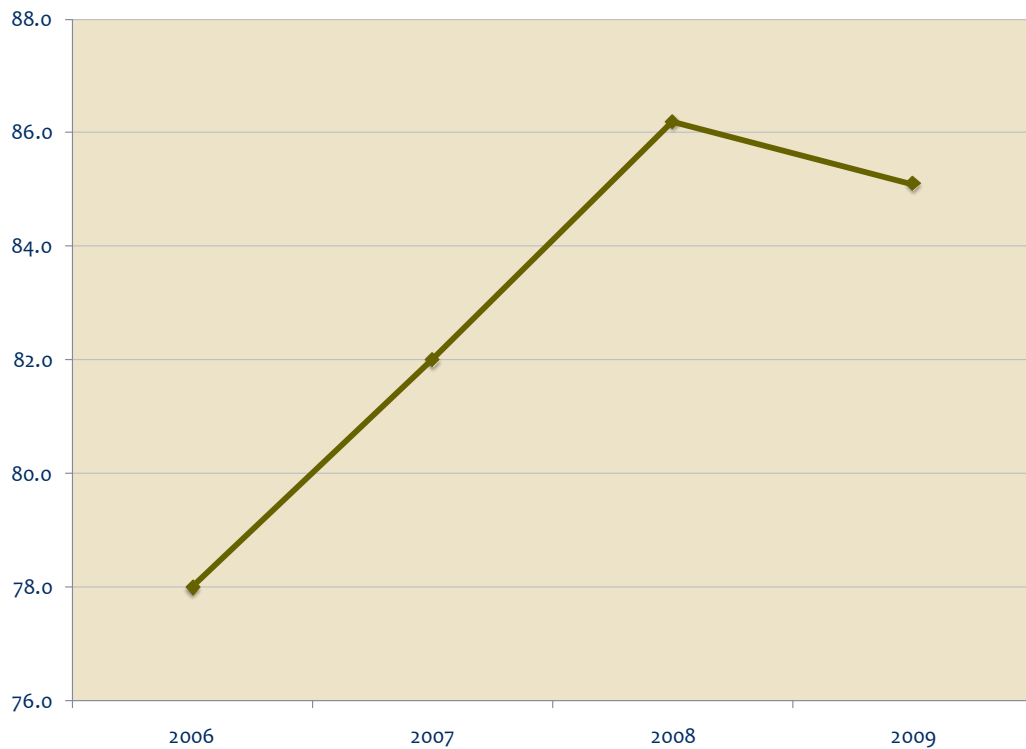


Figure 52: Heartland: Onshore vs. Offshore Ratings Trend



* Indicates between three and five respondents.

Figure 53: Heartland: Overall Score Trend



MedQuist™

▪ MEDQUIST

Figure 54: MedQuist: Size of Provider Facilities (n=53)

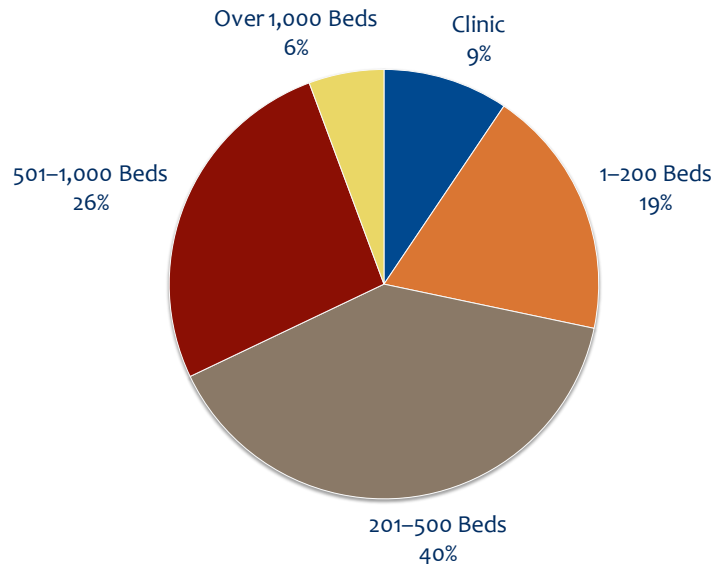


Figure 55: MedQuist: Score Frequency

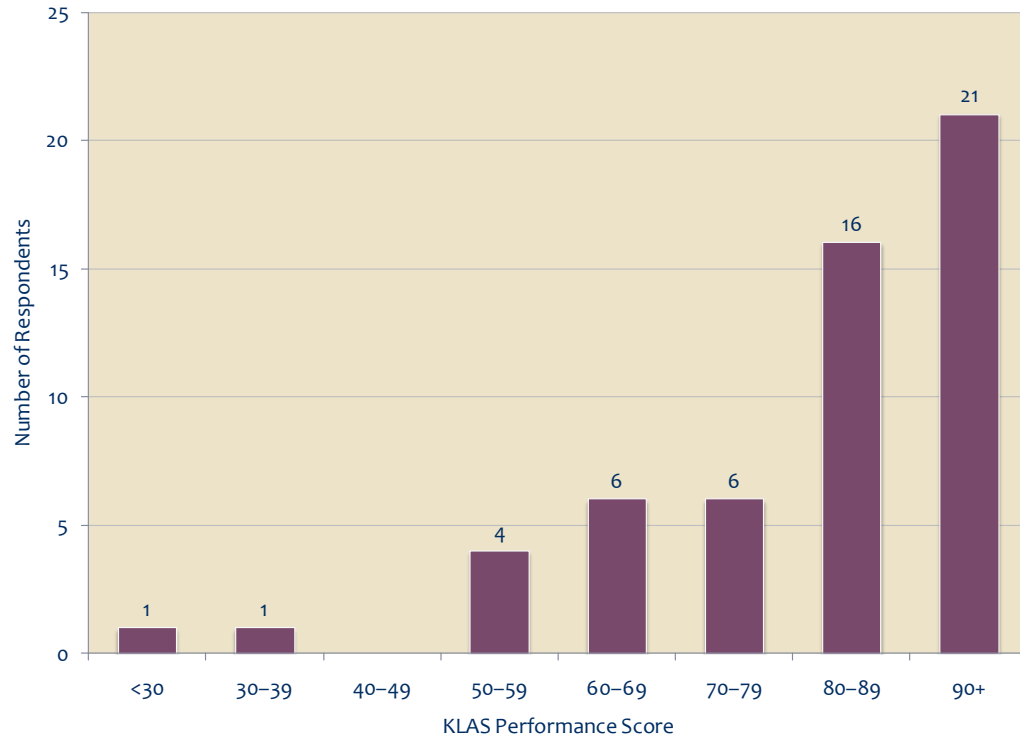


Figure 56: MedQuist: Percentage of Positive Commentary

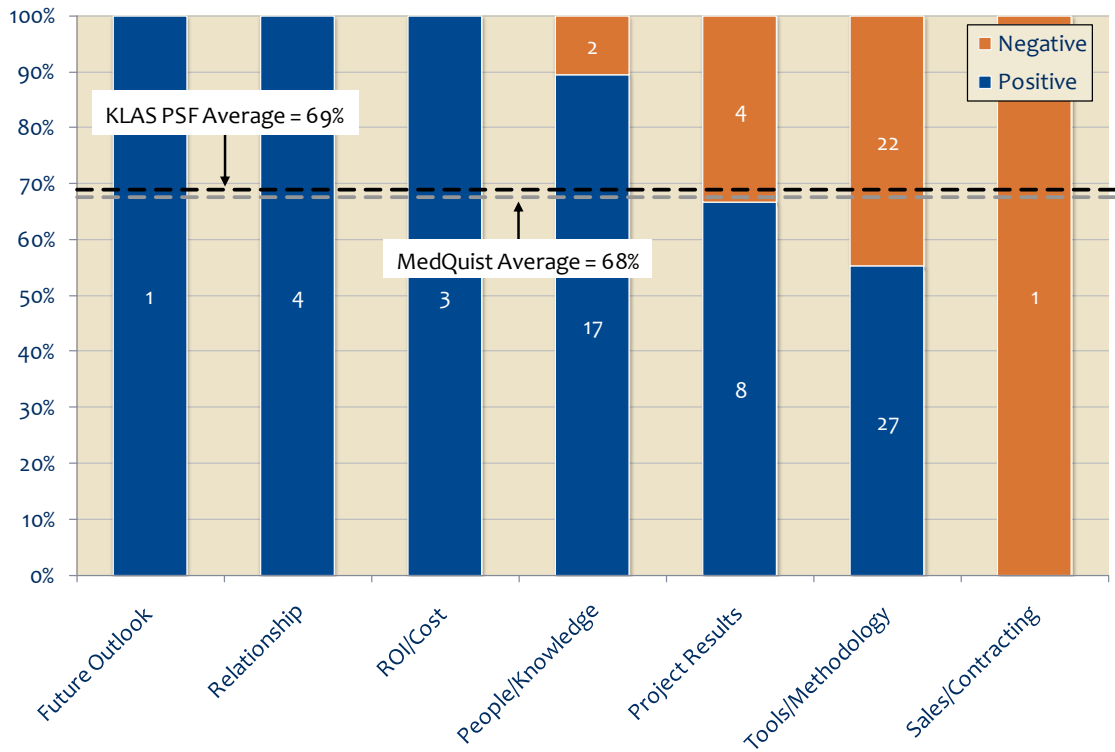


Figure 57: MedQuist: Report Turnaround Time and Report Quality Service Ratings Trend

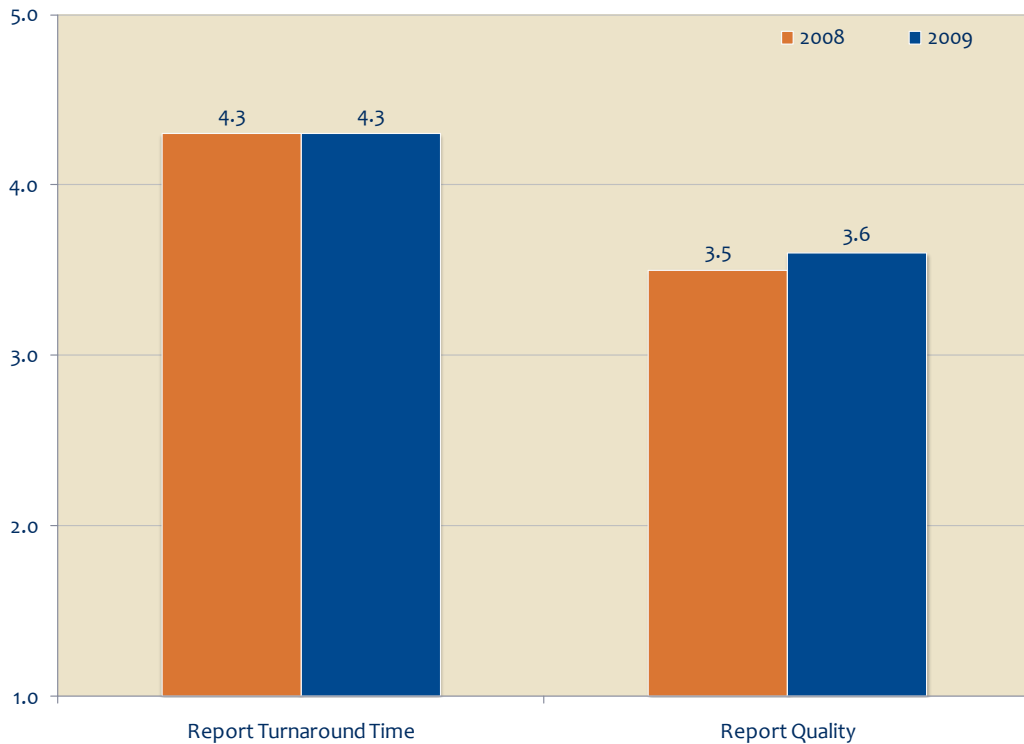


Figure 58: MedQuist: Total Transcription Volume Outsourced (n=28)

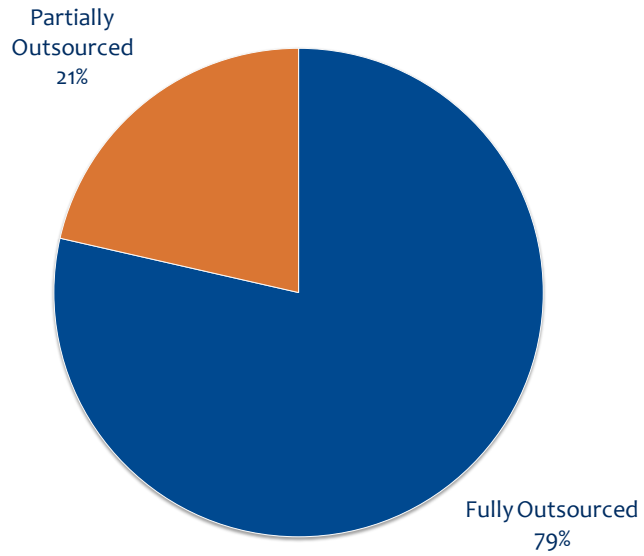


Figure 59: MedQuist: Service Ratings (n=30)

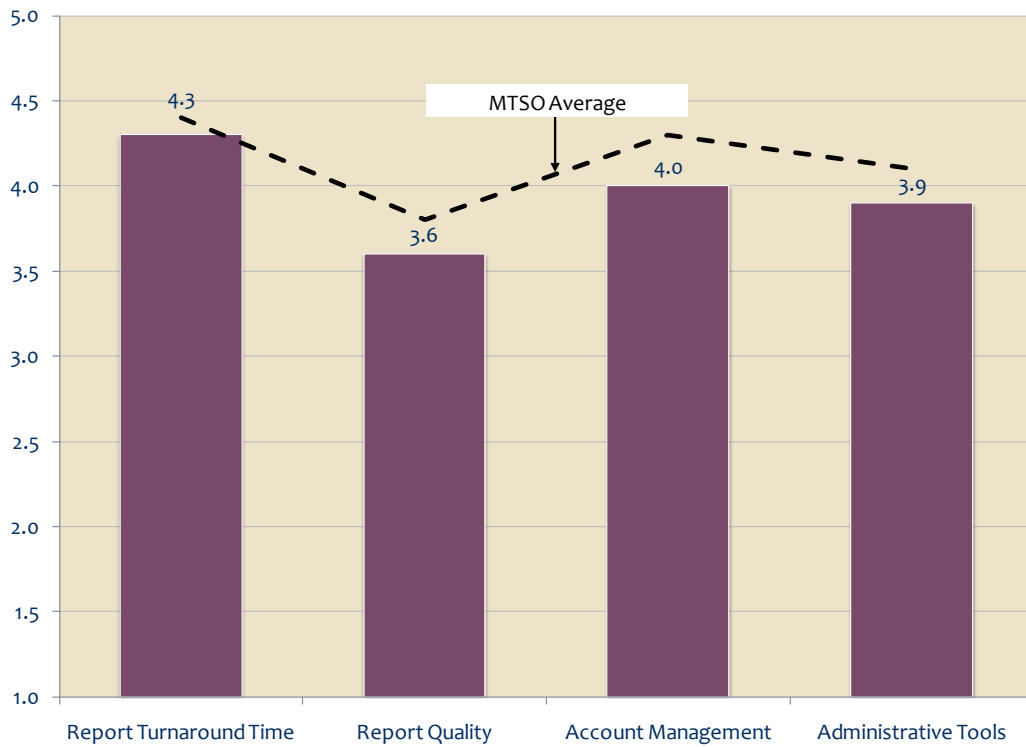
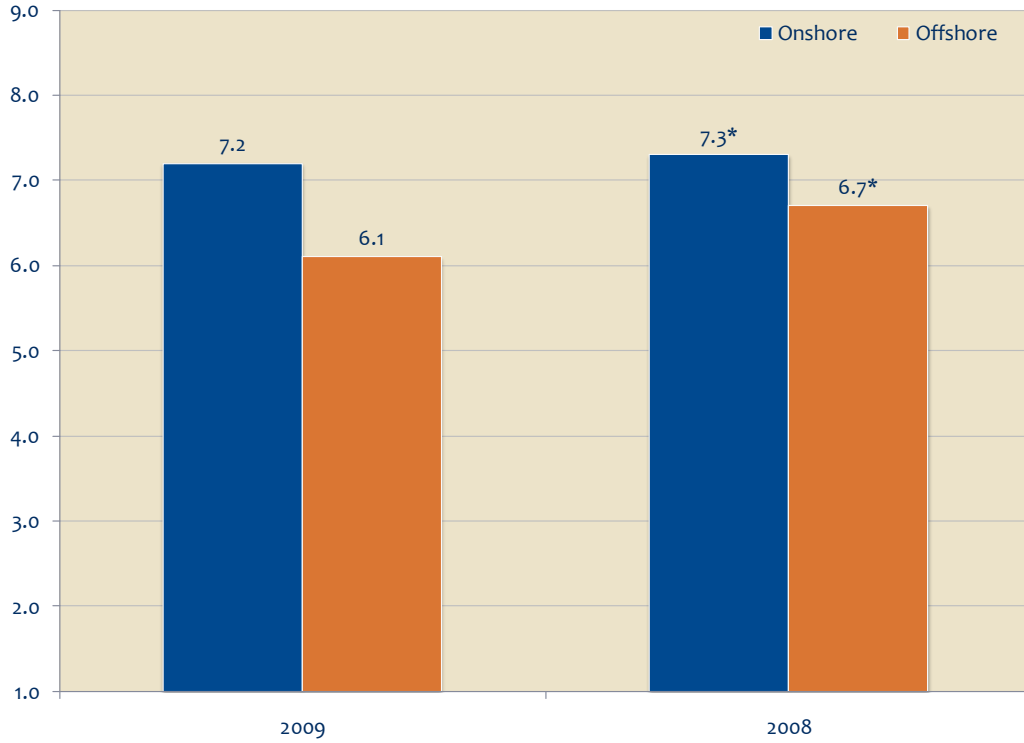
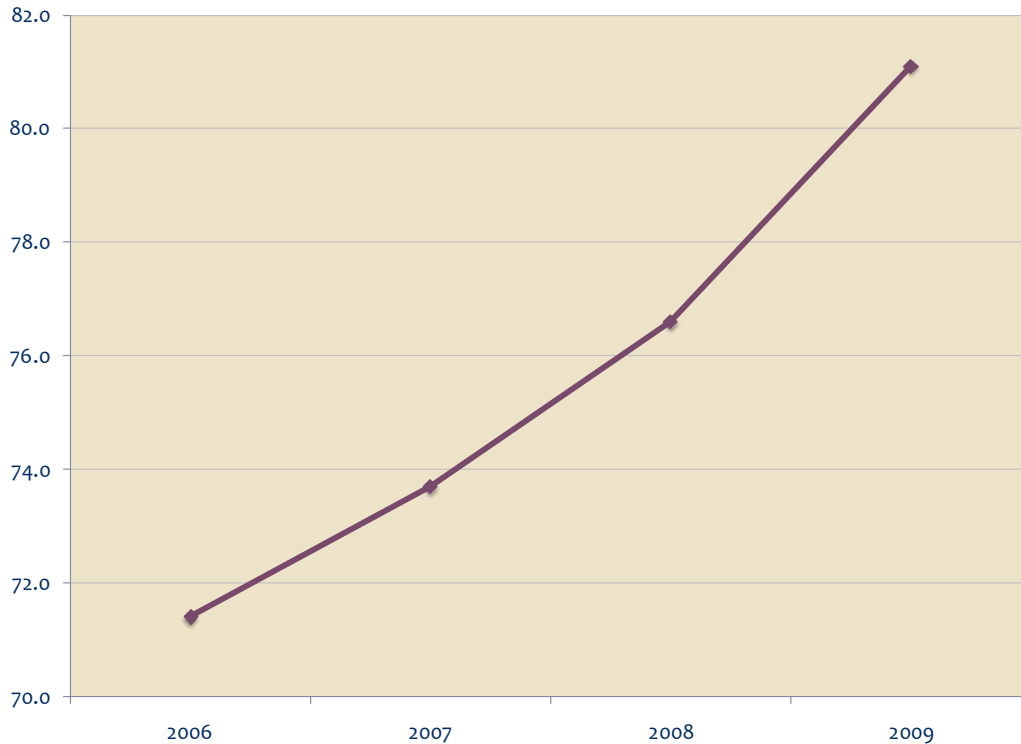


Figure 60: MedQuist: Onshore vs. Offshore Ratings Trend



* Indicates between three and five respondents.

Figure 61: MedQuist: Overall Score Trend





▪ **PRECYSE SOLUTIONS**

Figure 62: Precyse Solutions: Size of Provider Facilities (n=22)

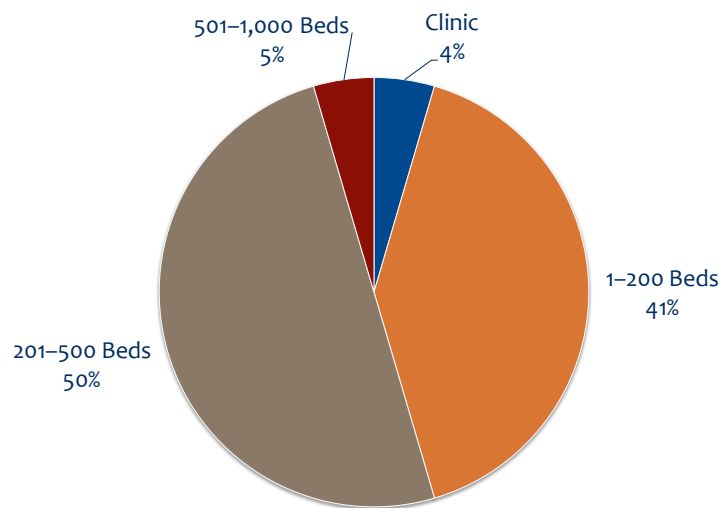


Figure 63: Precyse Solutions: Score Frequency

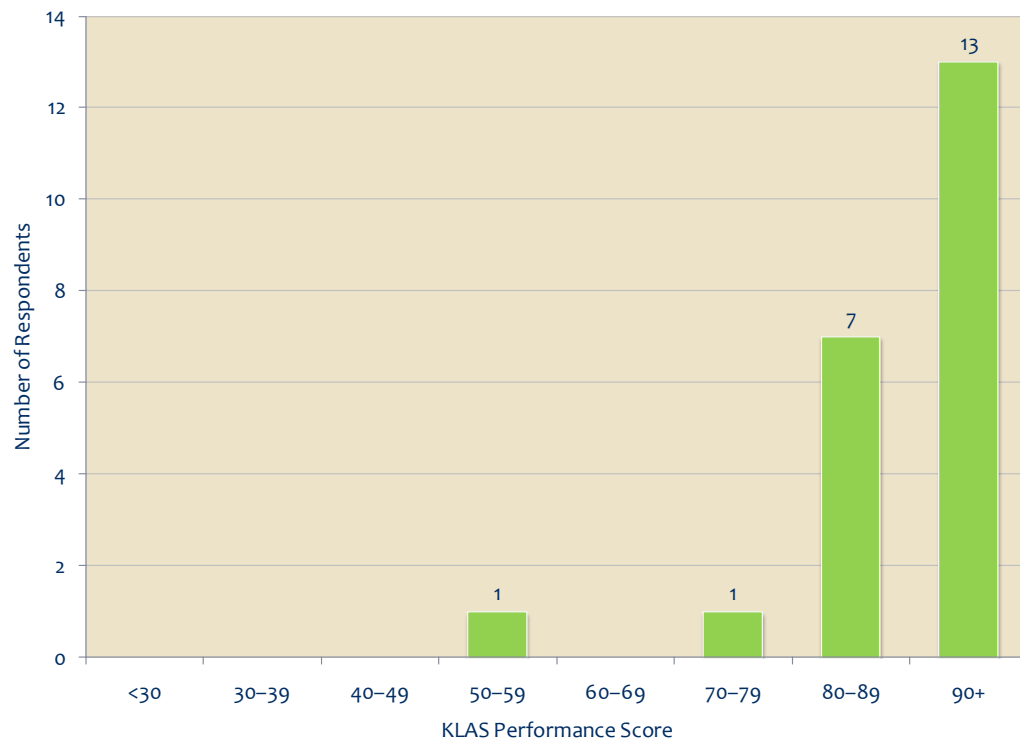


Figure 64: Precyse Solutions: Percentage of Positive Commentary

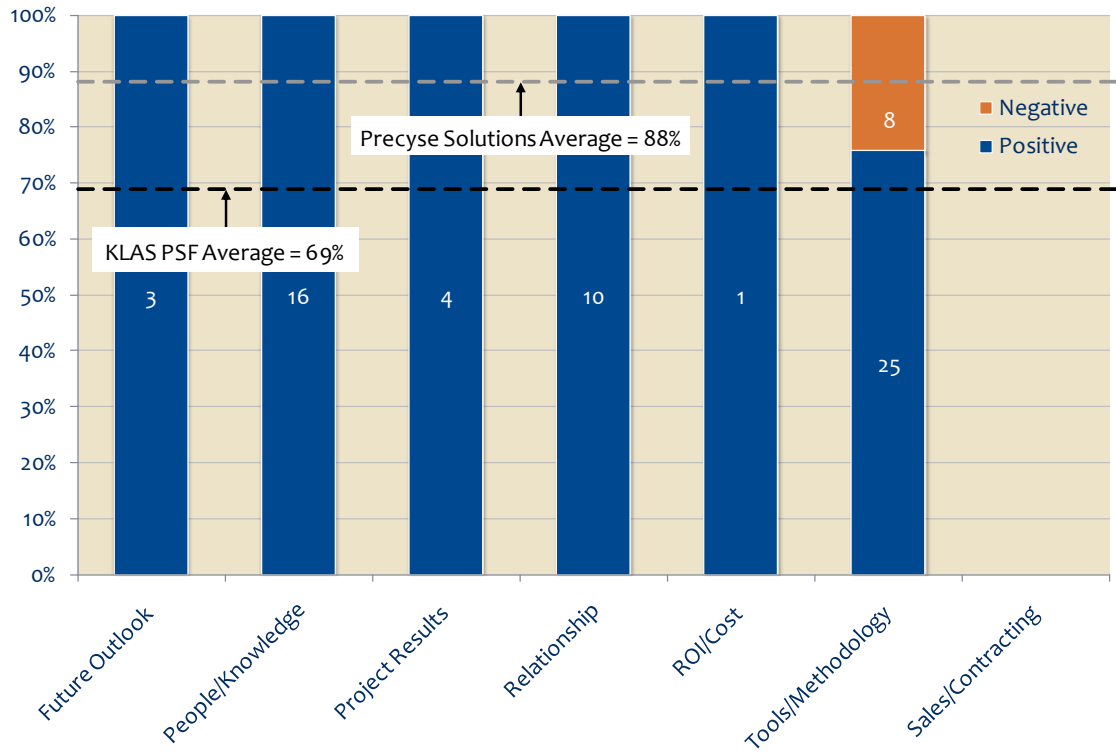


Figure 65: Precyse Solutions: Report Turnaround Time and Report Quality Service Ratings Trend

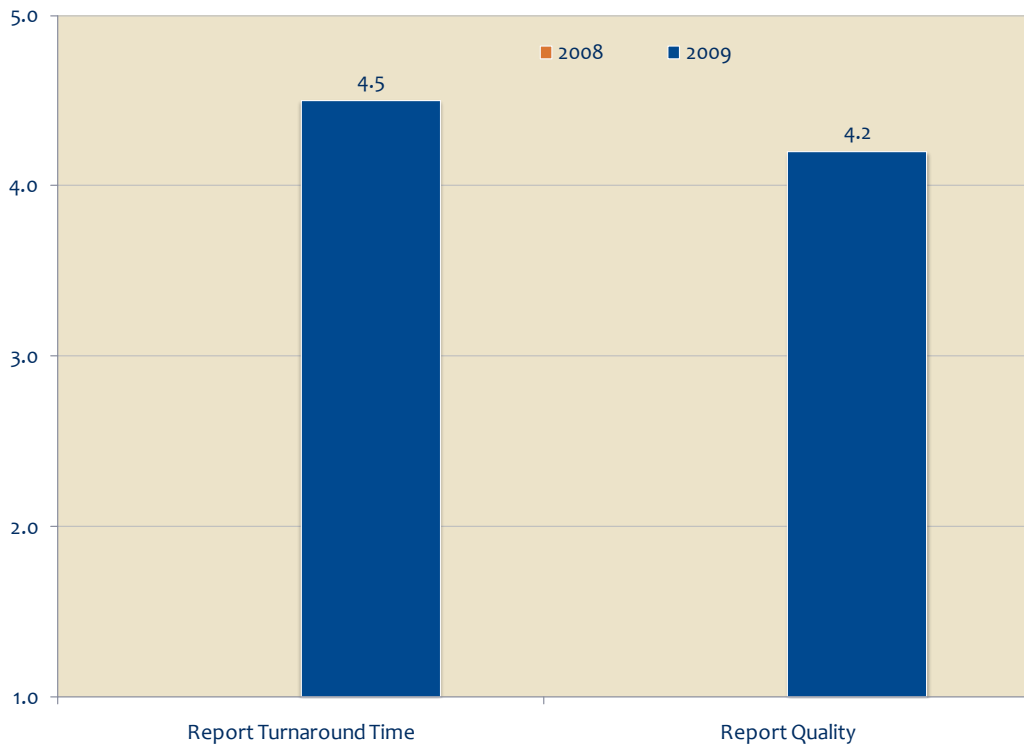


Figure 66: Precyse Solutions: Total Transcription Volume Outsourced (n=15)

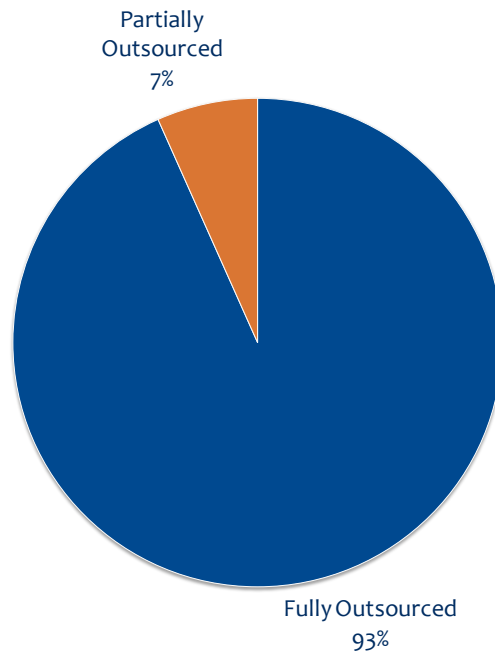


Figure 67: Precyse Solutions: Service Ratings (n=17)

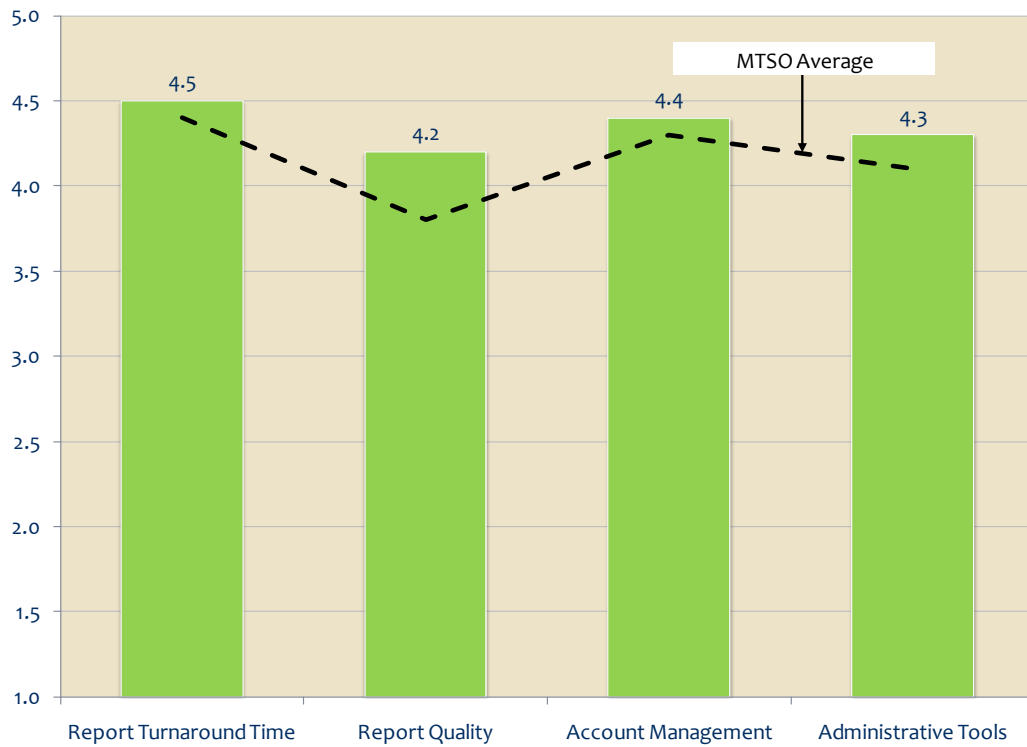
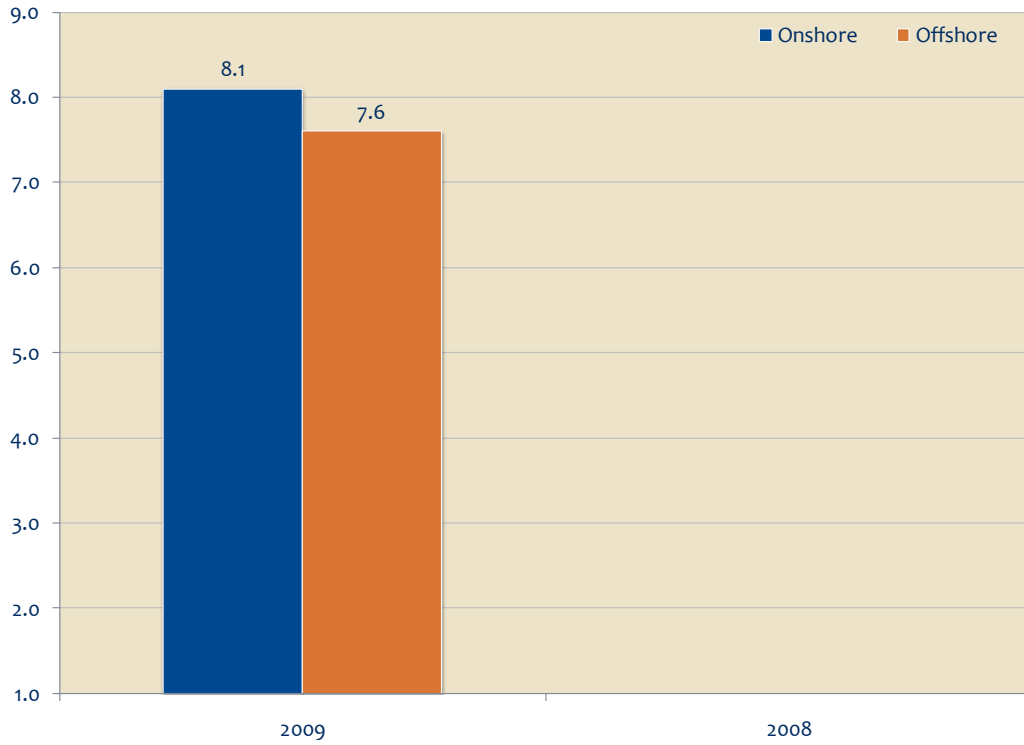


Figure 68: Precyse Solutions: Onshore vs. Offshore Ratings Trend



Note: No 2008 data available for Precyse Solutions.

Figure 69: Precyse Solutions: Overall Score Trend



Spheris®

▪ SPHERIS

Figure 70: Spheris: Size of Provider Facilities (n=49)

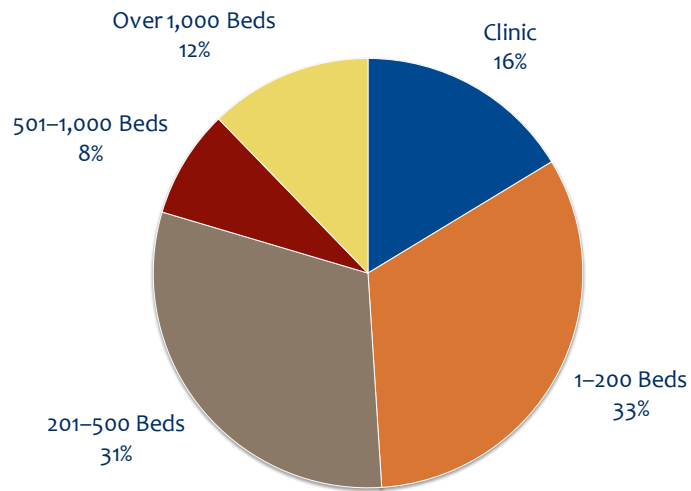


Figure 71: Spheris: Score Frequency

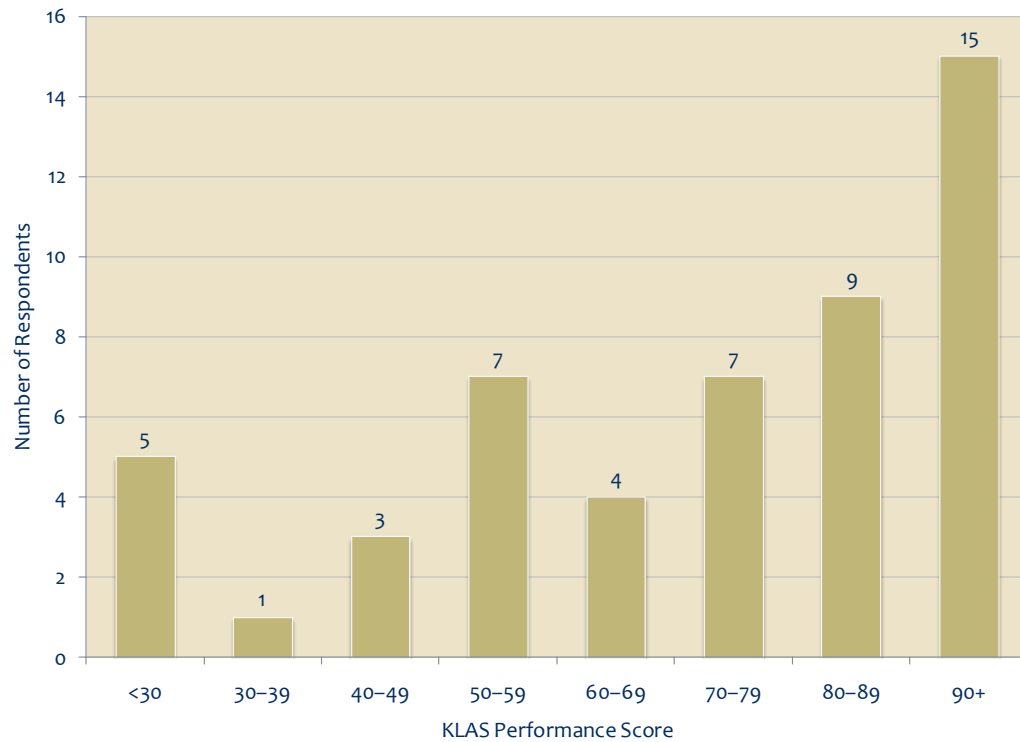


Figure 72: Spheris: Percentage of Positive Commentary

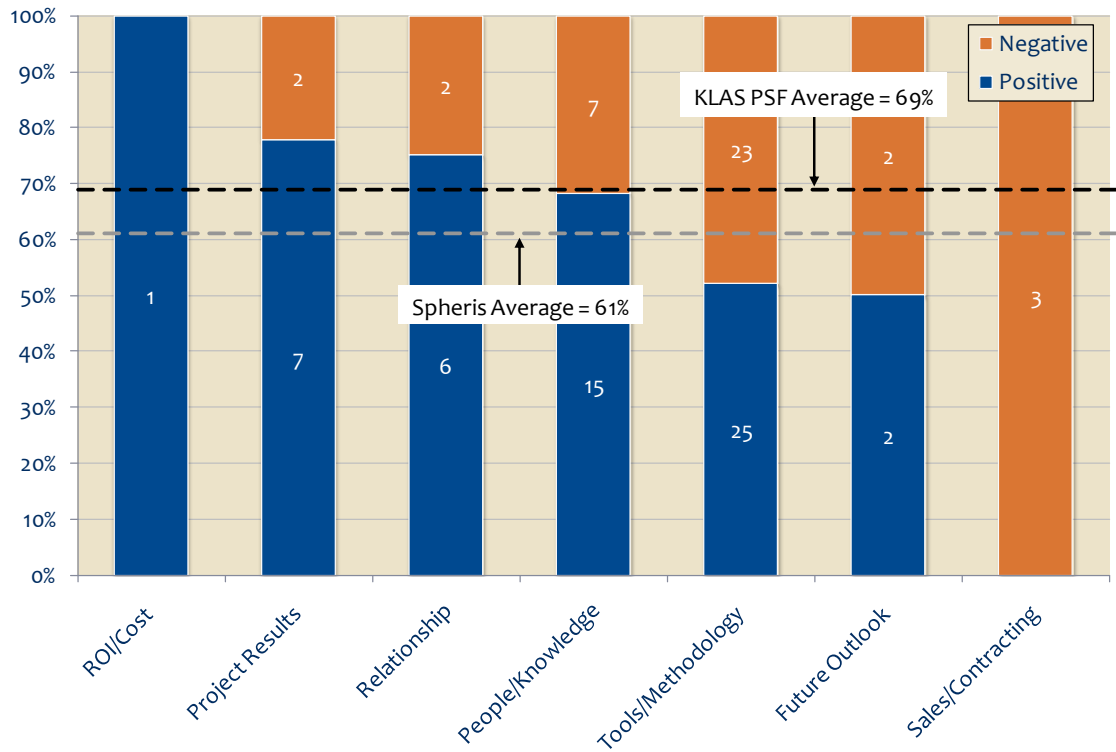


Figure 73: Spheris: Report Turnaround Time and Report Quality Service Ratings Trend

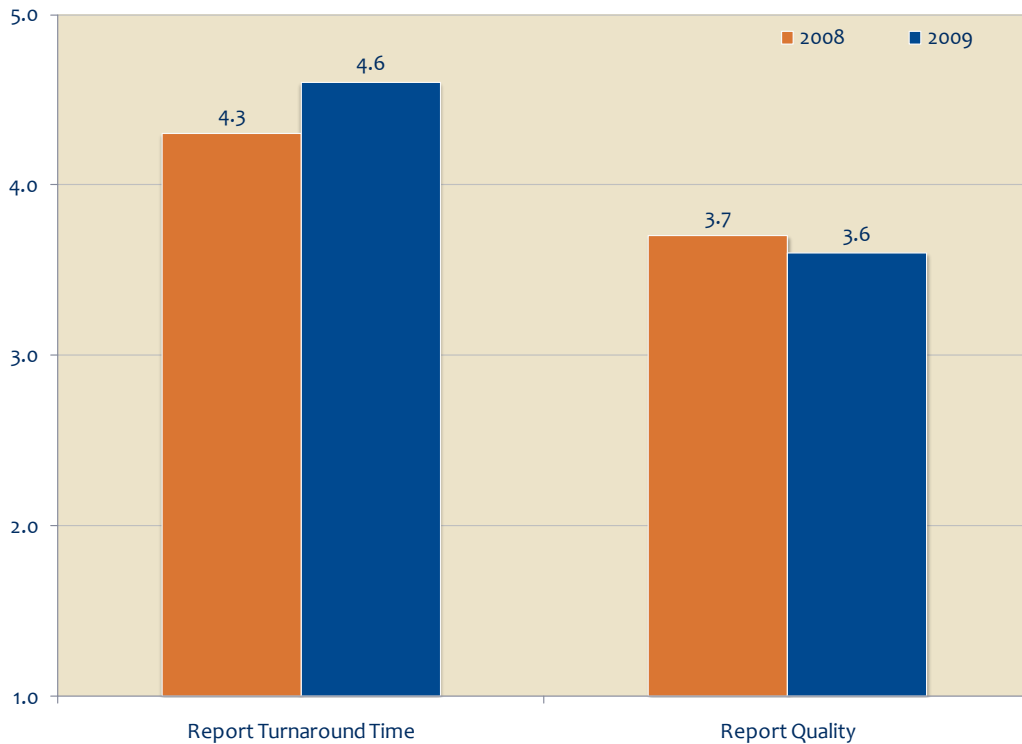


Figure 74: Spheris: Total Transcription Volume Outsourced (n=25)

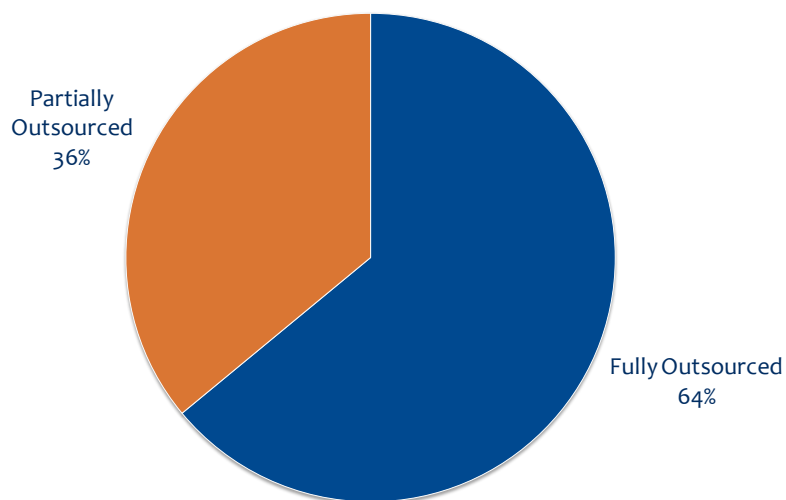


Figure 75: Spheris: Service Ratings (n=25)

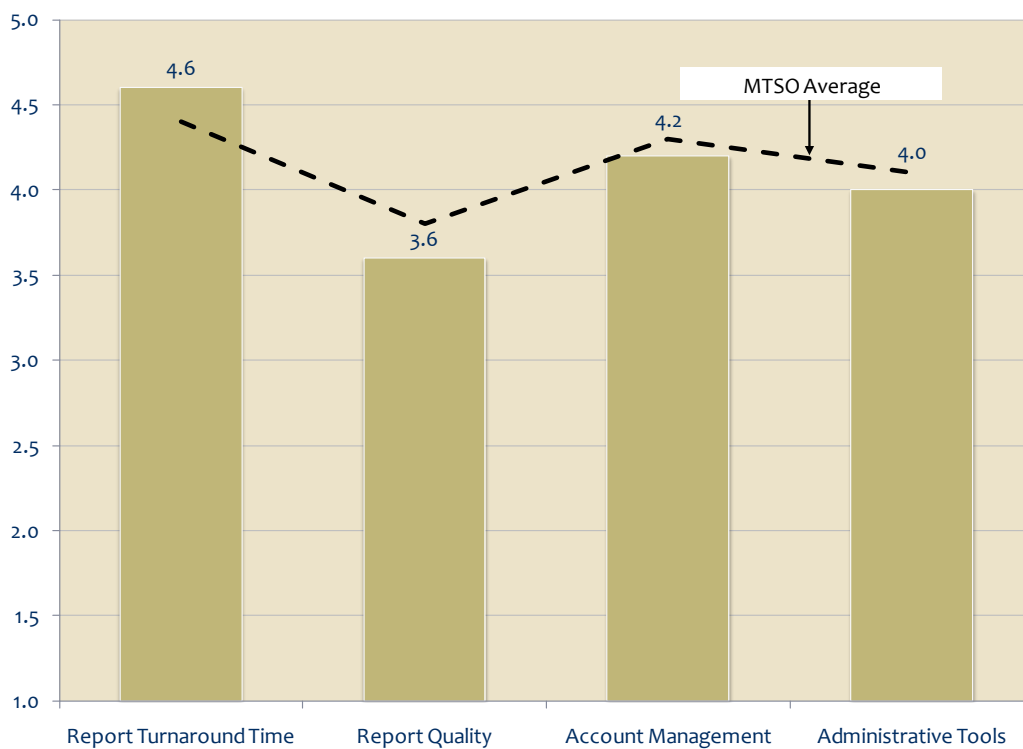
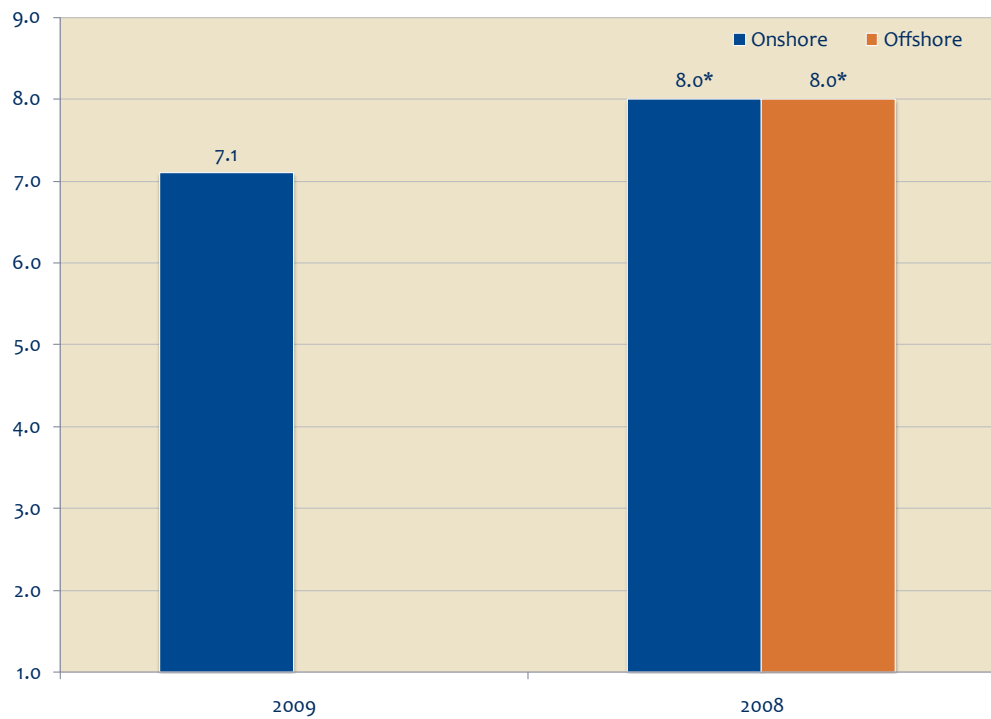
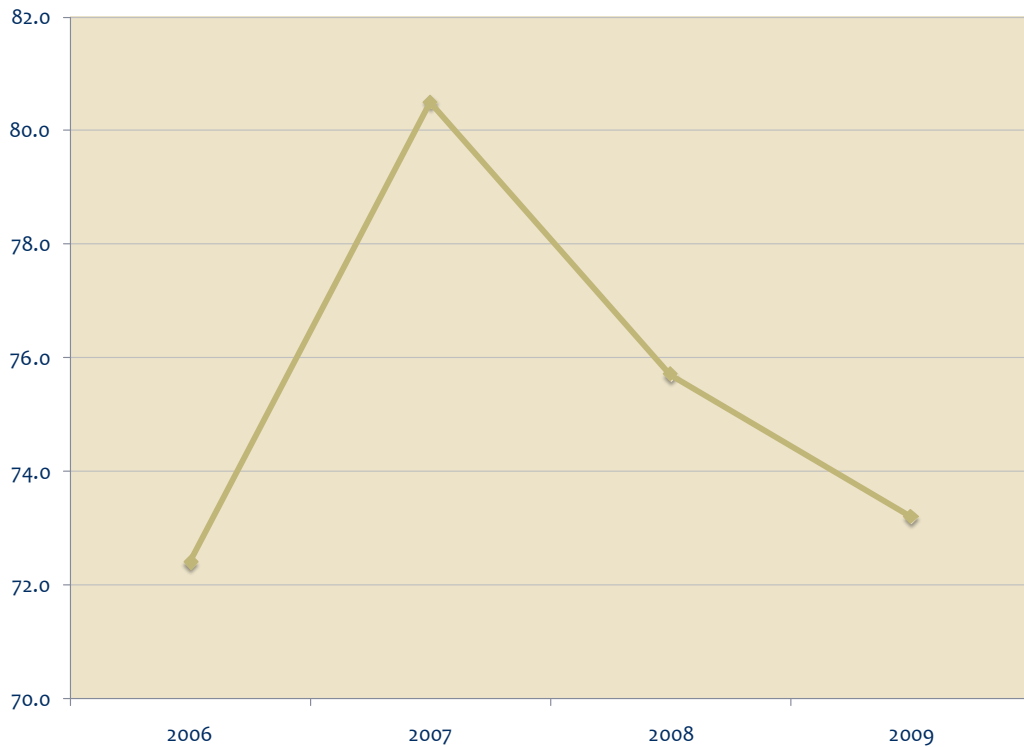


Figure 76: Spheris: Onshore vs. Offshore Ratings Trend



* Indicates between three and five respondents.

Figure 77: Spheris: Overall Score Trend





▪ SPi

Figure 78: SPi: Size of Provider Facilities (n=21)

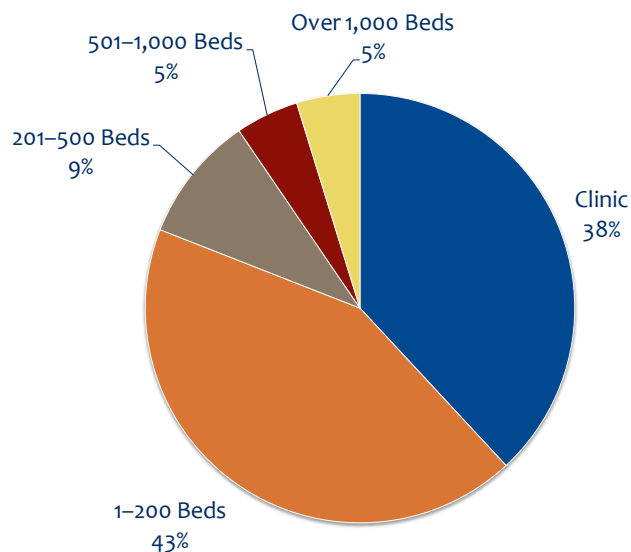


Figure 79: SPi: Score Frequency

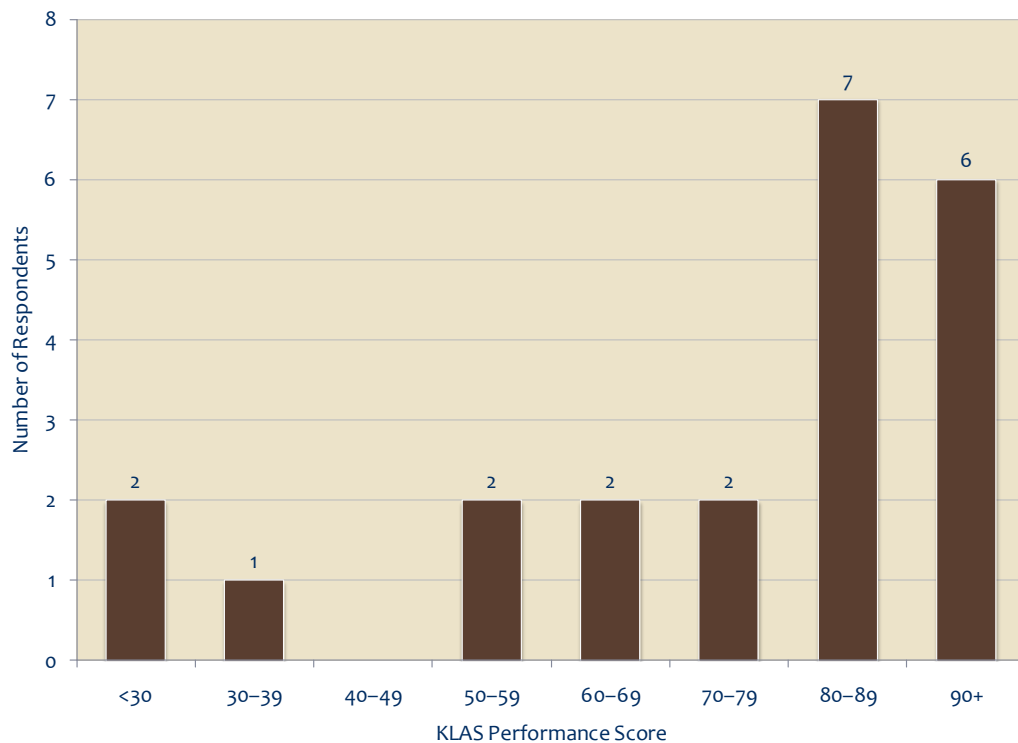


Figure 80: SPi: Percentage of Positive Commentary

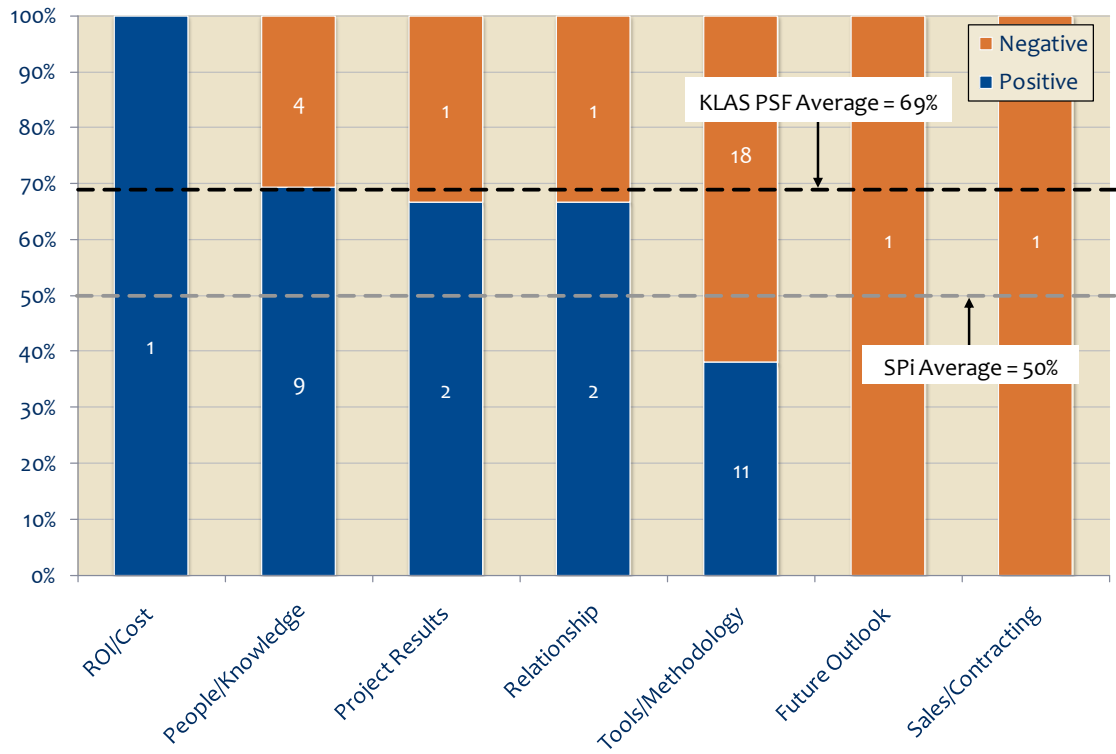


Figure 81: SPi: Report Turnaround Time and Report Quality Service Ratings Trend

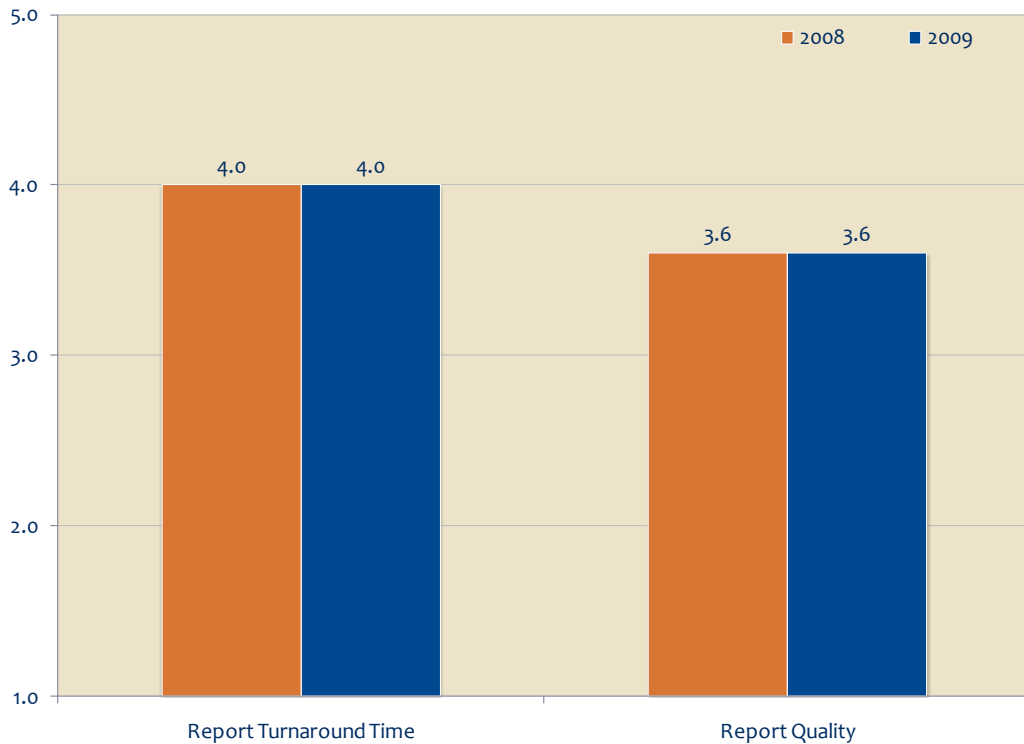


Figure 82: SPi: Total Transcription Volume Outsourced (n=19)

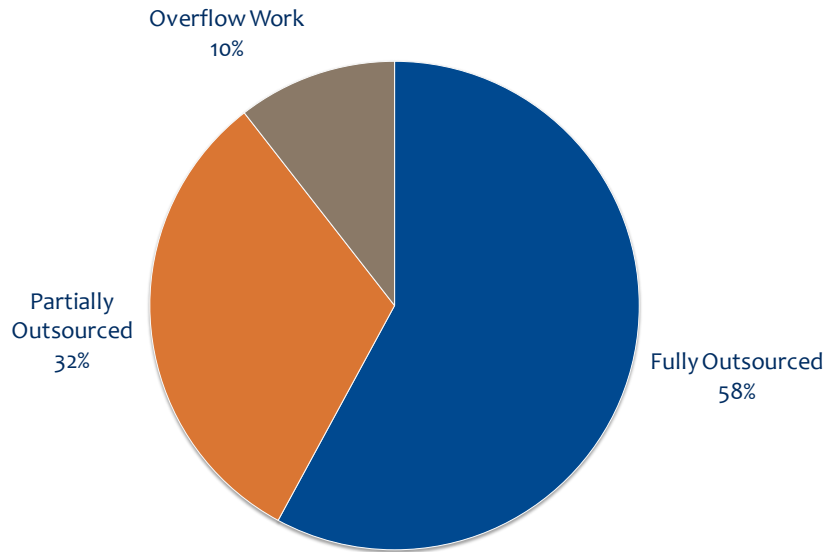


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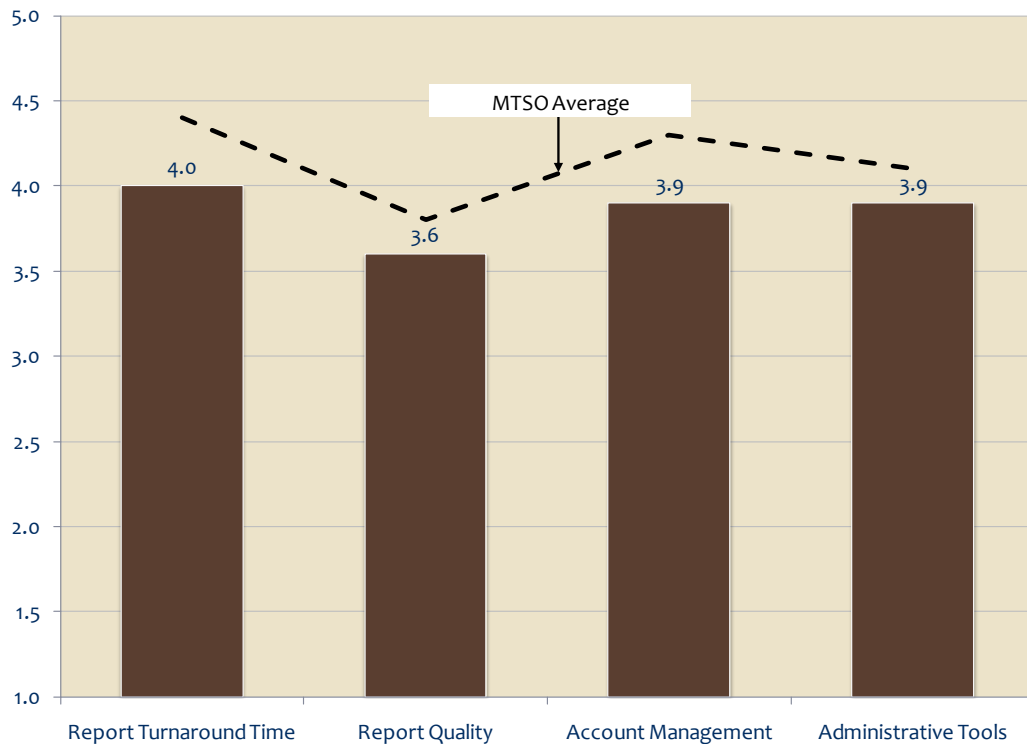
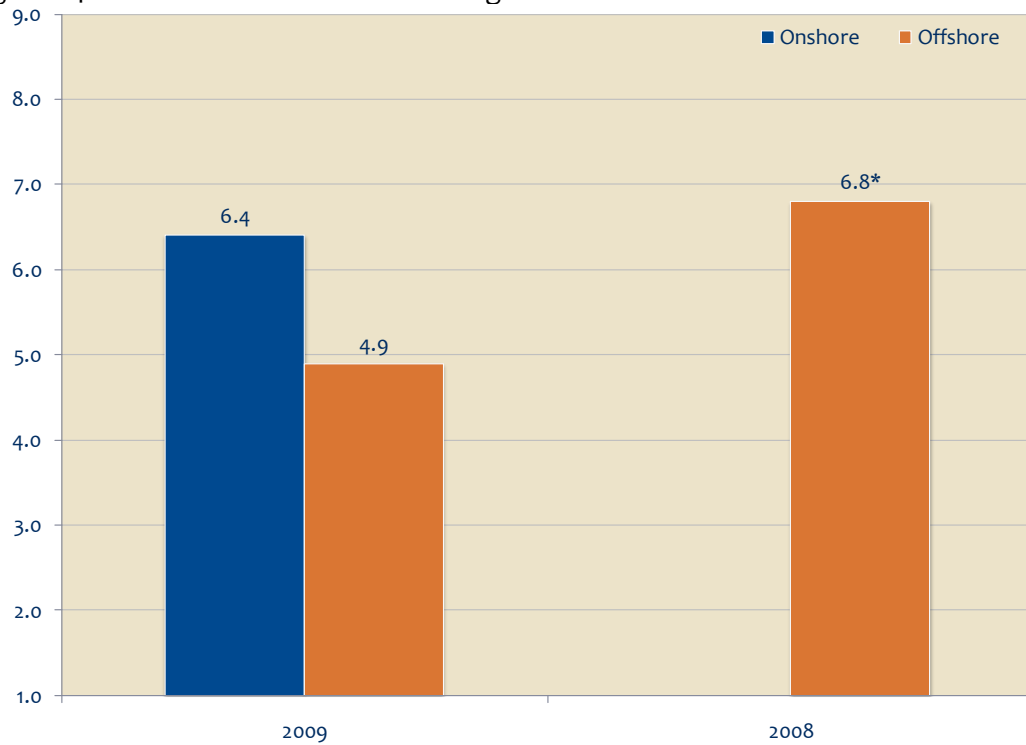
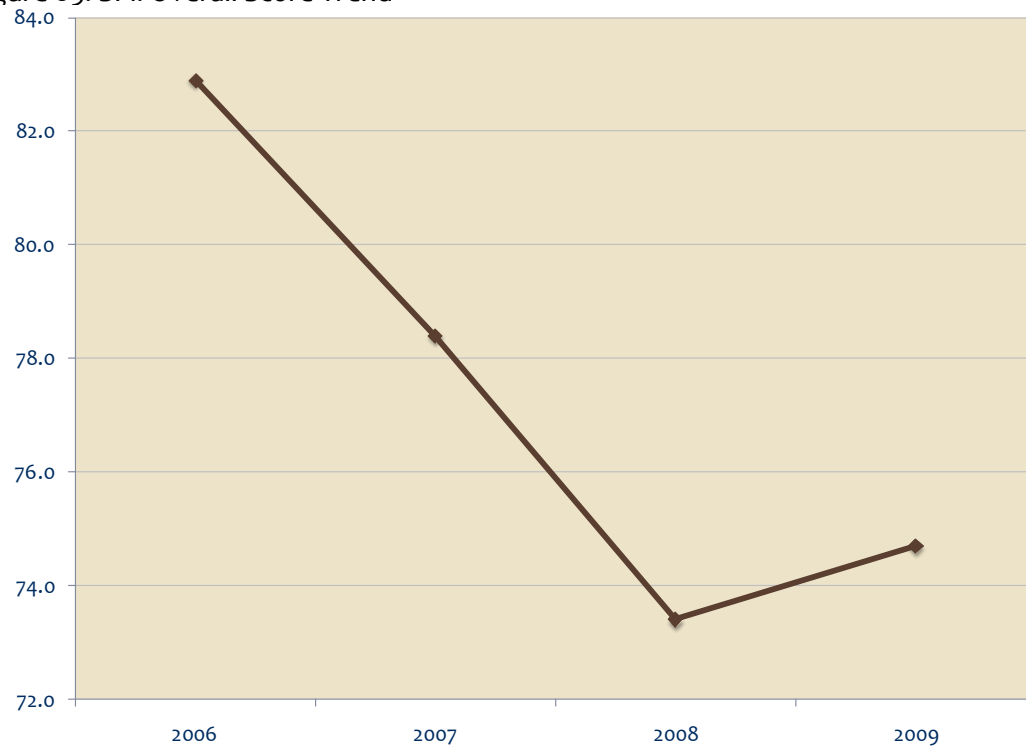


Figure 84: SPi: Onshore vs. Offshore Ratings Trend



* Indicates between three and five respondents. No data is shown for any area with less than three respondents.

Figure 85: SPi: Overall Score Trend



Sten-Tel[®]

▪ STEN-TEL

Figure 86: Sten-Tel: Size of Provider Facilities (n=17)

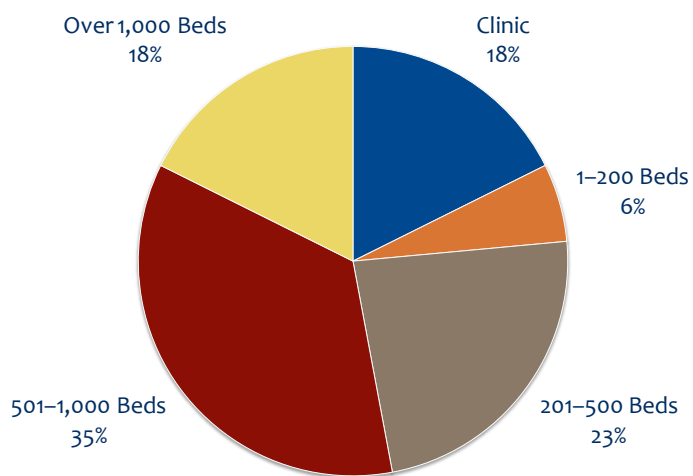


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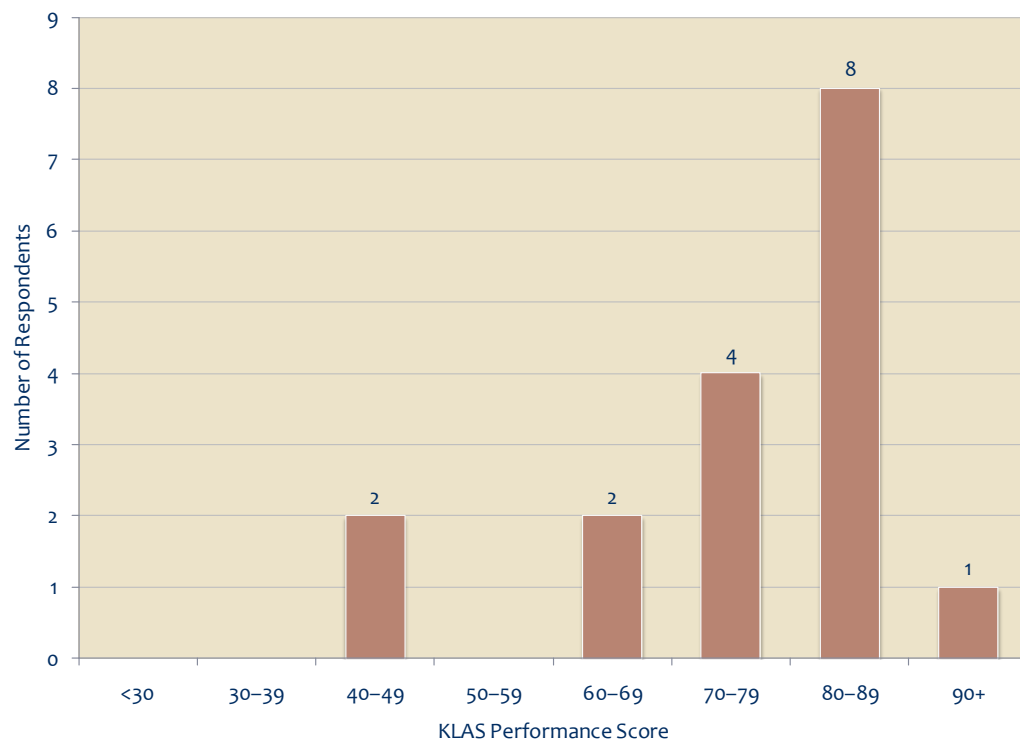


Figure 88: Sten-Tel: Percentage of Positive Commentary

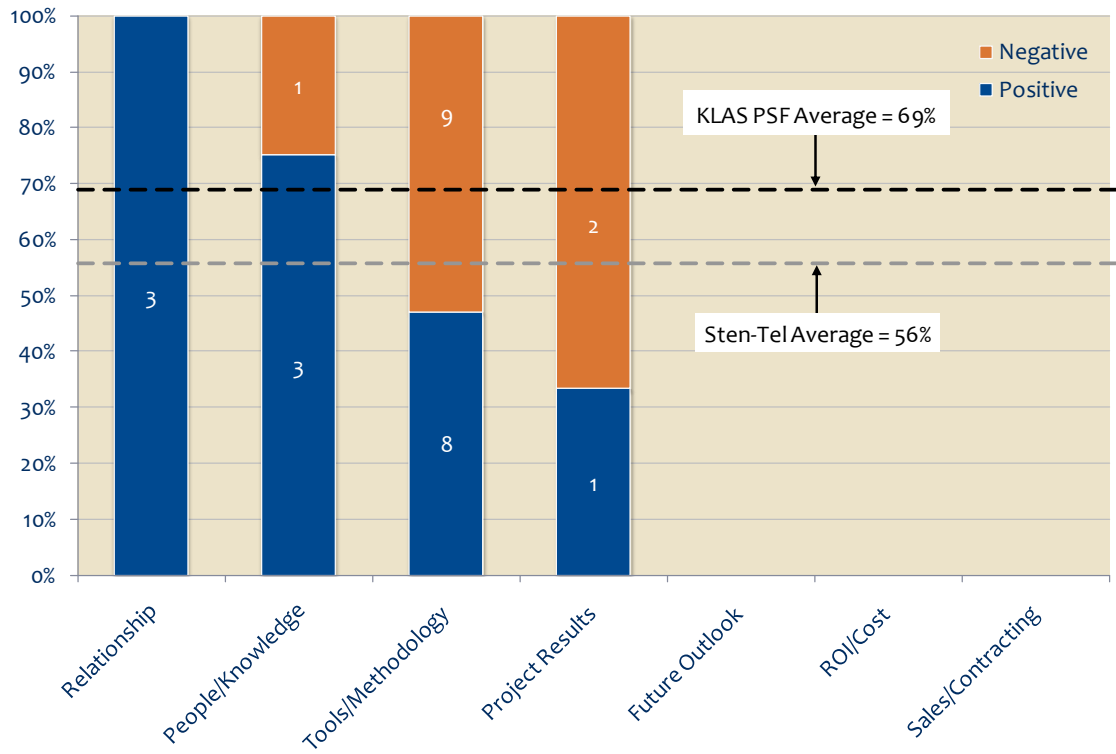


Figure 89: Sten-Tel: Report Turnaround Time and Report Quality Service Ratings Trend

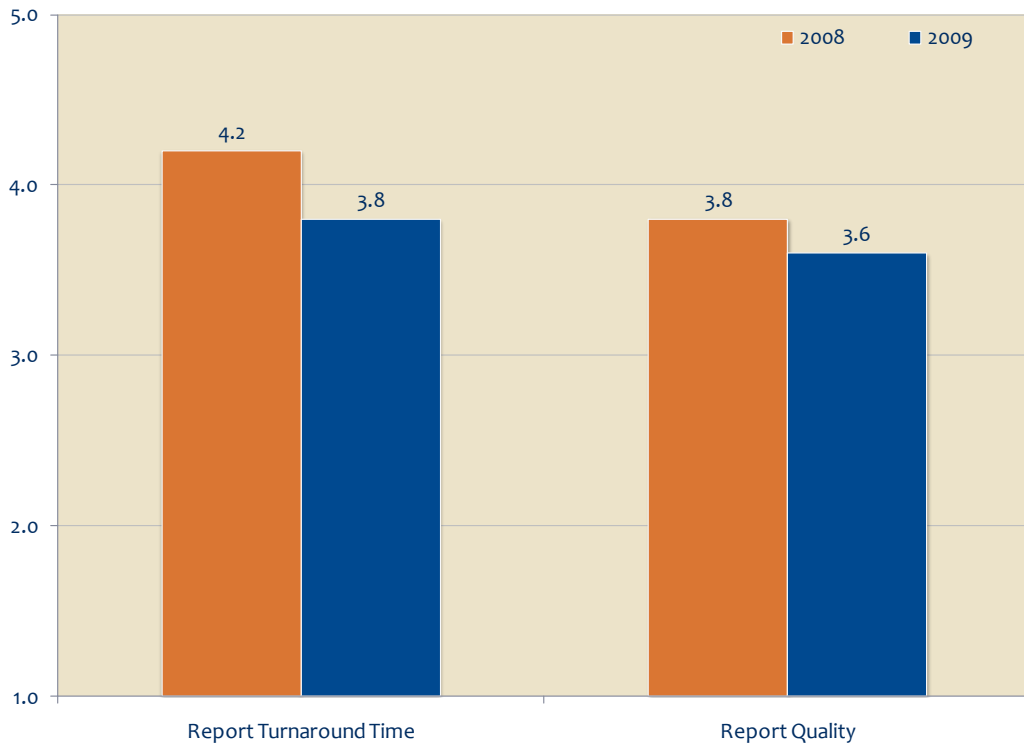


Figure 90: Sten-Tel: Total Transcription Volume Outsourced (n=16)

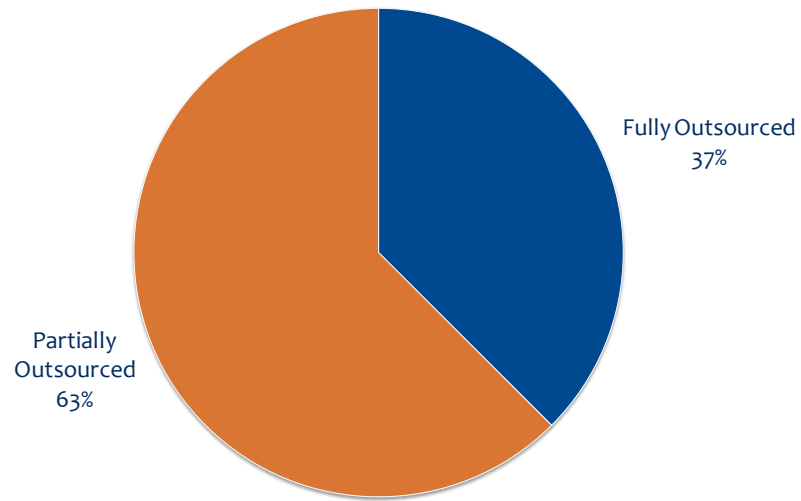


Figure 91: Sten-Tel: Service Ratings (n=16)

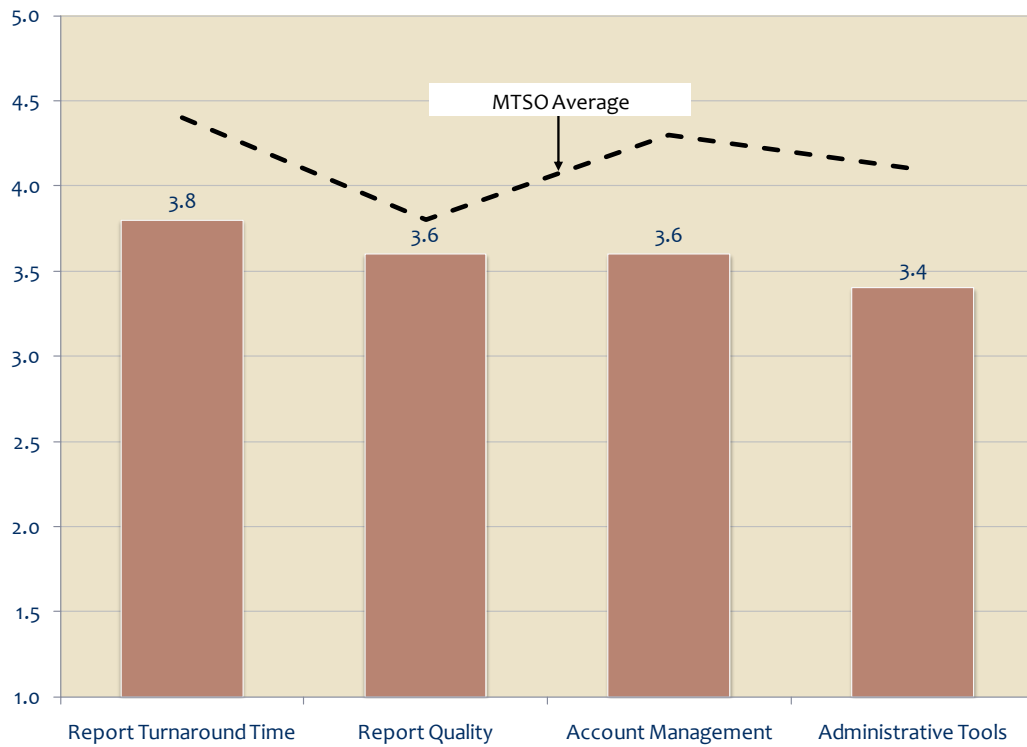
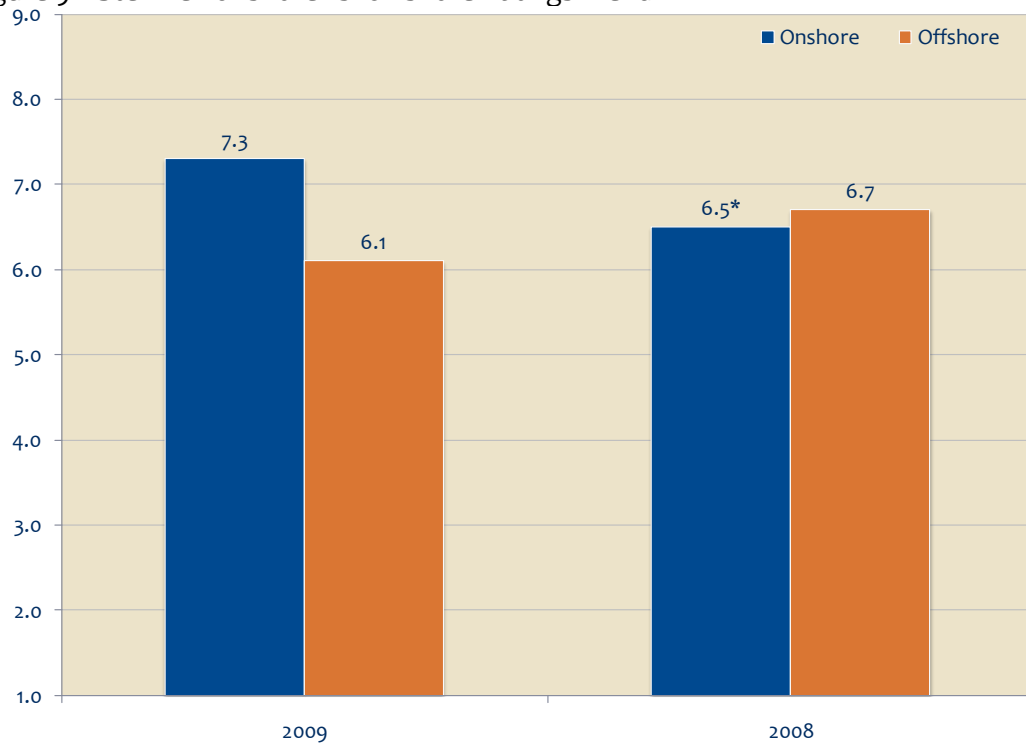
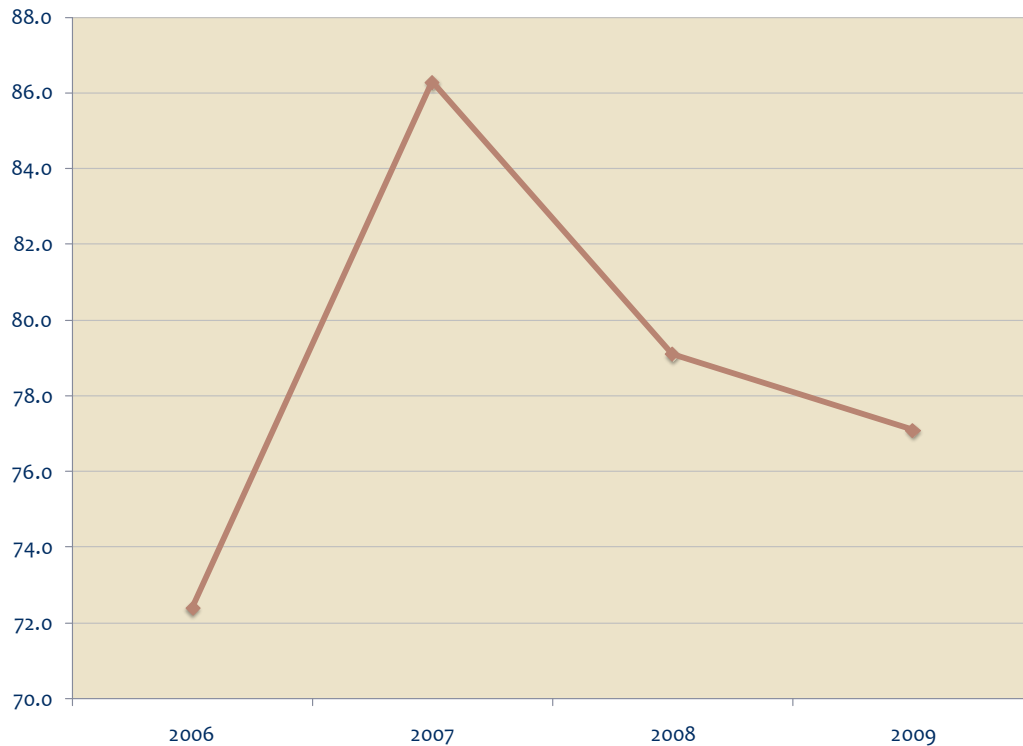


Figure 92: Sten-Tel: Onshore vs. Offshore Ratings Trend



* Indicates between three and five respondents.

Figure 93: Sten-Tel: Overall Score Trend



Superior Global Solutions

▪ SUPERIOR GLOBAL SOLUTIONS INC.

Figure 94: Superior Global: Size of Provider Facilities (n=25)

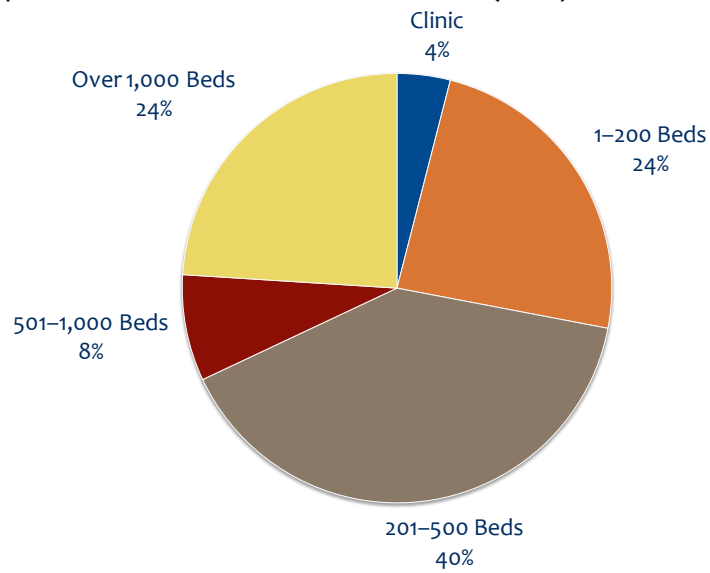


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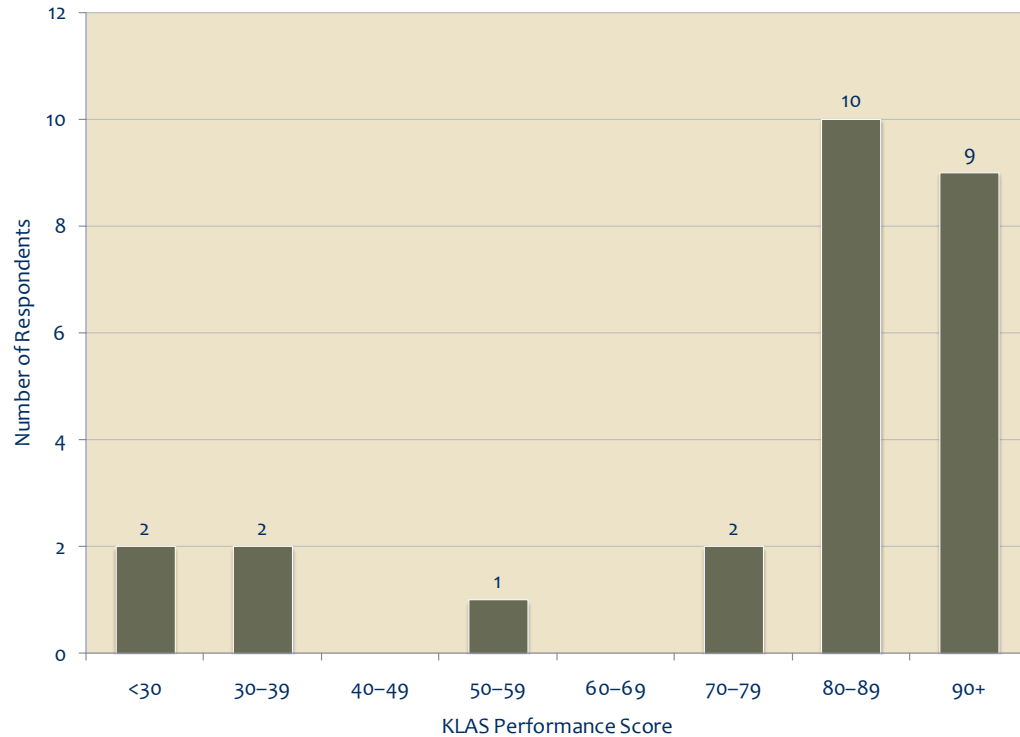


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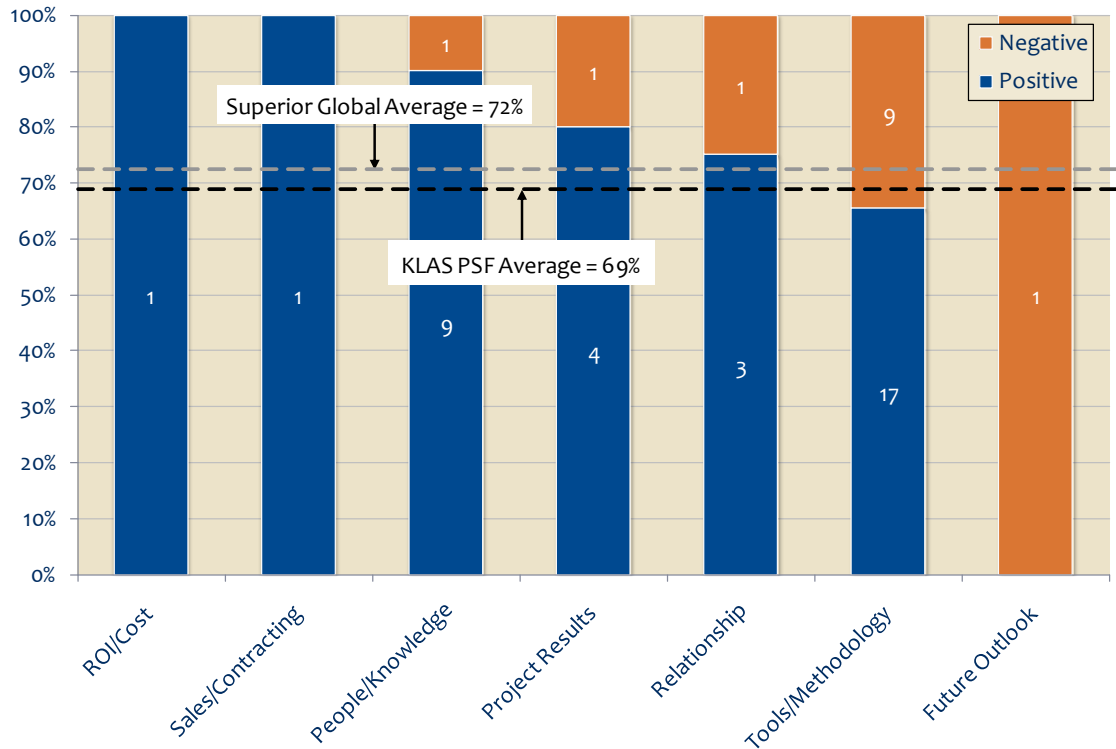


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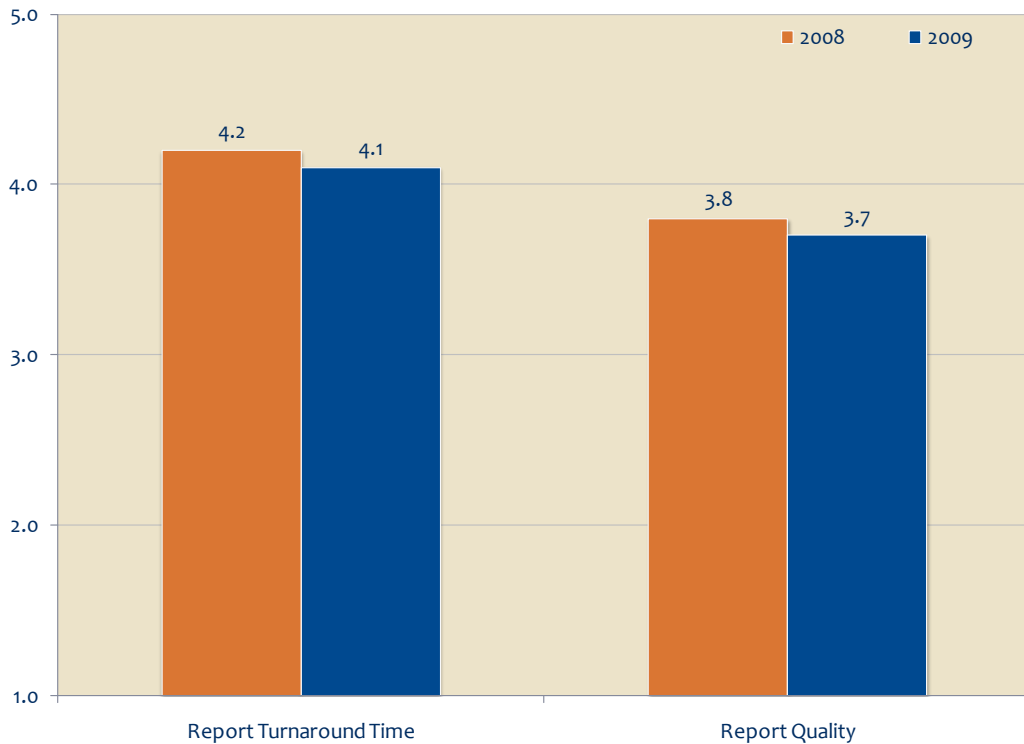


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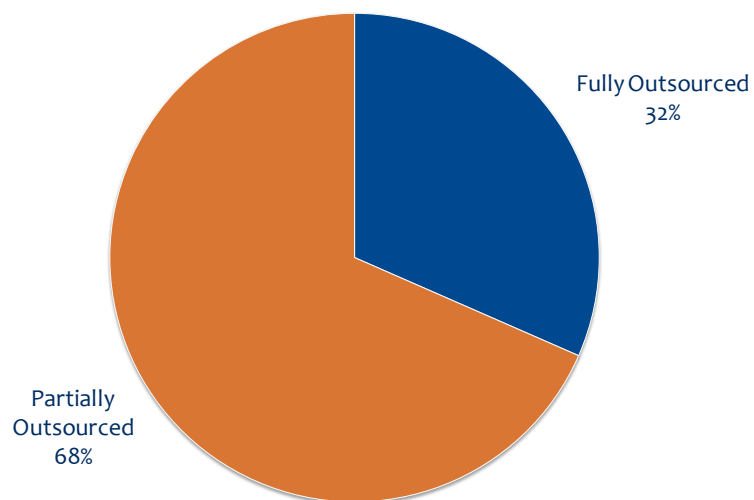


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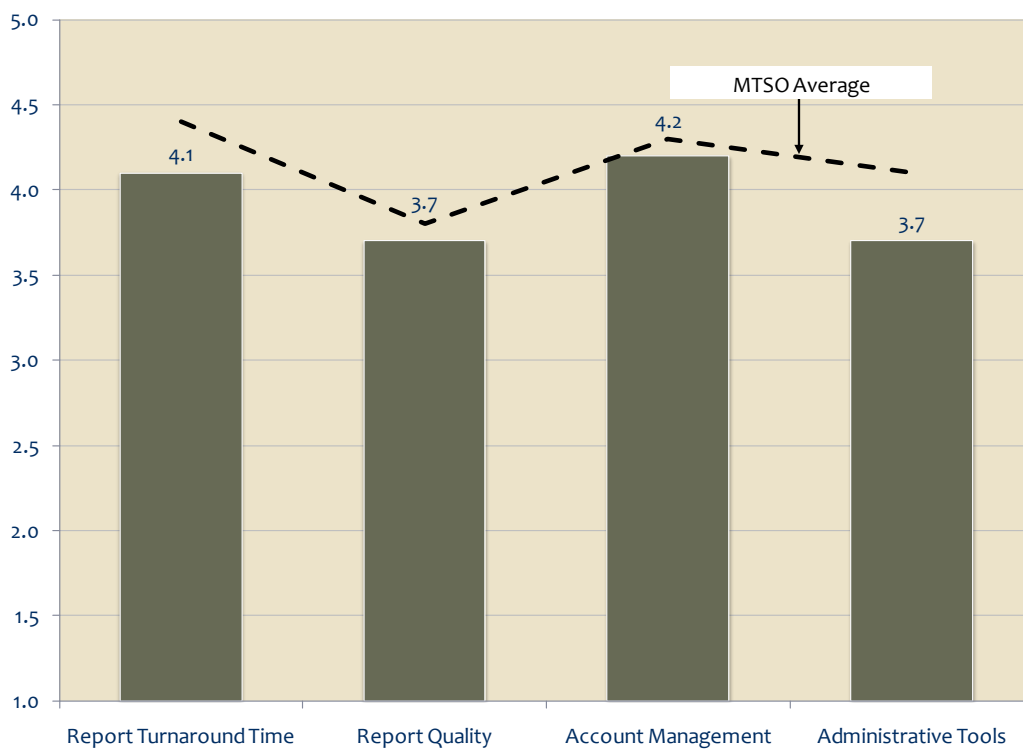
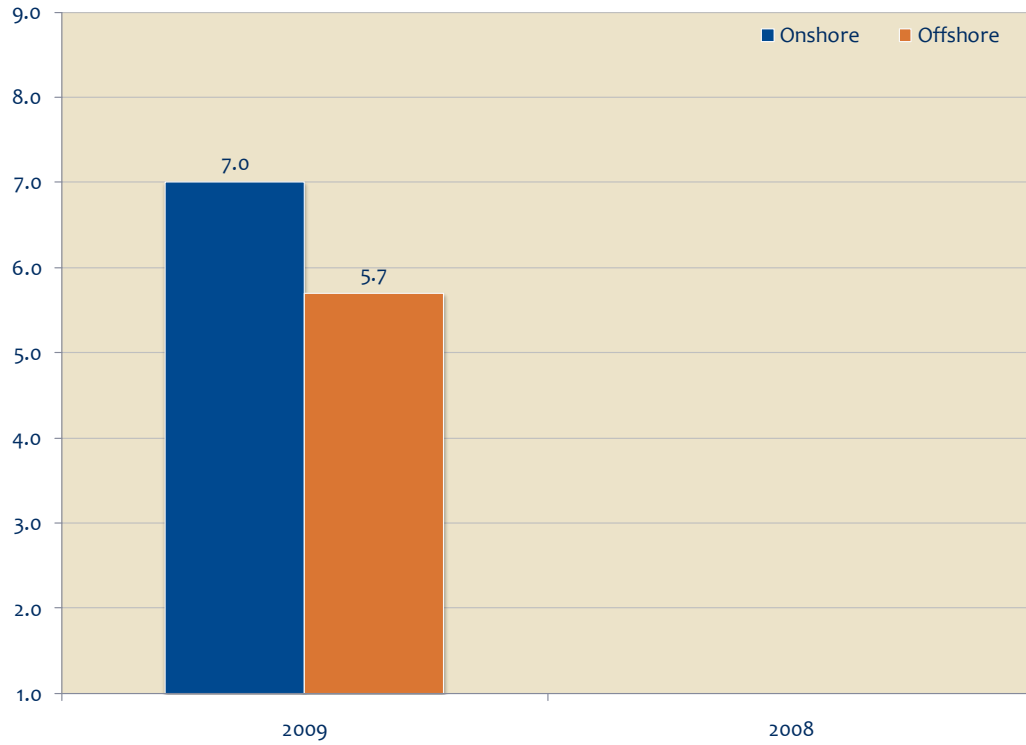
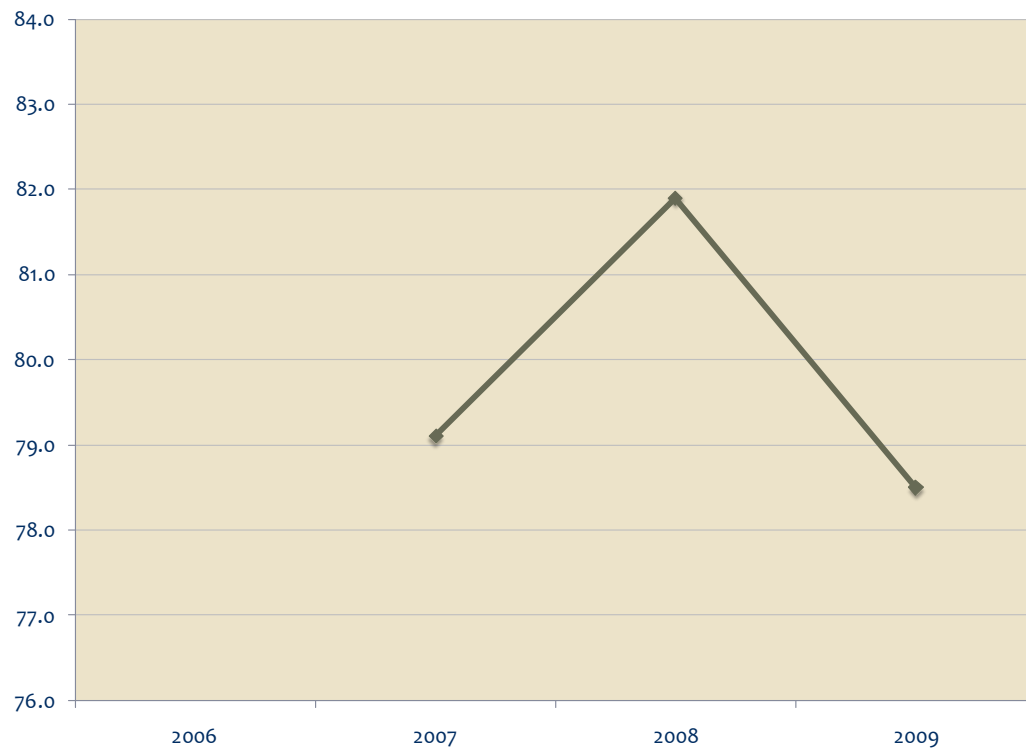


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Note: No data is shown for any area with less than three respondents.

Figure 101: Superior Global: Overall Score Trend





TRANSCEND SERVICES INC.

Figure 102: Transcend: Size of Provider Facilities (n=45)

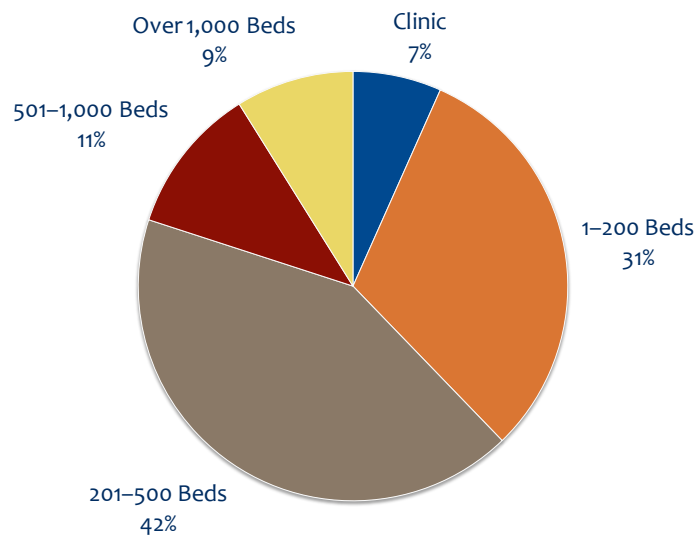


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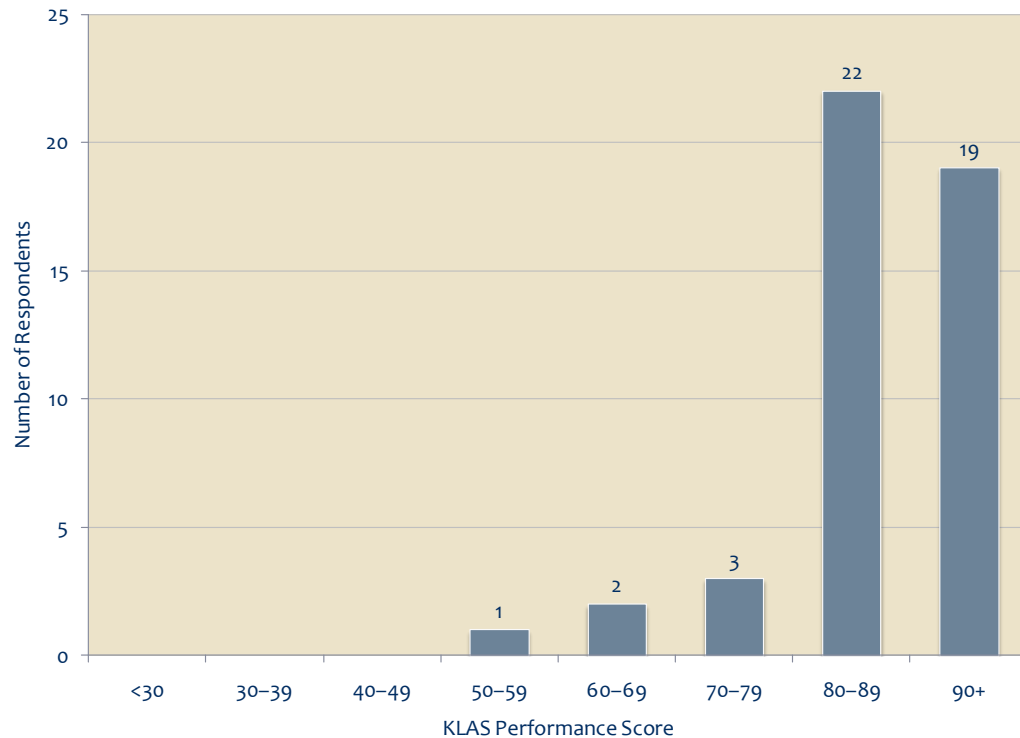


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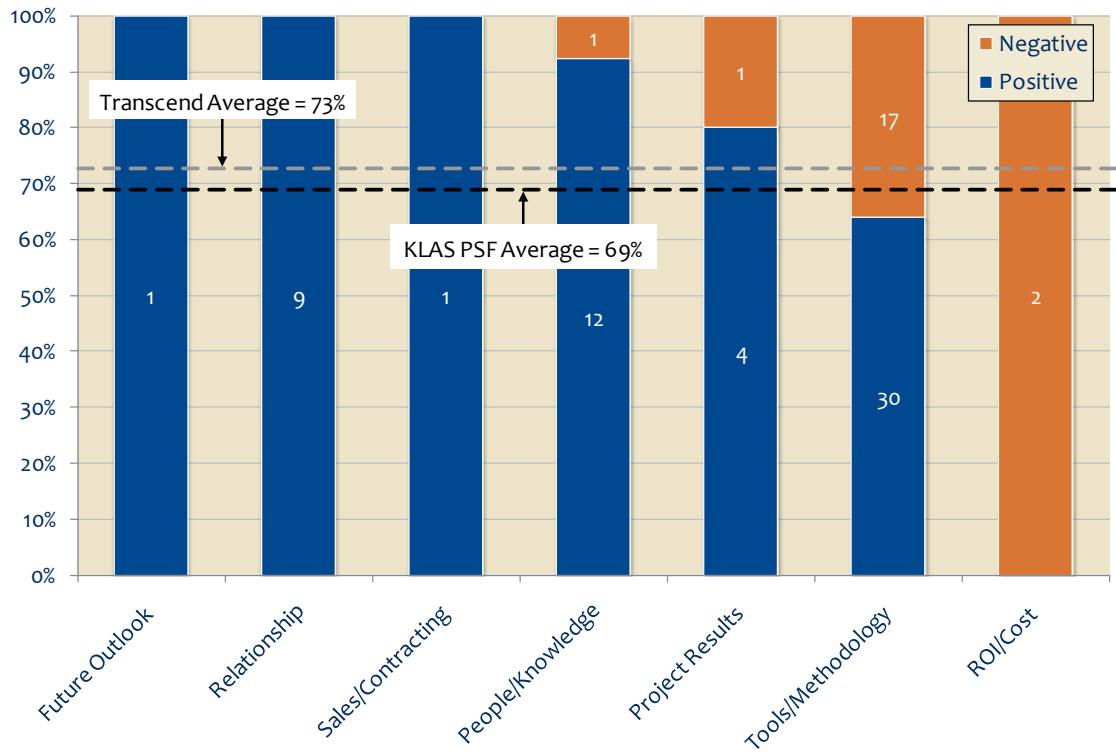


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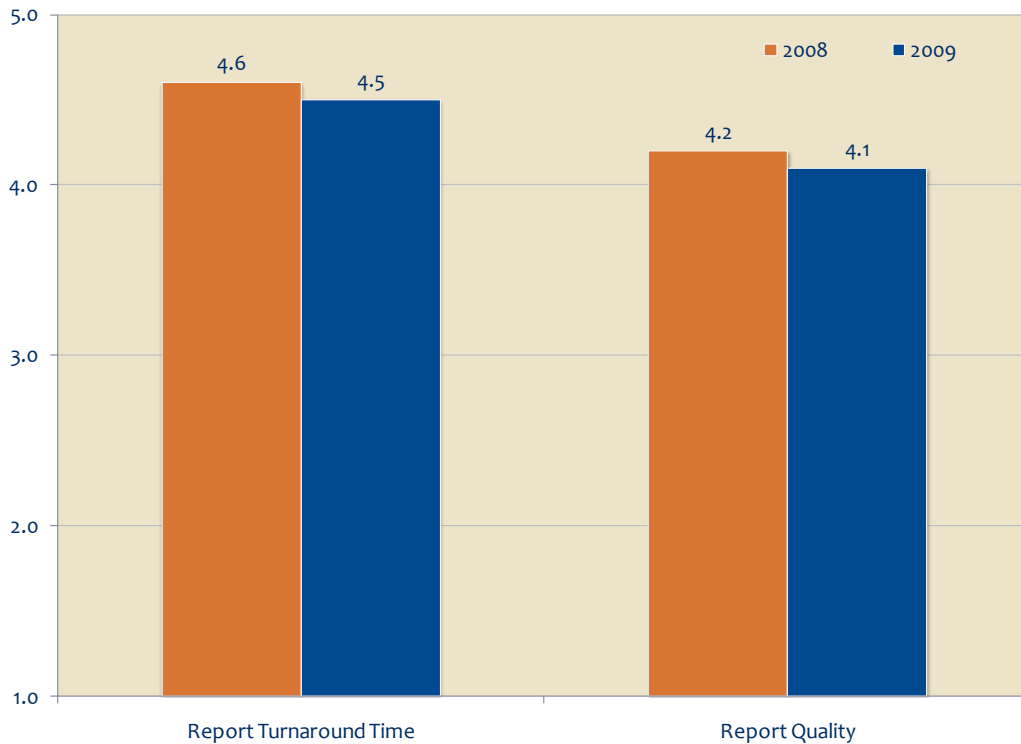


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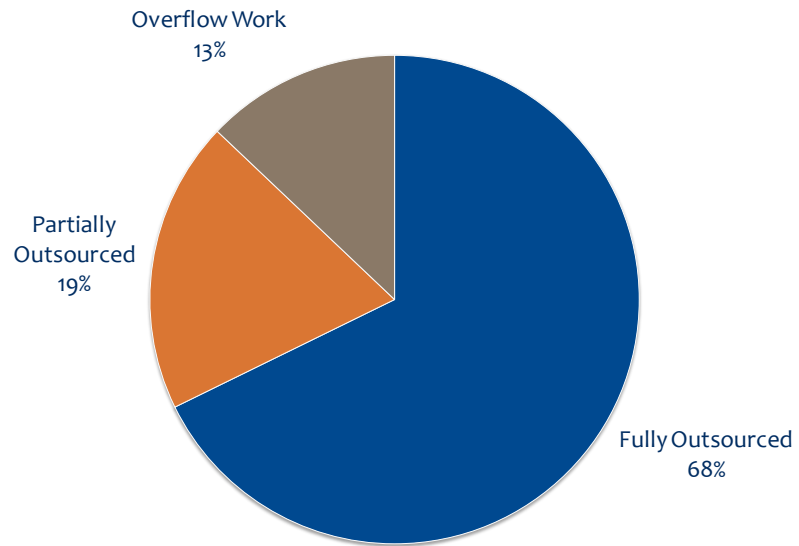


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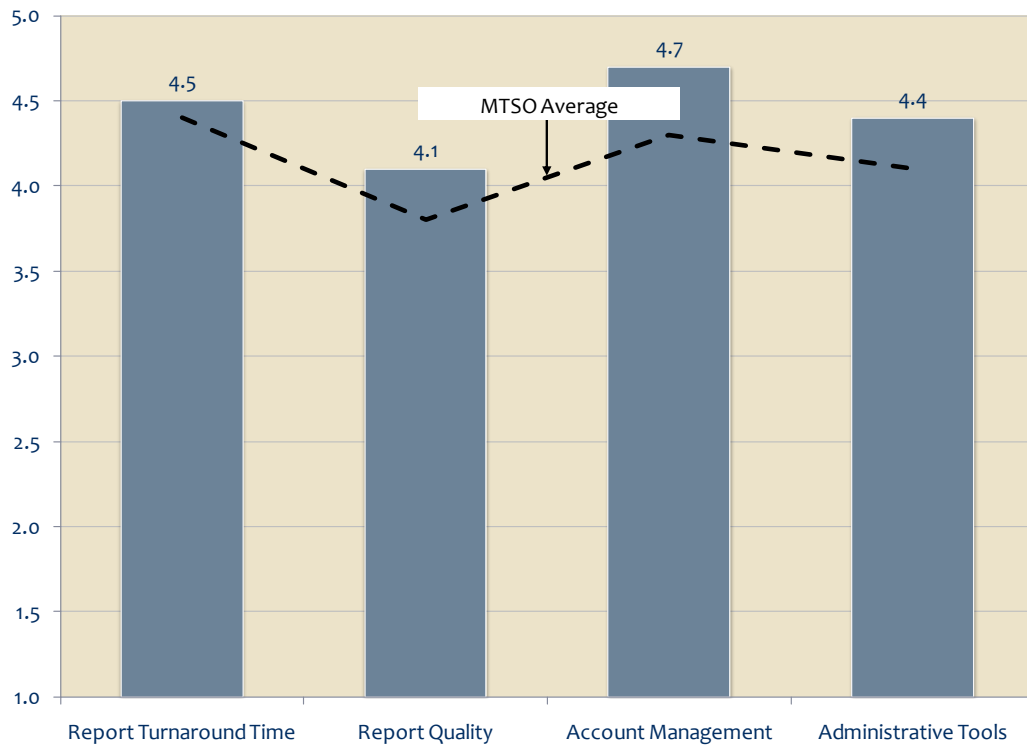
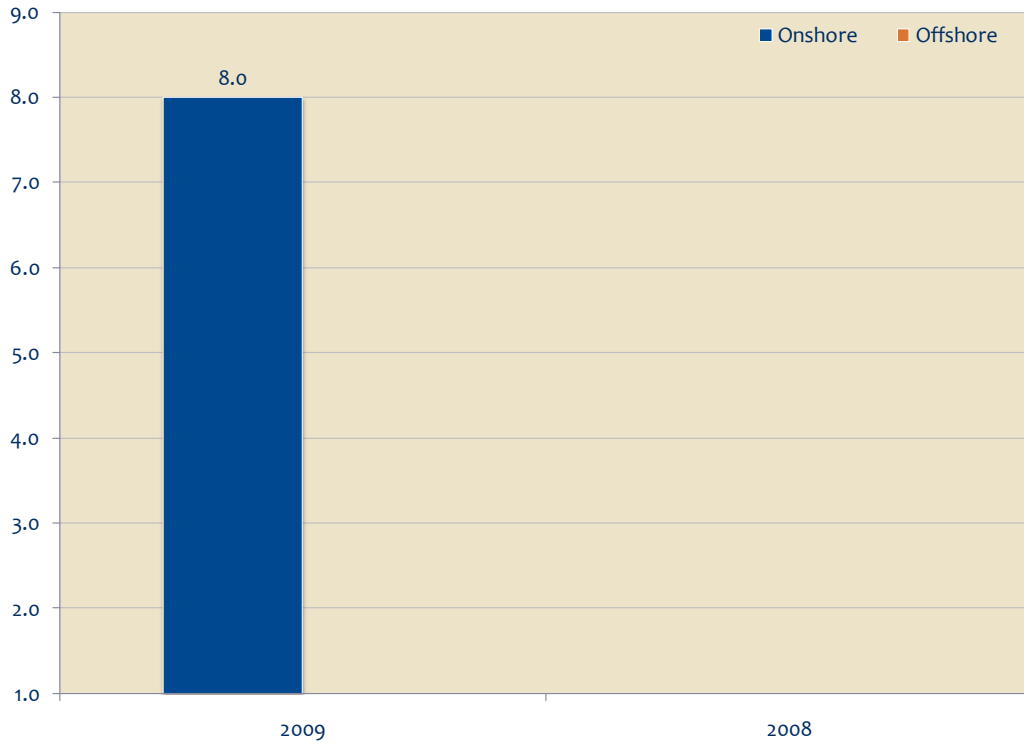
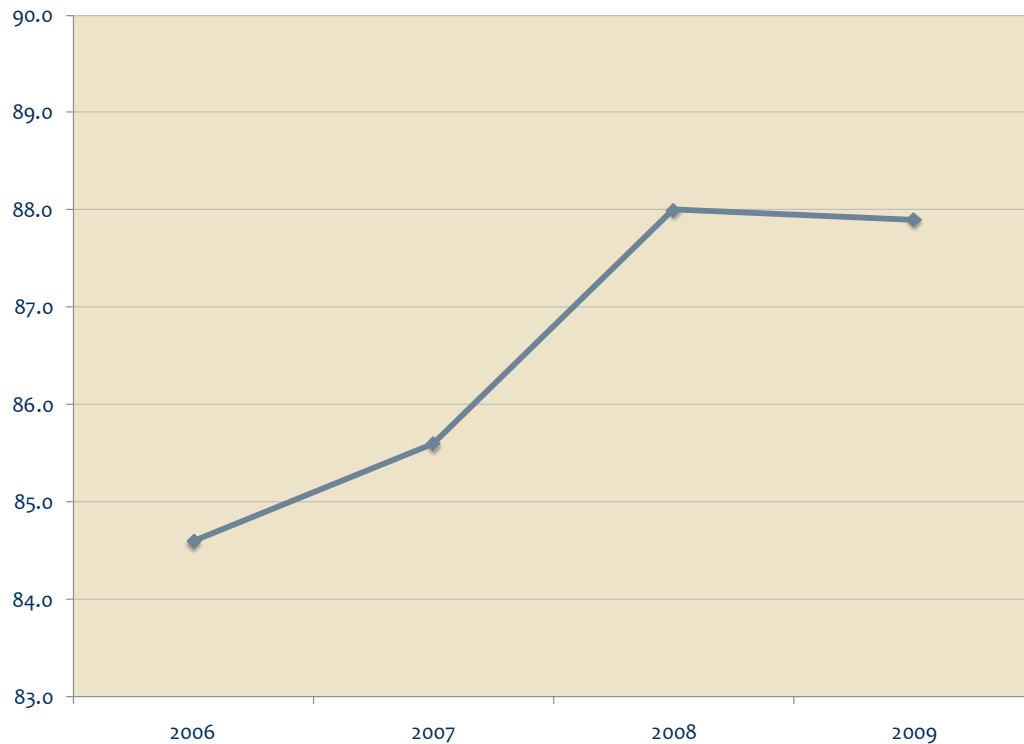


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TRANSTECH MEDICAL SOLUTIONS

Figure 110: TransTech: Size of Provider Facilities (n=21)

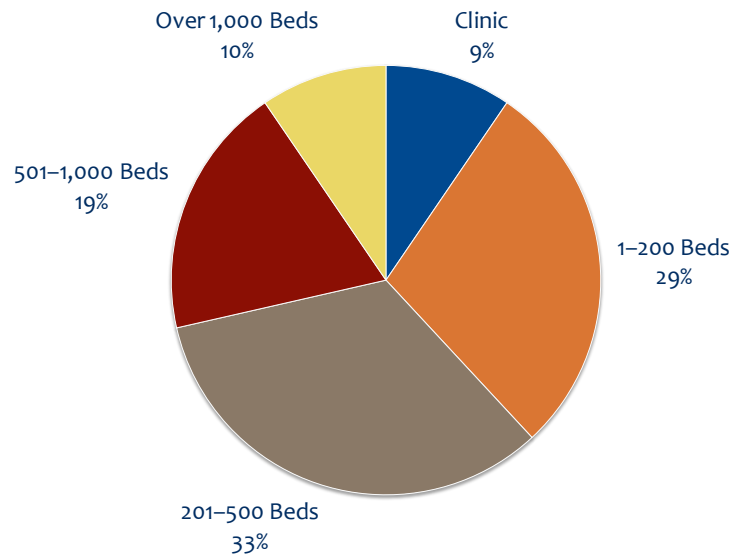


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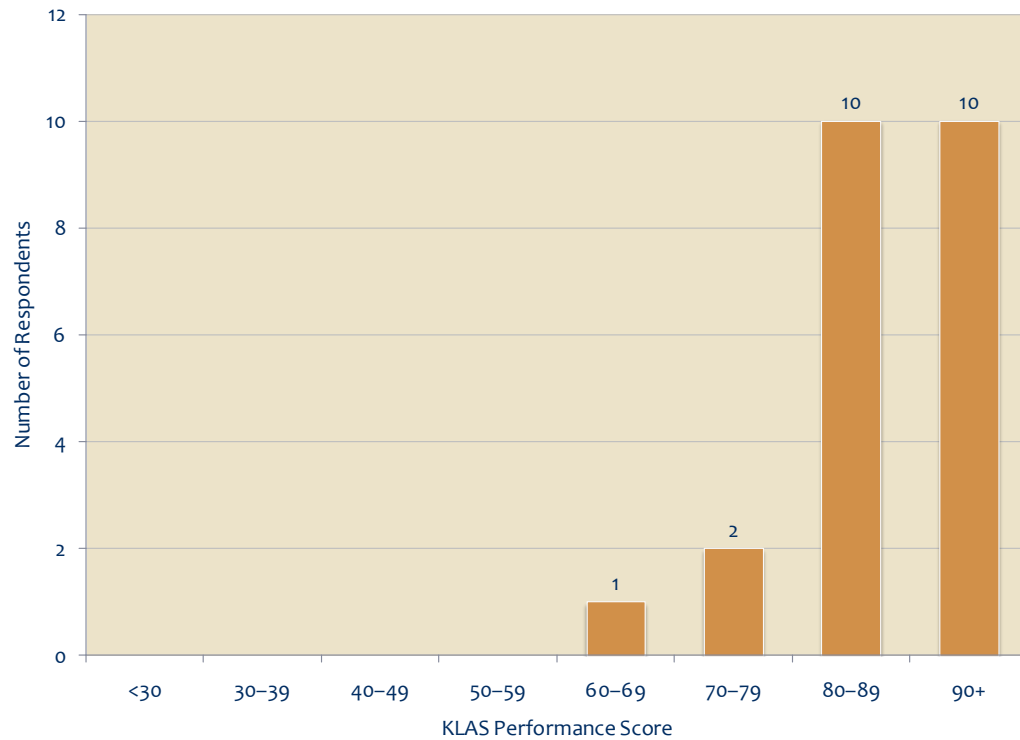


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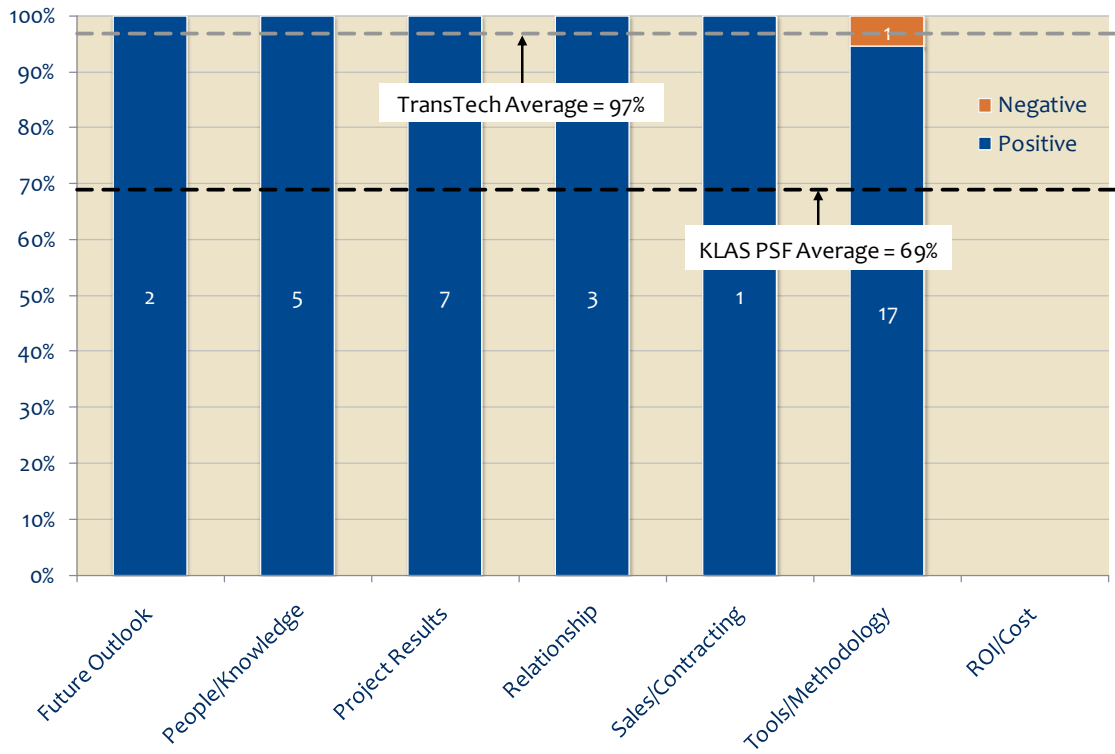


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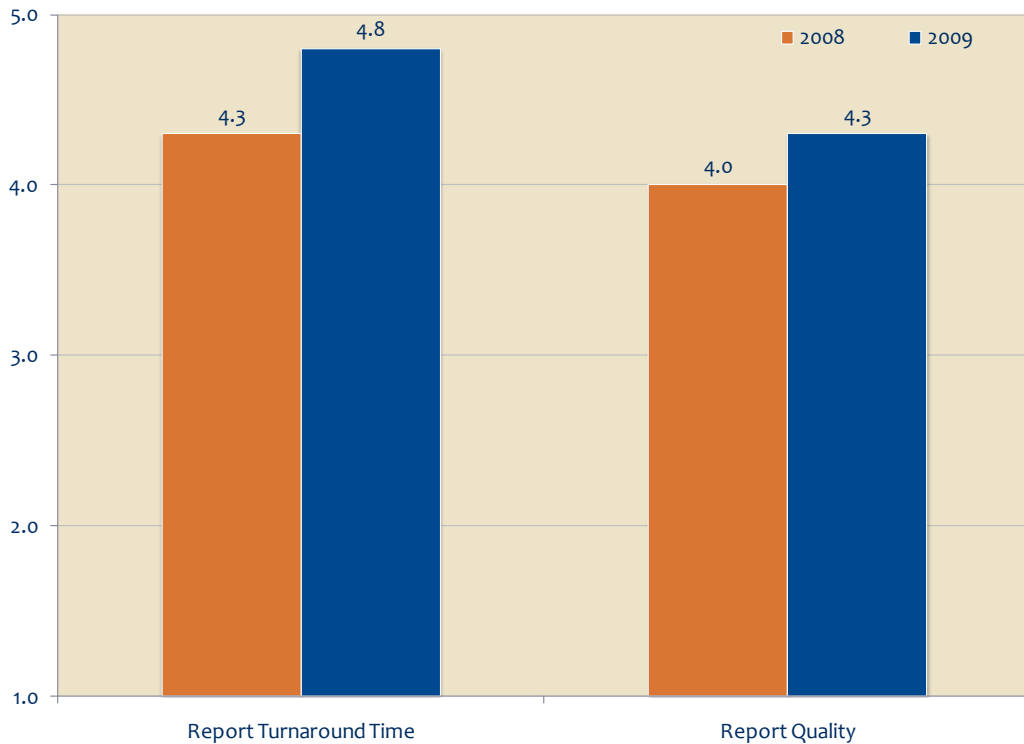


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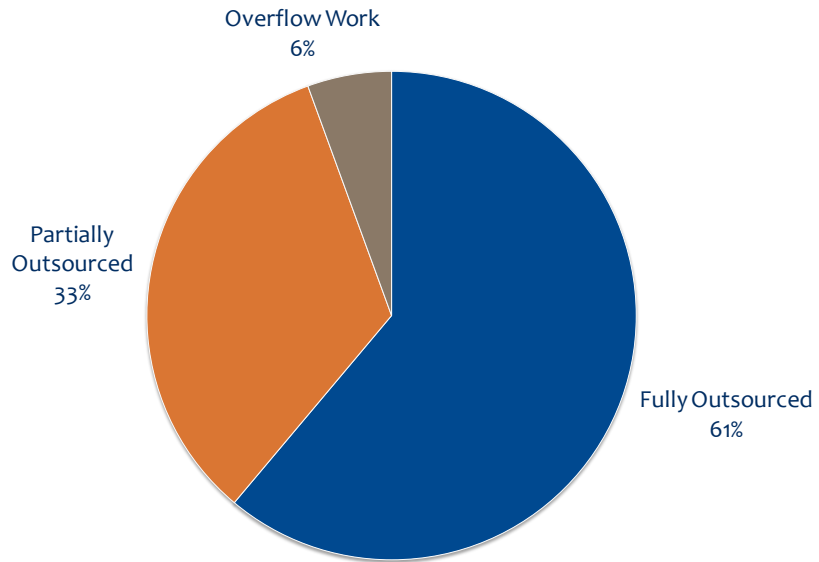


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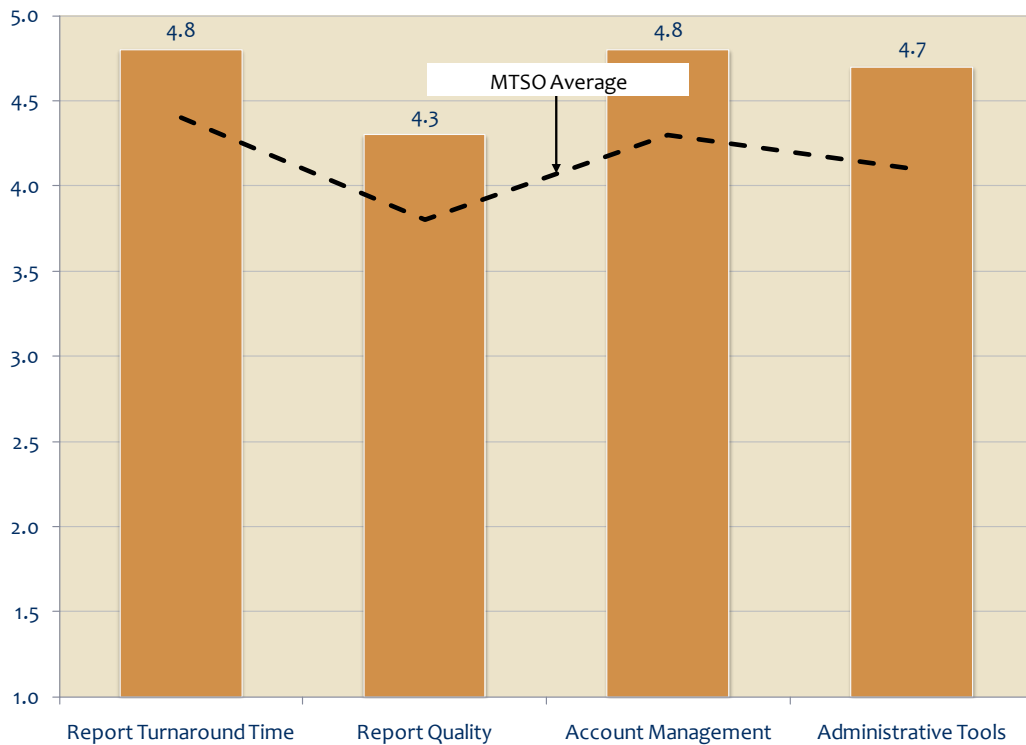
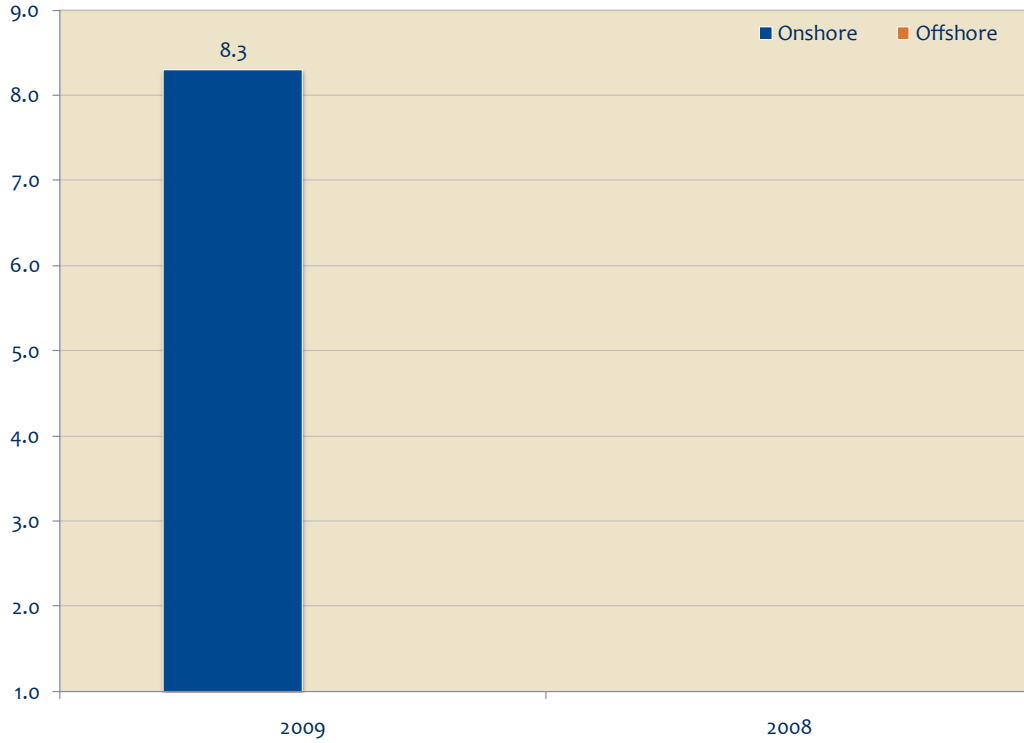
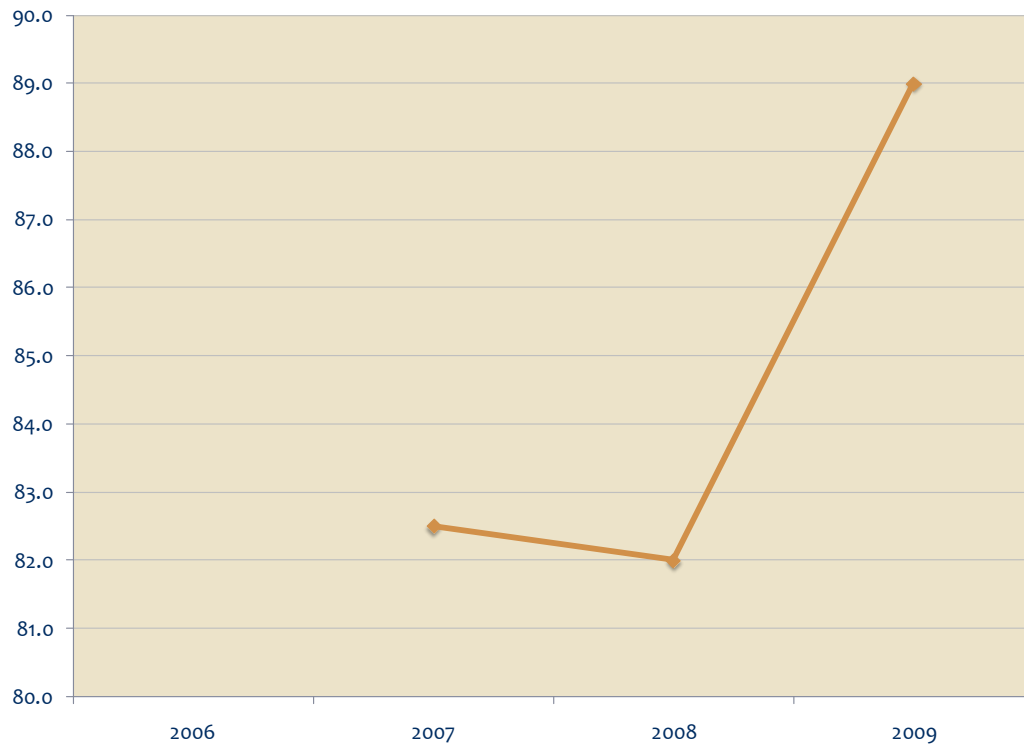


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Note: No data is shown for any area with less than three respondents.

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▪ WEBMEDX

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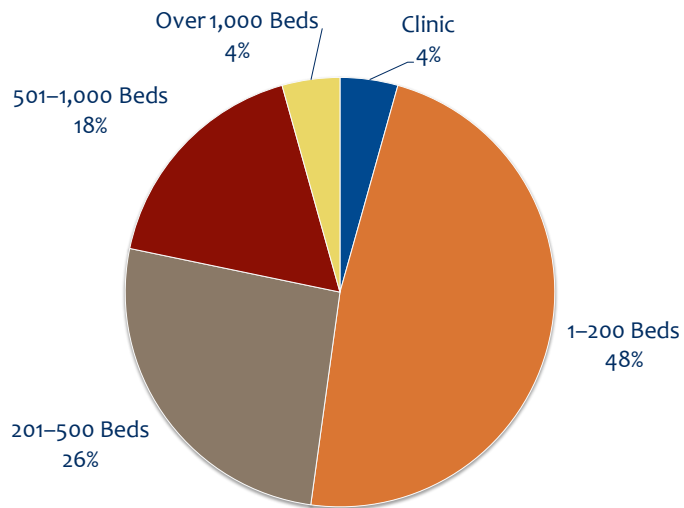


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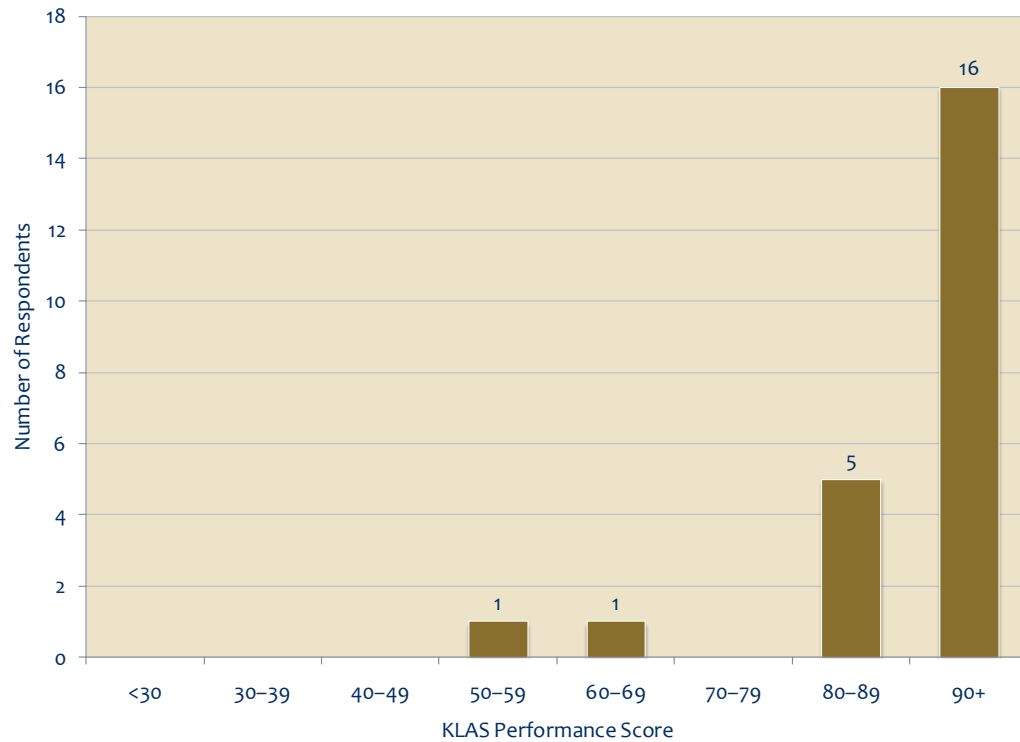


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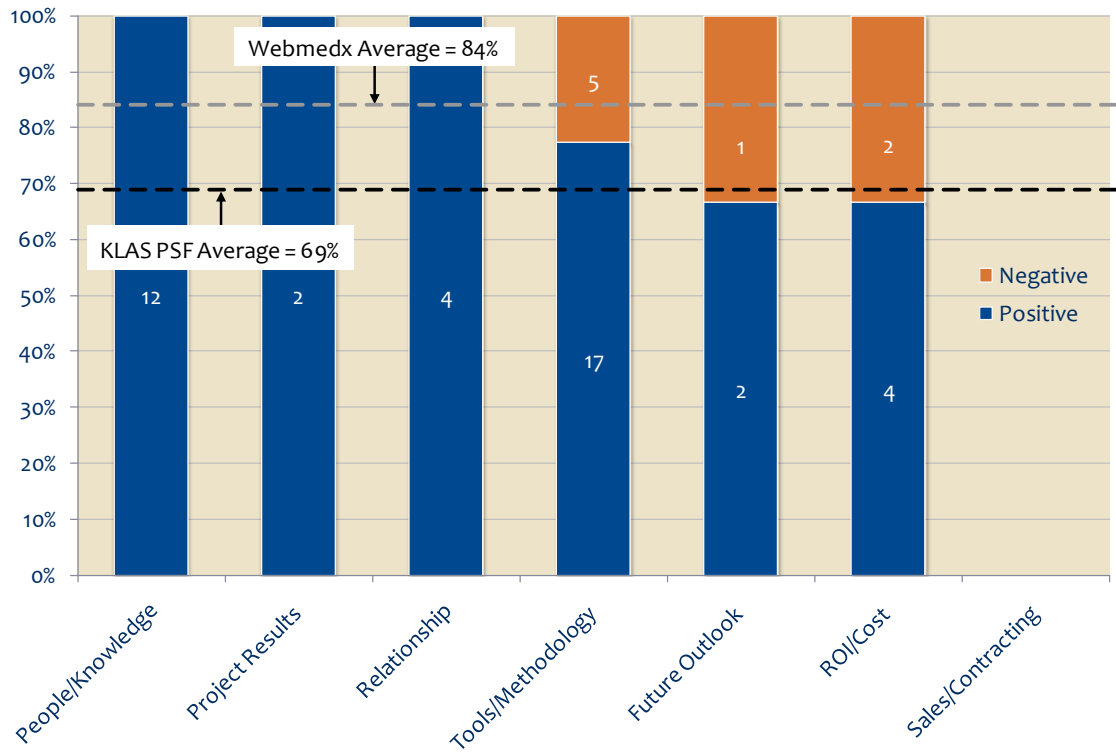


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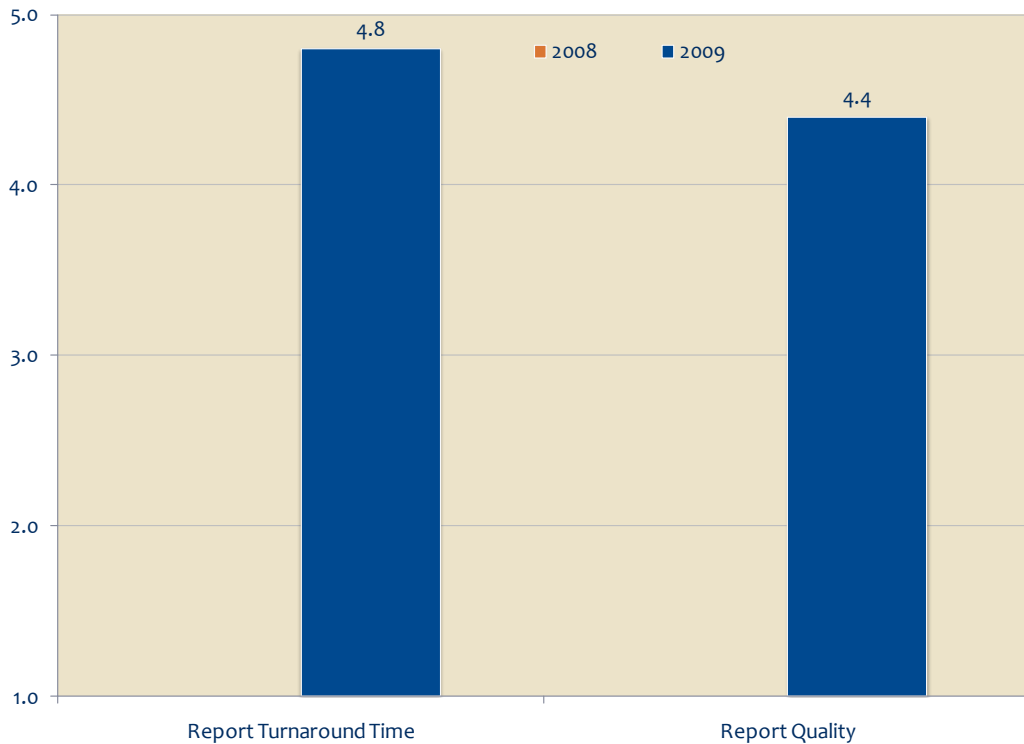


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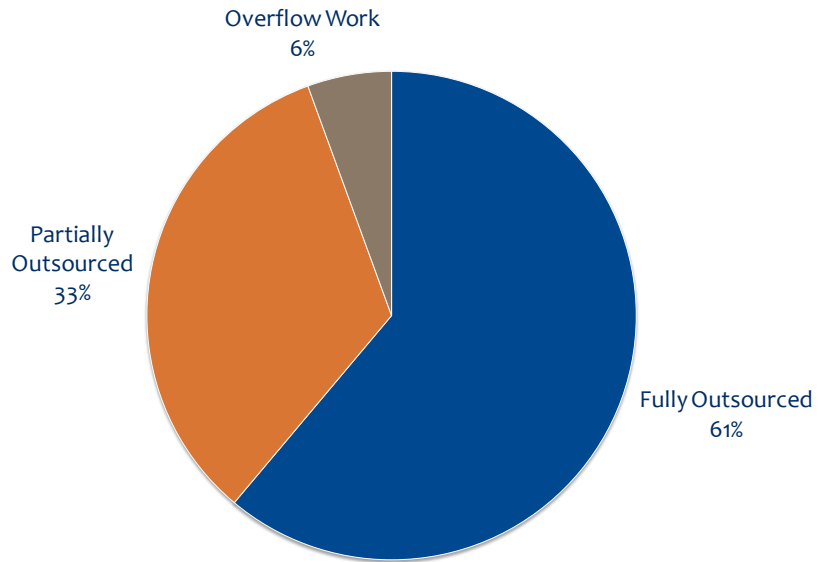


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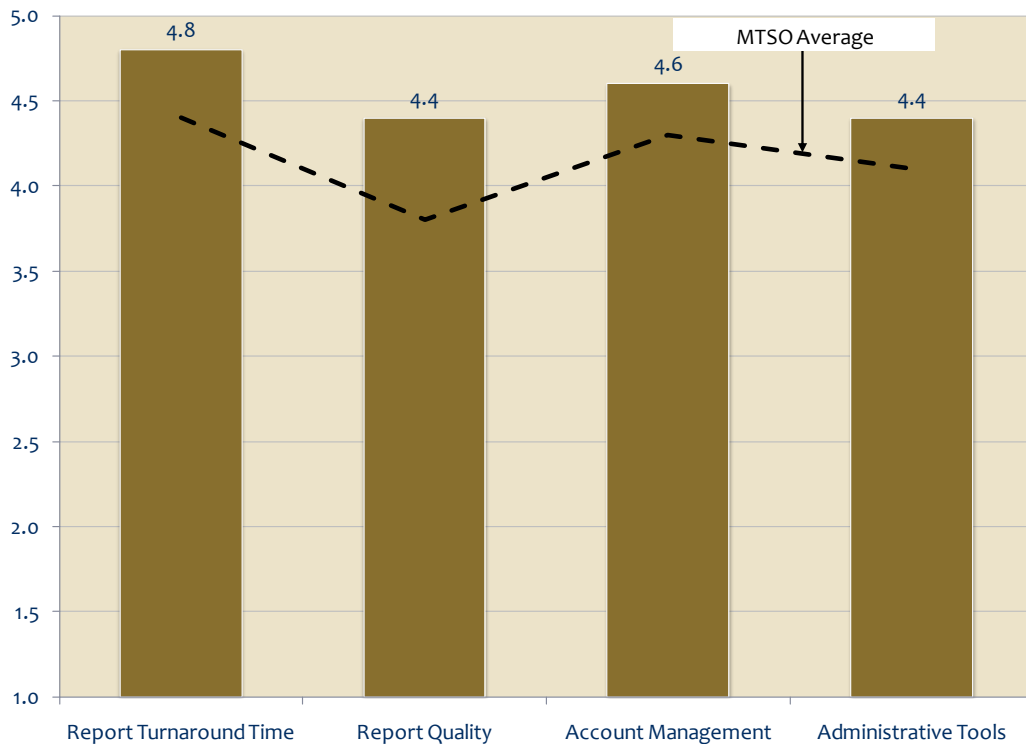
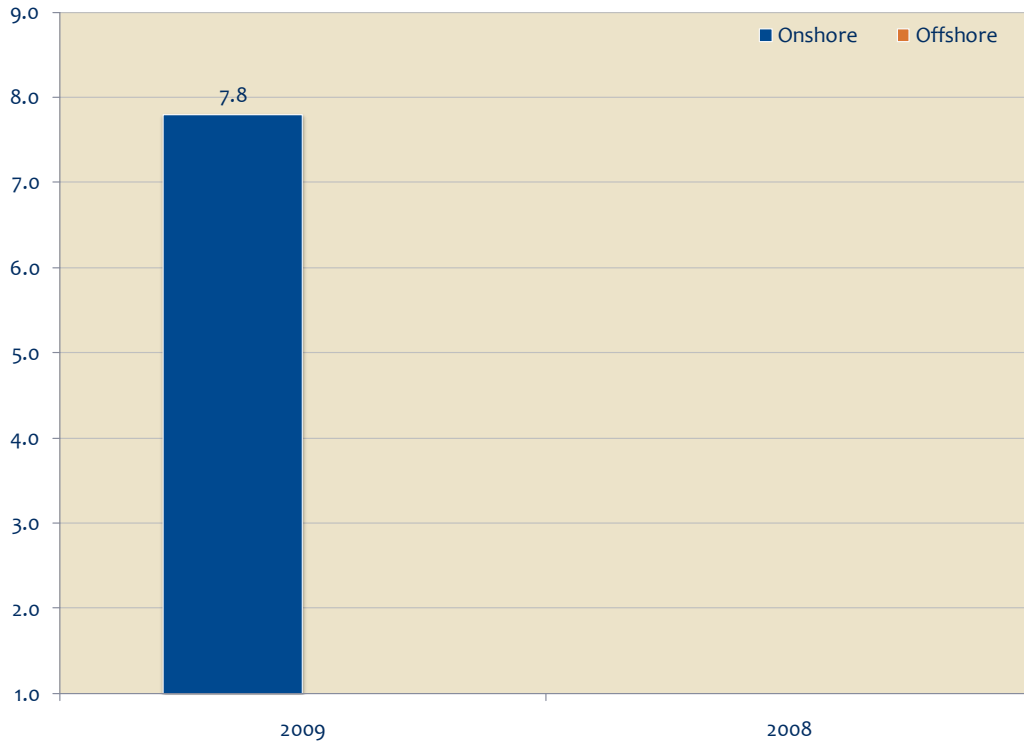


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Note: No data is shown for any area with less than three respondents and no 2008 data available for Webmedx.

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Expanded Results (200+ pages) for

Transcription Services: Steady Demand in a Volatile Market

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Market Detail



SPECIFIC RESEARCH DATA

Figure 126: Survey Participants by Title (n=508)

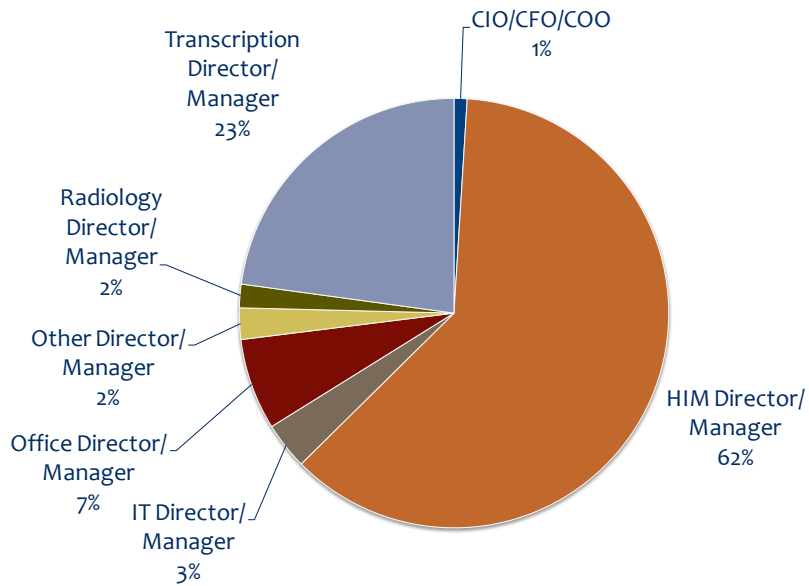


Figure 127: Overall: Size of Provider Organizations (n=483)

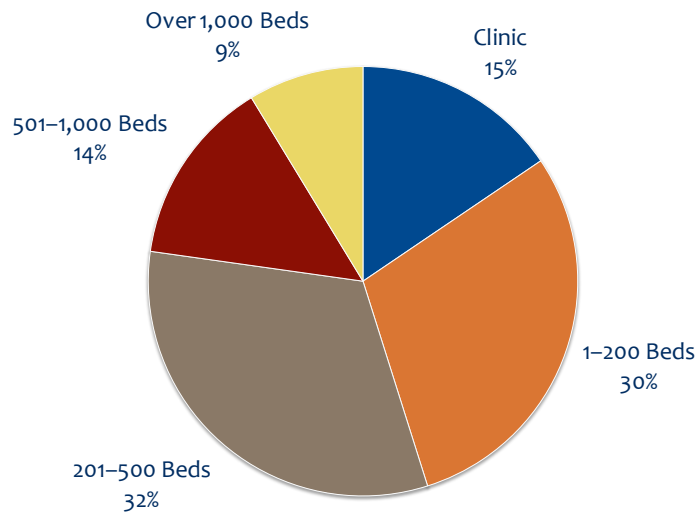


Figure 128: Overall: Total Transcription Volume Outsourced (n=300)

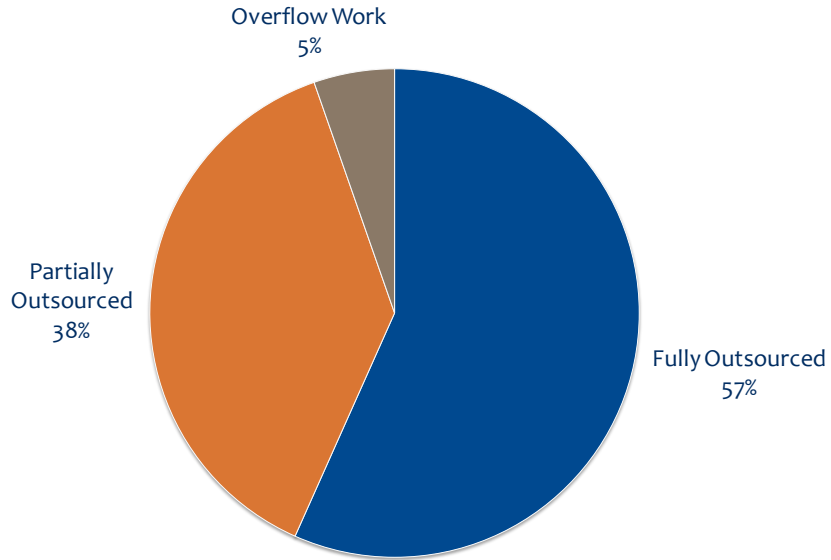


Figure 129: Overall: Total Transcription Volume Outsourced – by MTSO (n=300)

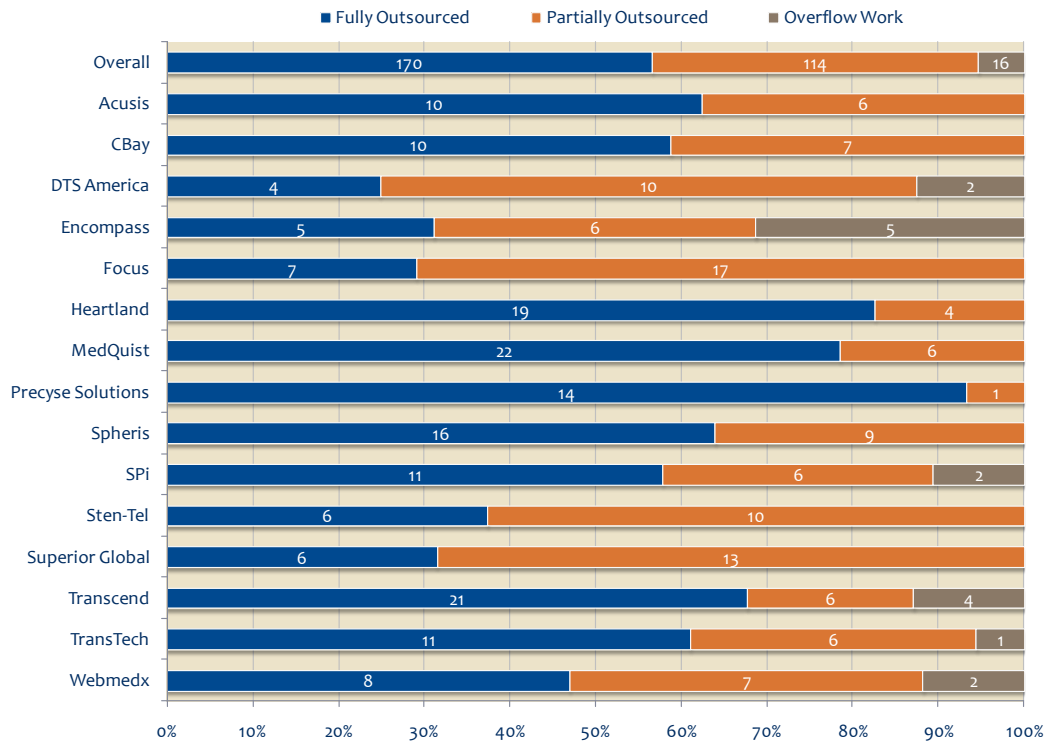


Figure 130: Overall: How are you charged? – Trend

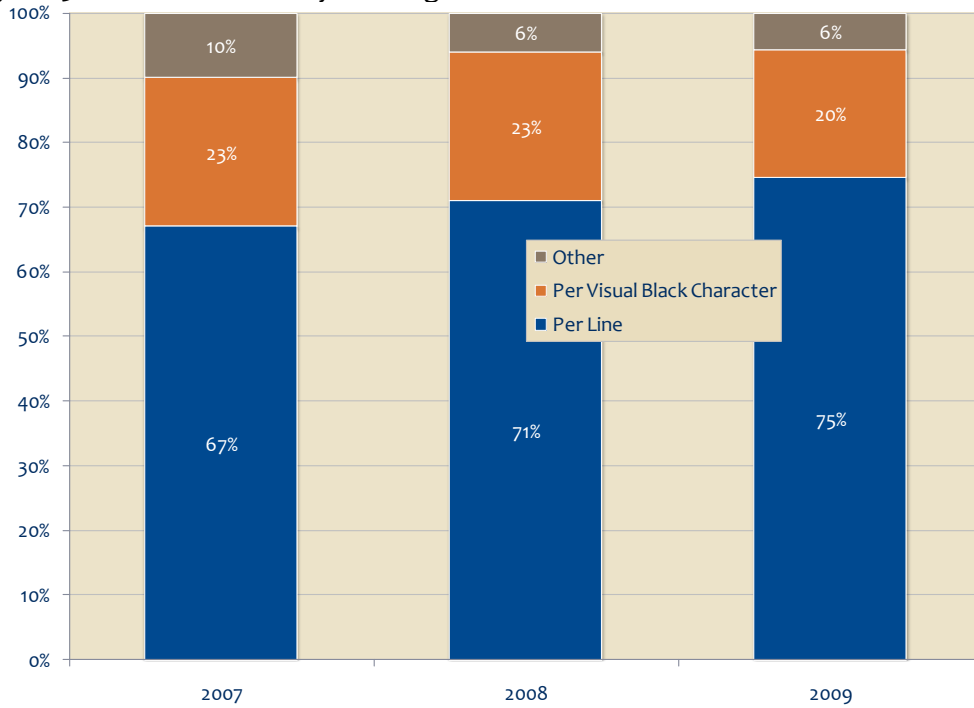
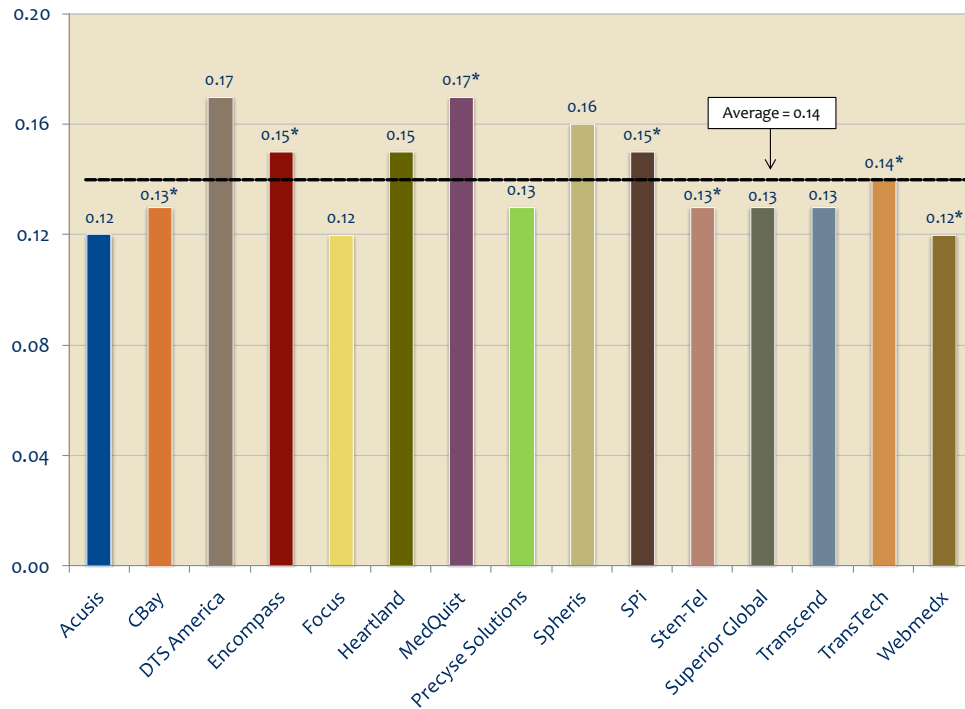
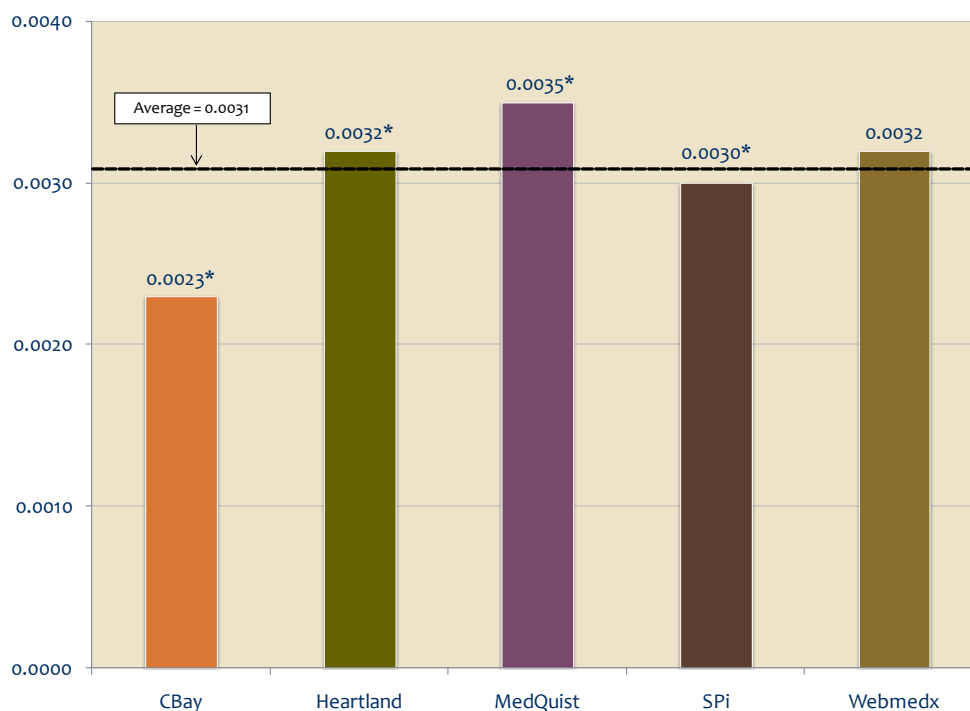


Figure 131: What is the rate per line?



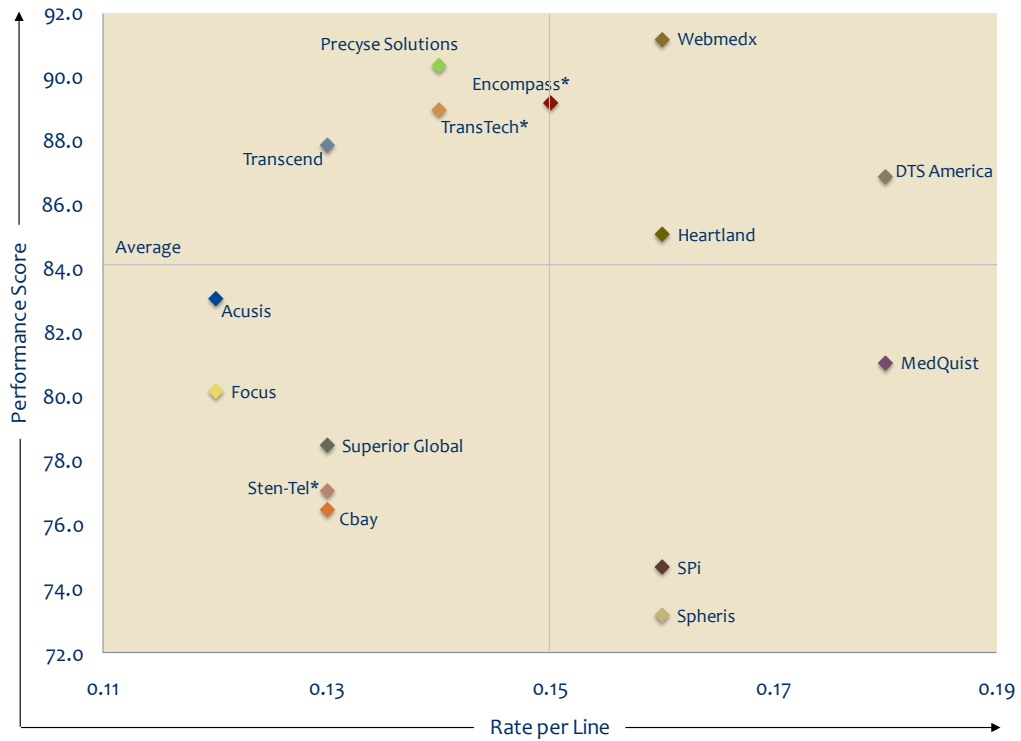
*Indicates between three and five respondents. Note: At times rates reported by providers vary from those reported by the MTSO. Additionally, variations can occur due to rounding and estimation.

Figure 132: What is the rate per VBC?



*Indicates between three and five respondents. MTSOs not shown did not have enough data to display.
 Note: At times rates reported by providers vary from those reported by the MTSO. Additionally, variations can occur due to rounding and estimation.

Figure 133: Rate vs. Performance Quadrant



*Encompass, Sten-Tel and TransTech each have between three and five respondents.

Where applicable, pricing was converted from a per VBC rate to a virtual line rate. DTS America and Precyse Solutions have a higher rate per line on this chart because of converted VBC rates that do not appear in the previous chart due to insufficient data points.

At times rates reported by providers vary from those reported by the MTSO. Additionally, variations can occur due to rounding and estimation.

Figure 134: MTSO Service Capability Summary Table

| MTSO | Transcription Services Onshore/Offshore | | Speech Recognition Editorial Services | | Speech Recognition Toolkit Ownership/Partnership | |
|-------------|---|-----------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|--|-------------------------|
| | Provider Reported | Vendor Reported | Provider Reported | Vendor Reported | Provider Reported | Vendor Reported |
| Acusis | Both | Both | Yes | Yes | Nuance | Nuance |
| CBay | Both | Both | Yes | Yes | M*Modal | M*Modal, Nuance |
| DTS America | NA | Both | Yes | Yes | Nuance | Nuance |
| Encompass | Onshore Only | Onshore Only | Yes | Yes | Nuance | Nuance, SoftMed |
| Focus | Both | Both | Yes | Yes | Nuance | Nuance |
| Heartland | Both | Offshore Only | Yes | Yes | Nuance | M*Modal |
| MedQuist | Both | Both | Yes | Yes | MedQuist | MedQuist |
| Precyse | Both | Both | Yes | Yes | Precyse | M*Modal |
| Spheris | Both | Both | Yes | Yes | M*Modal, Spheris | Spheris |
| SPi | Both | Both | Yes | Yes | N/A | M*Modal |
| Sten-Tel | Both | Both | Yes | Yes | Nuance | Nuance, M*Modal |
| Superior | Both | Both | Yes | Yes | Nuance | Nuance |
| Transcend | Both | Both | Yes | Yes | Nuance | Nuance, In-house tool |
| TransTech | Both | Onshore Only | Yes | Yes | Nuance | Dolbey, Nuance, M*Modal |
| Webmedx | Onshore Only | Onshore Only | Yes | Yes | M*Modal, Nuance | M*Modal, Nuance |

Figure 135: Overall: Is the MTSO doing any back-end speech editing? (n=297)

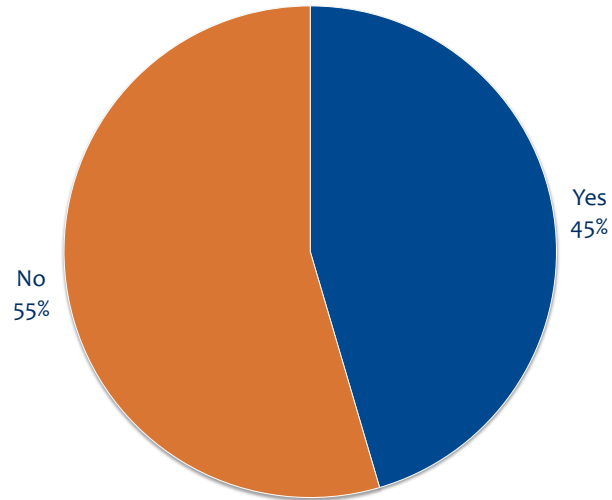


Figure 136: Overall: Is the MTSO doing any back-end speech editing? – by MTSO (n=297)

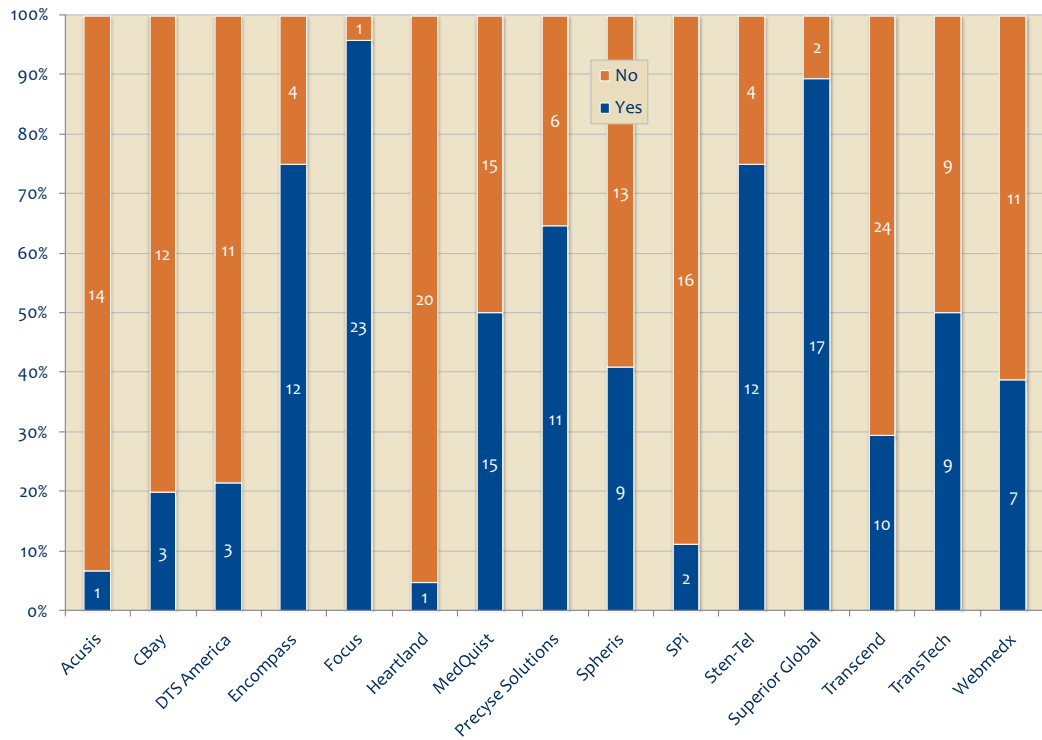


Figure 137: Overall: If yes, what percentage of the MTSO's work is editing? – by MTSO (n=96)

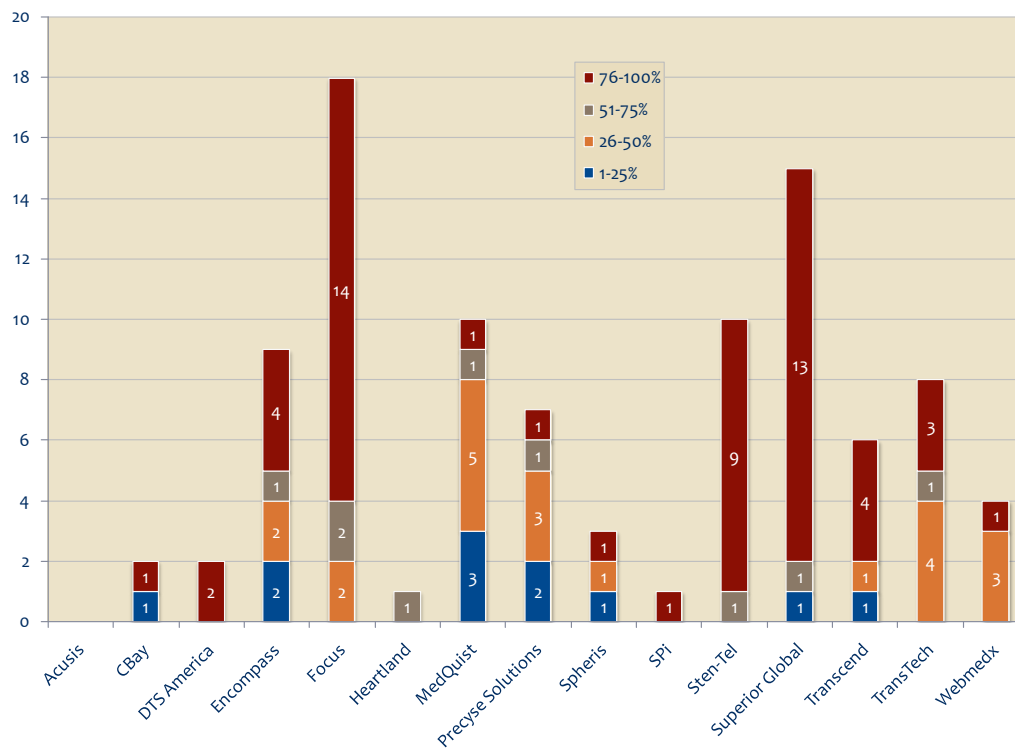


Figure 138: Overall: If yes, what back-end speech editing software vendor/product does the MTSO use? (n=134)

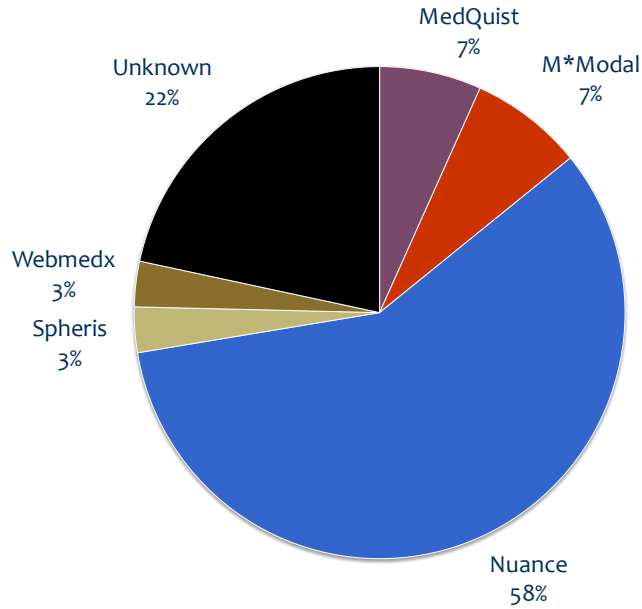


Figure 139: Overall: If yes, what back-end speech editing software vendor/product does the MTSO use? – by MTSO (n=134)

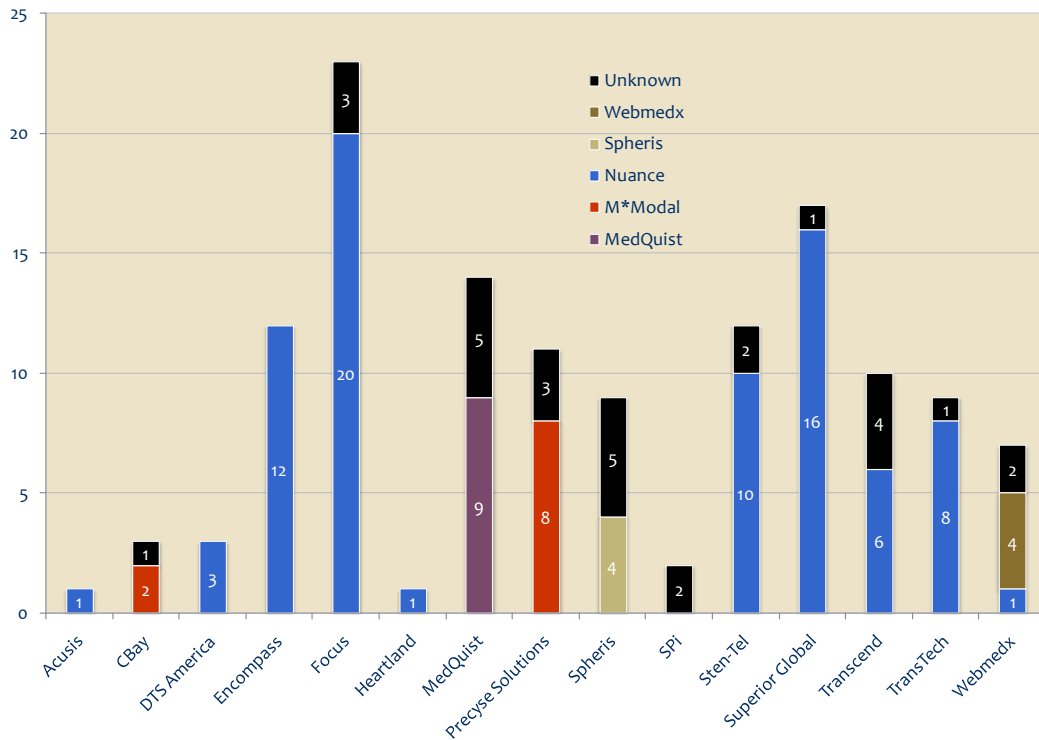


Figure 140: Overall: Has your dictation volume changed compared to last year? (n=278)

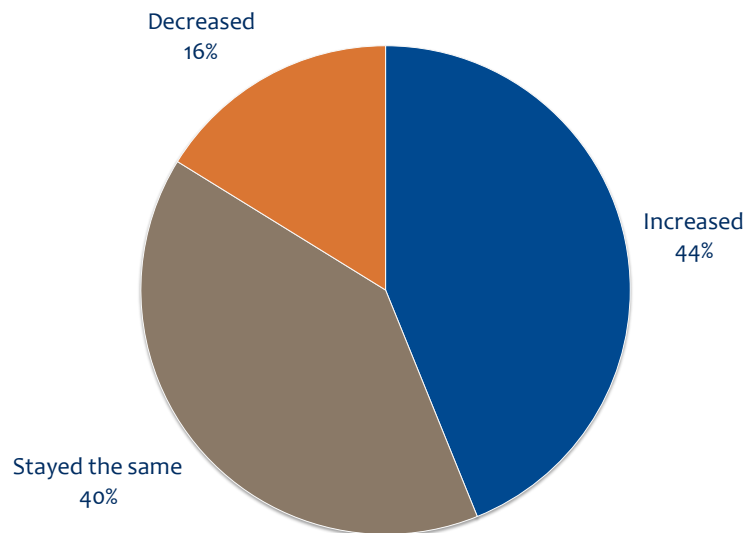
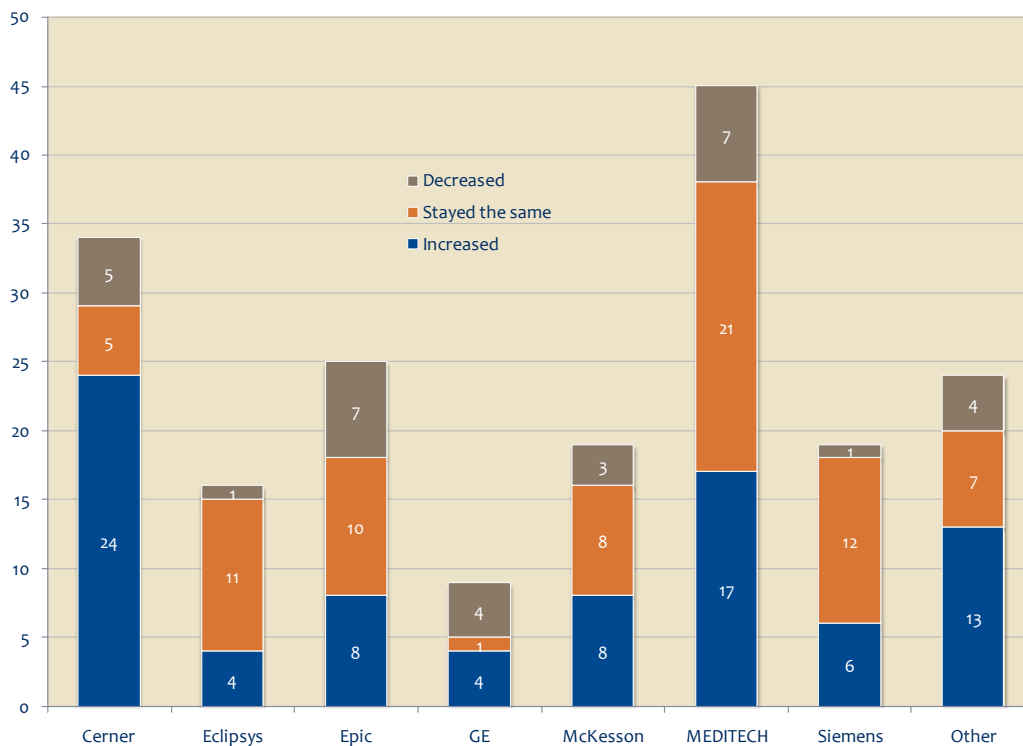


Figure 141: Change in Volume – by Inpatient EMR Vendor



Note: No clinic data is shown on this chart. Only Inpatient EMR is represented.

Figure 142: Change in Volume – by Front-end Speech Recognition Vendor

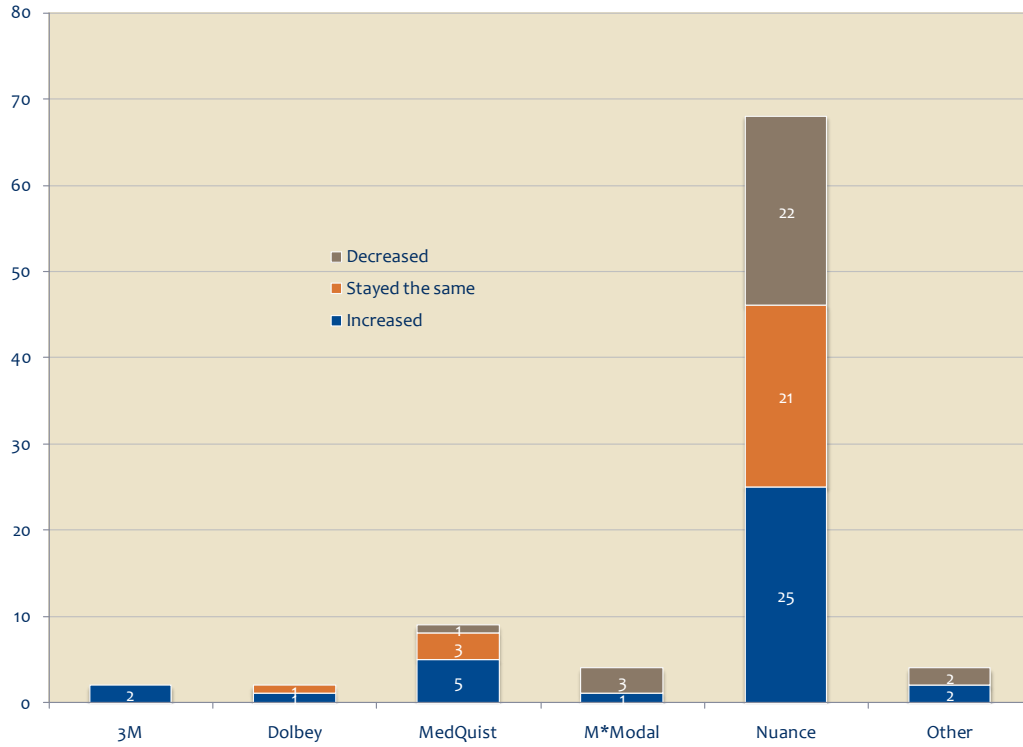


Figure 143: Change in Volume – by Back-end Speech Recognition Vendor

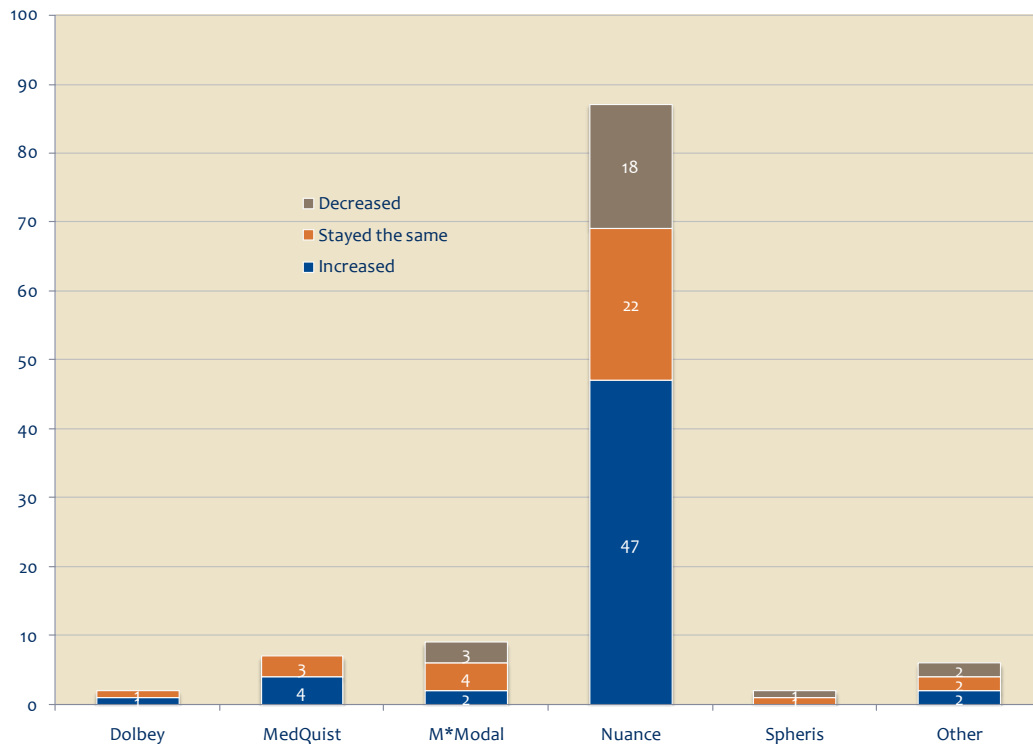


Figure 144: Overall: If there was an increase in volume, what has been the main cause? (n=114)

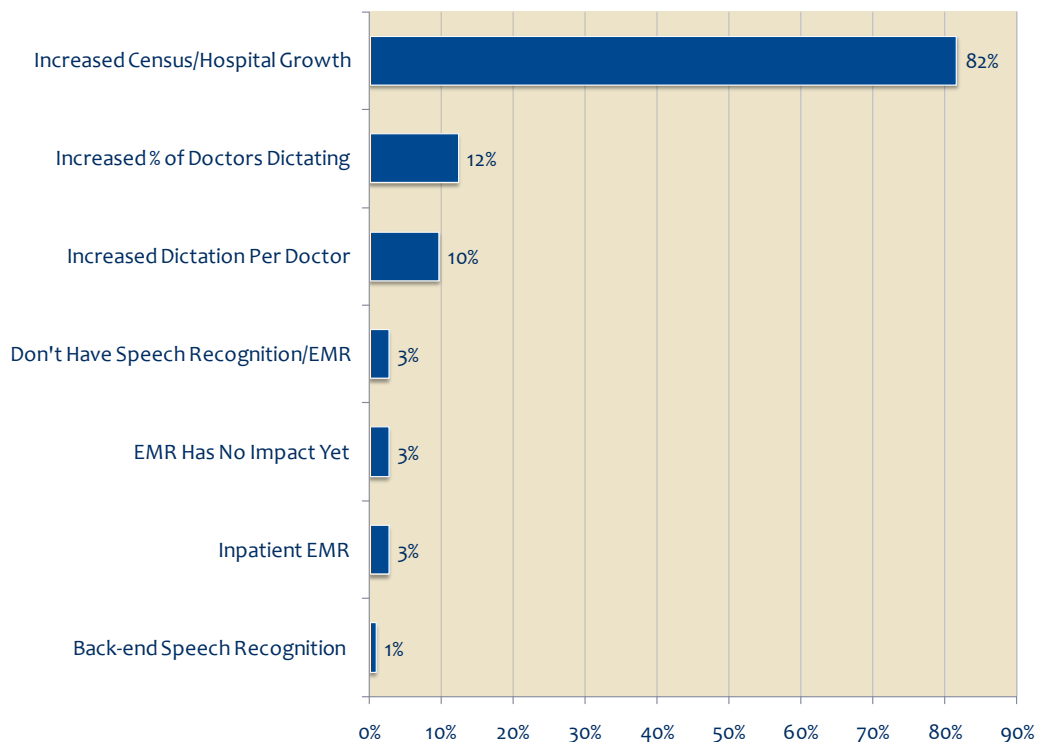


Figure 145: Overall: If there was a decrease in volume, what has been the main cause? (n=43)

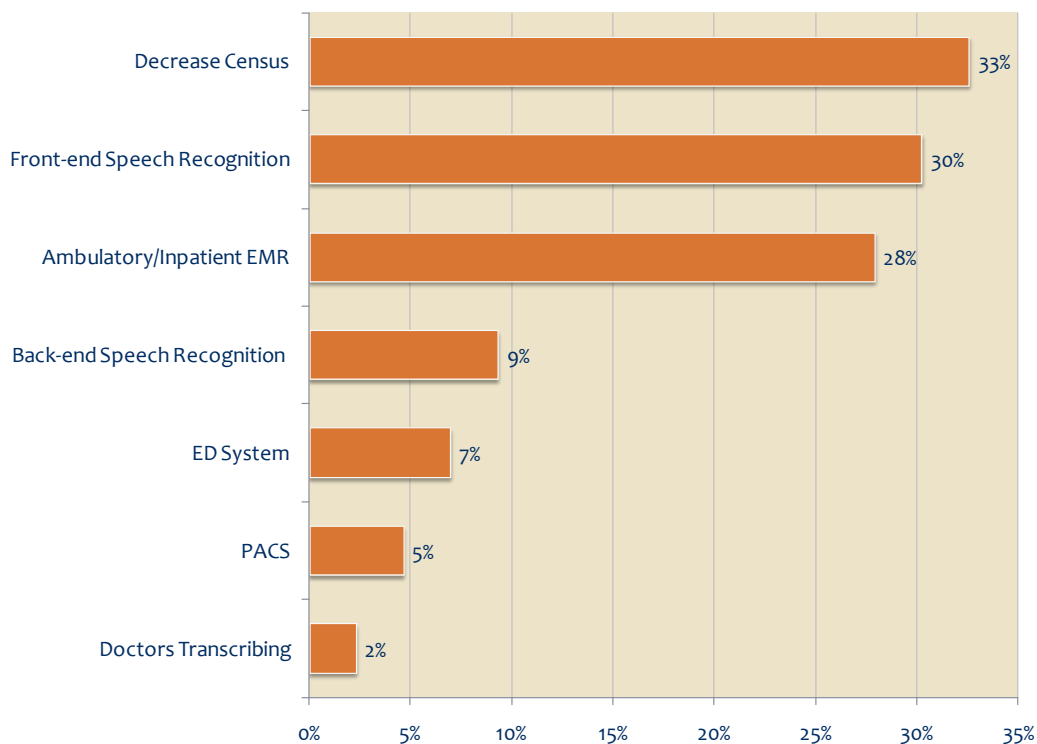


Figure 146: Volume Decreased because of EMR – by EMR Vendor (n=18)

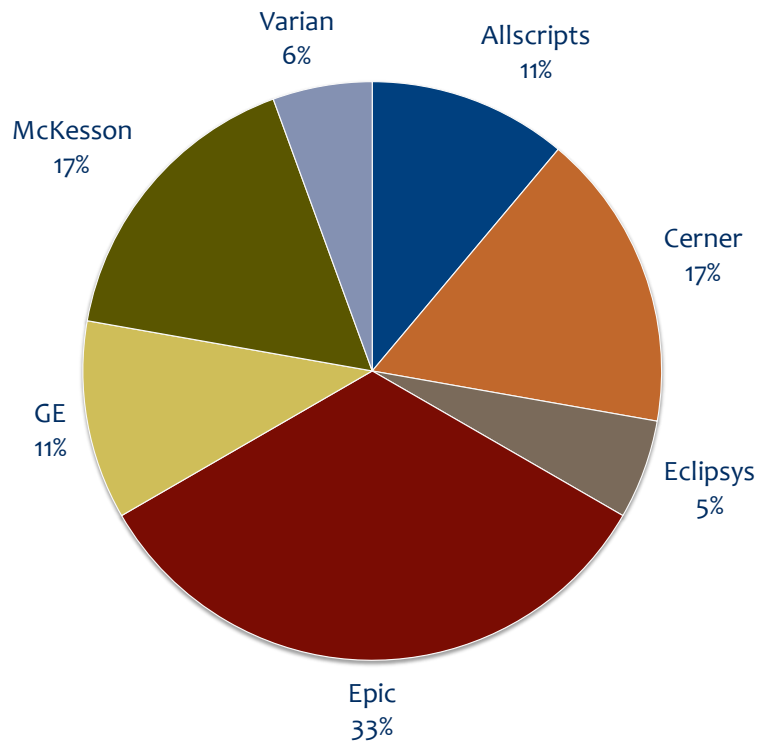


Figure 147: Volume Decreased because of Speech Recognition – by Speech Vendor (n=20)

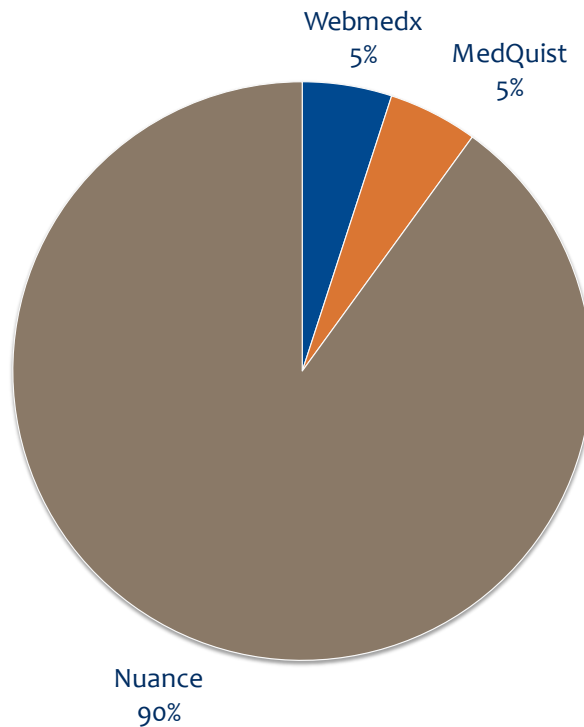


Figure 148: Service Ratings – by Area (n=315)

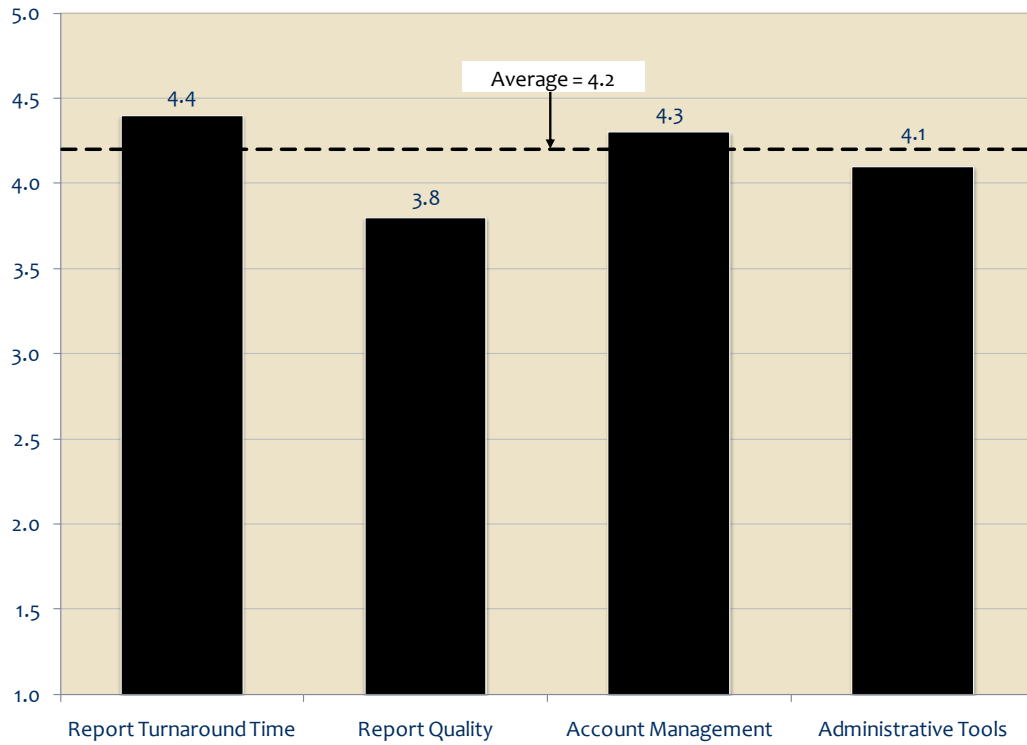


Figure 149: Service Ratings – by MTSO (n=315)

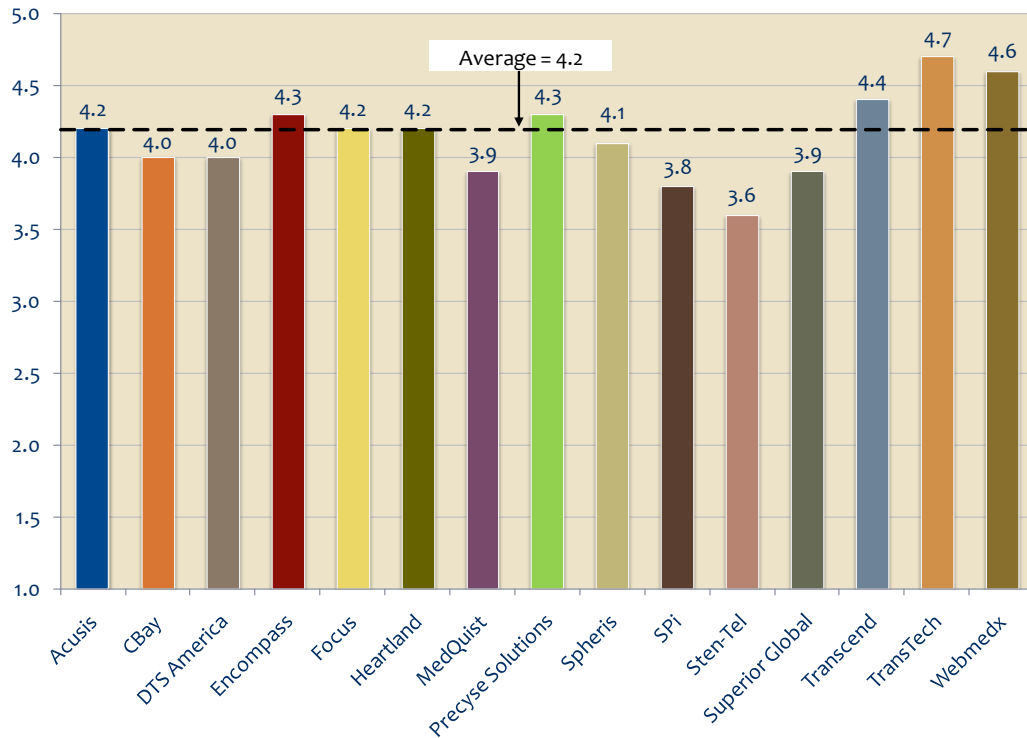


Figure 150: Service Ratings – Report Turnaround Time (n=315)

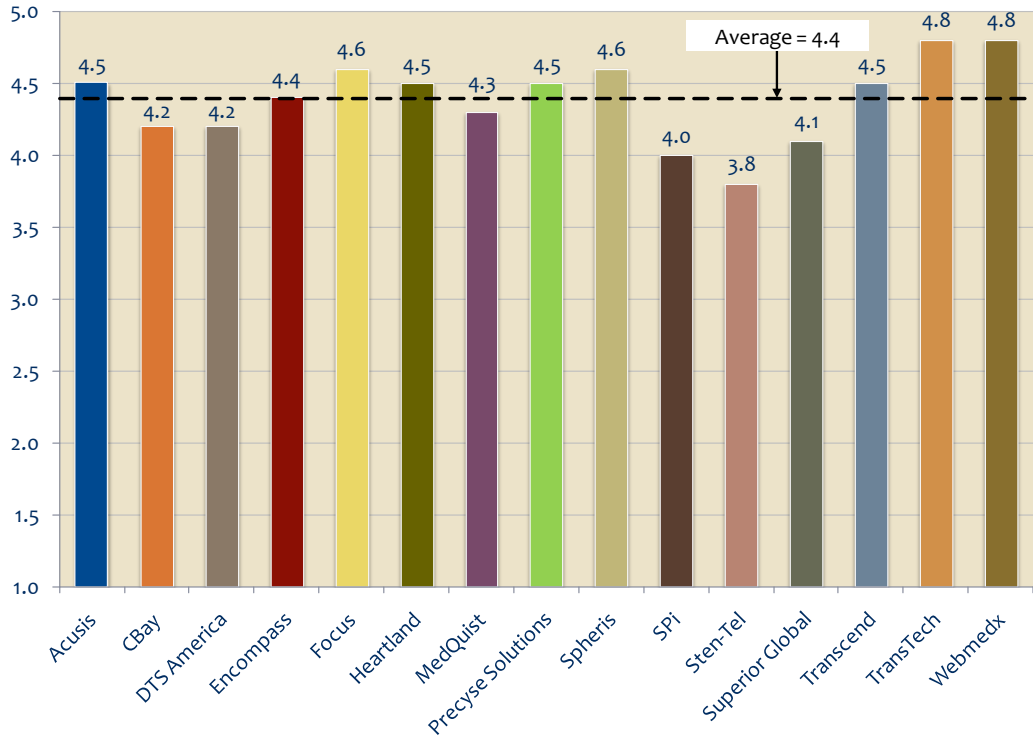


Figure 151: Service Ratings – Report Quality (n=314)

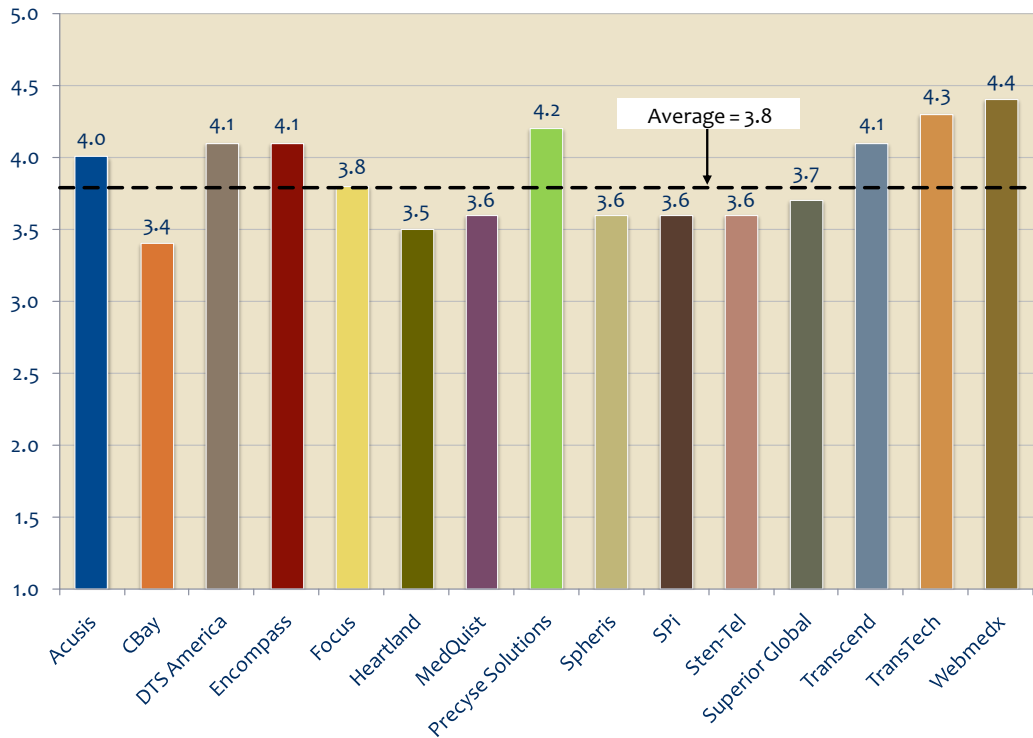


Figure 152: Service Ratings – Account Management (n=313)

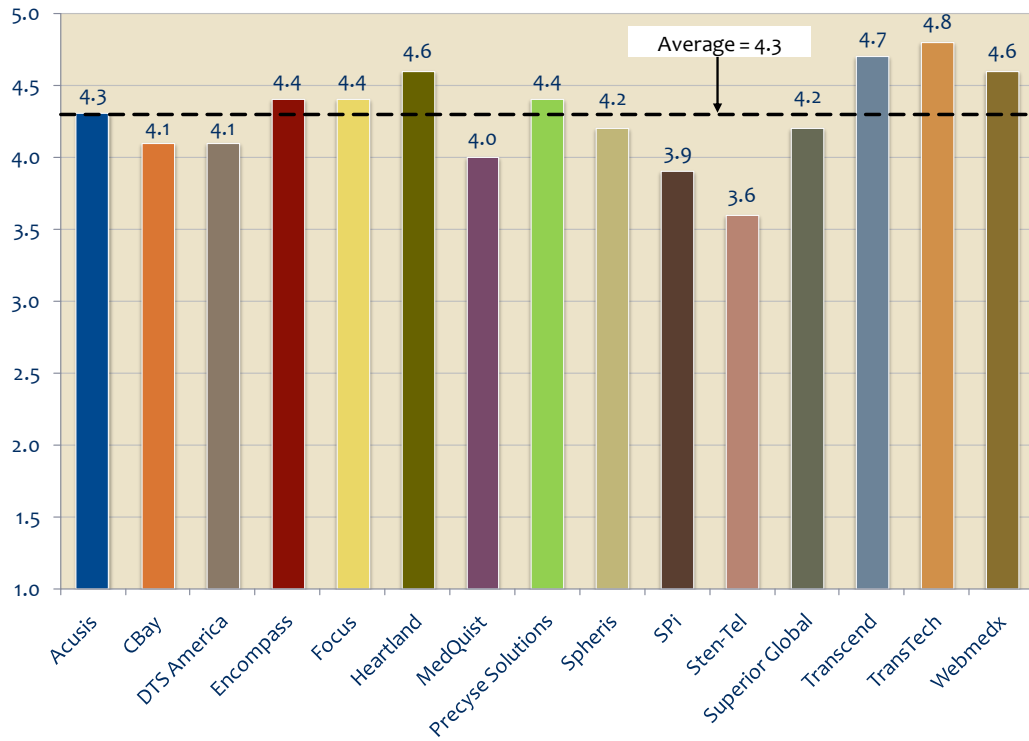


Figure 153: Service Ratings – Administrative Tools (n=266)

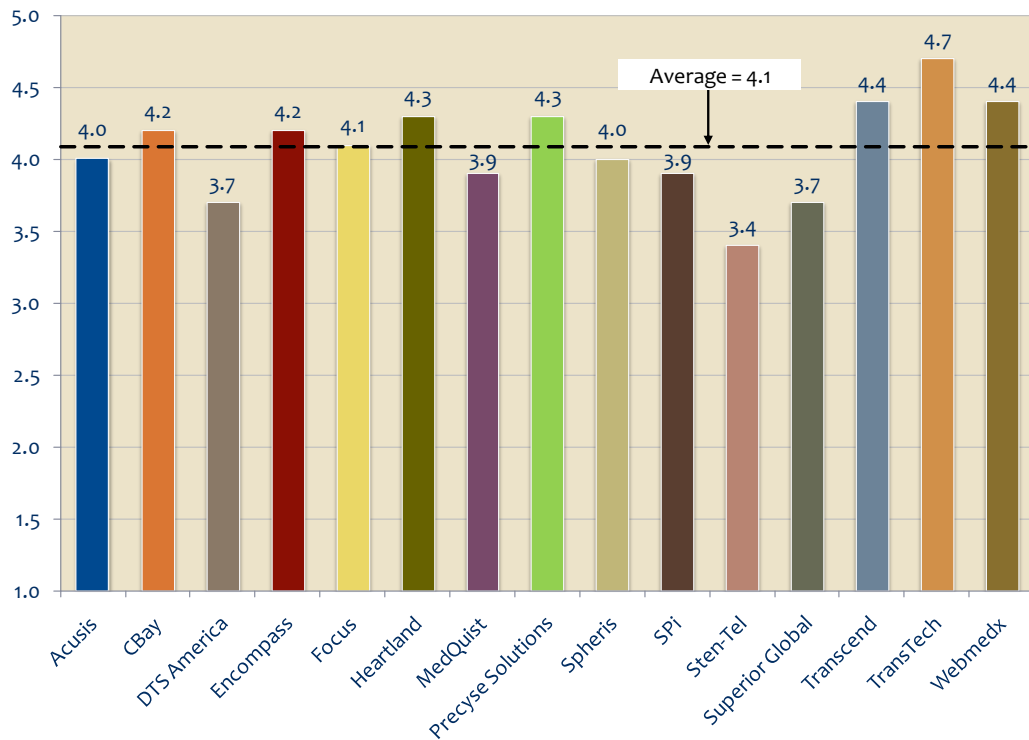


Figure 154: Overall: Is your transcription work done onshore, offshore, or both? (n=305)

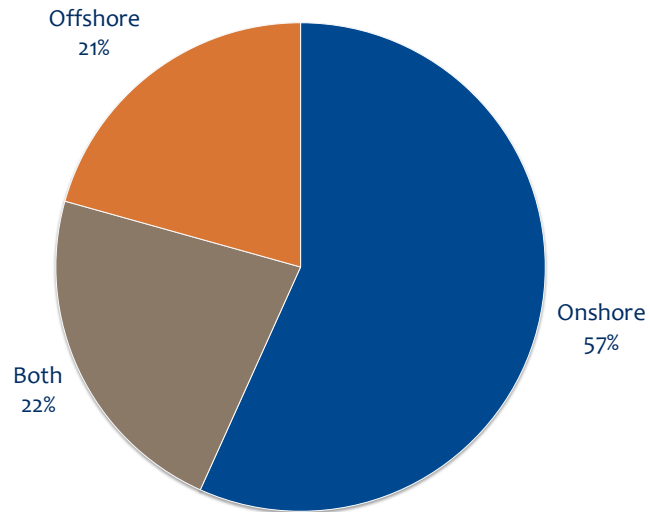


Figure 155: Overall: Is your transcription work done onshore, offshore, or both? – by MTSO (n=305)

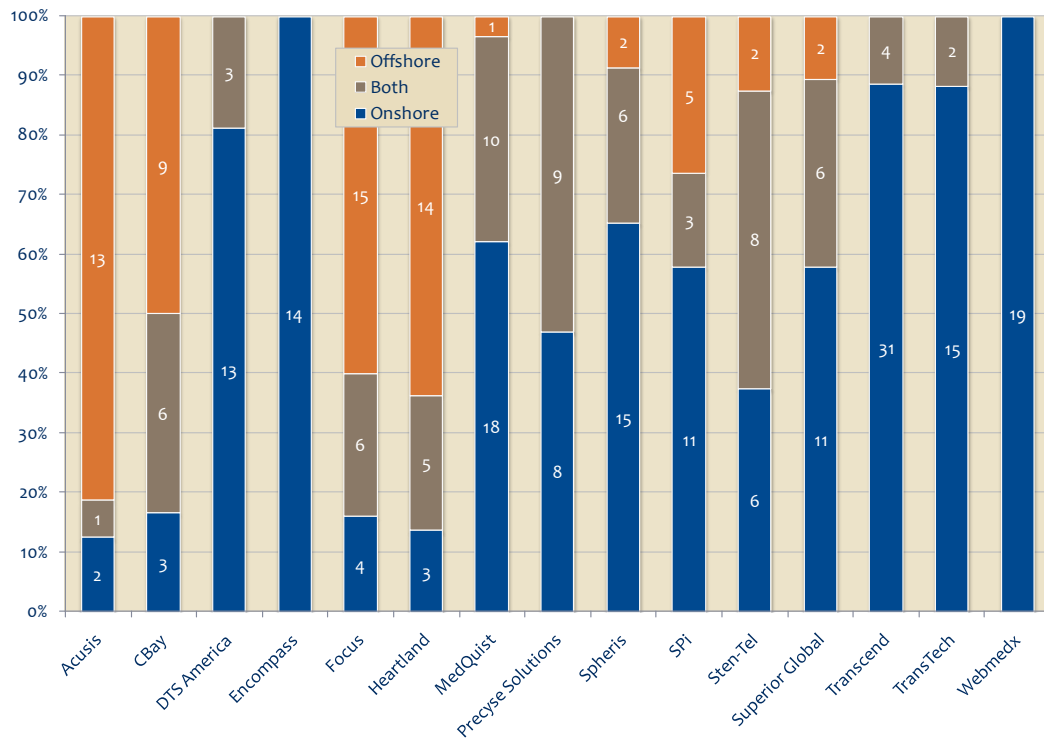


Figure 156: Overall: Is your transcription work done onshore, offshore, or both? – Trend

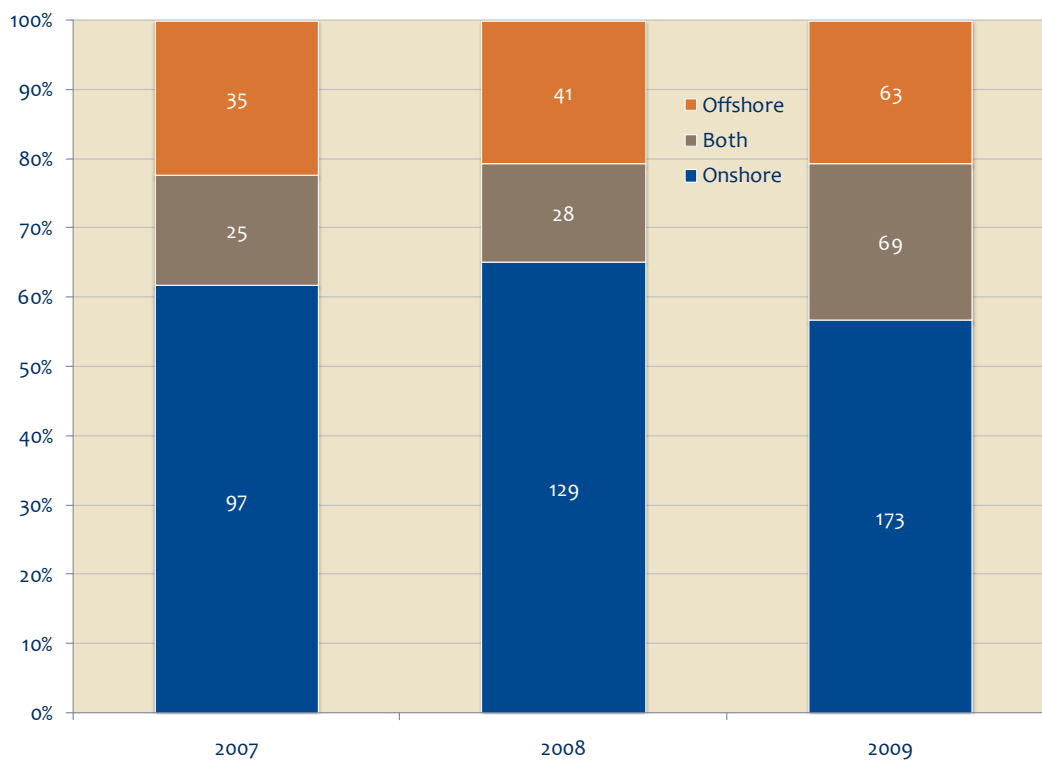
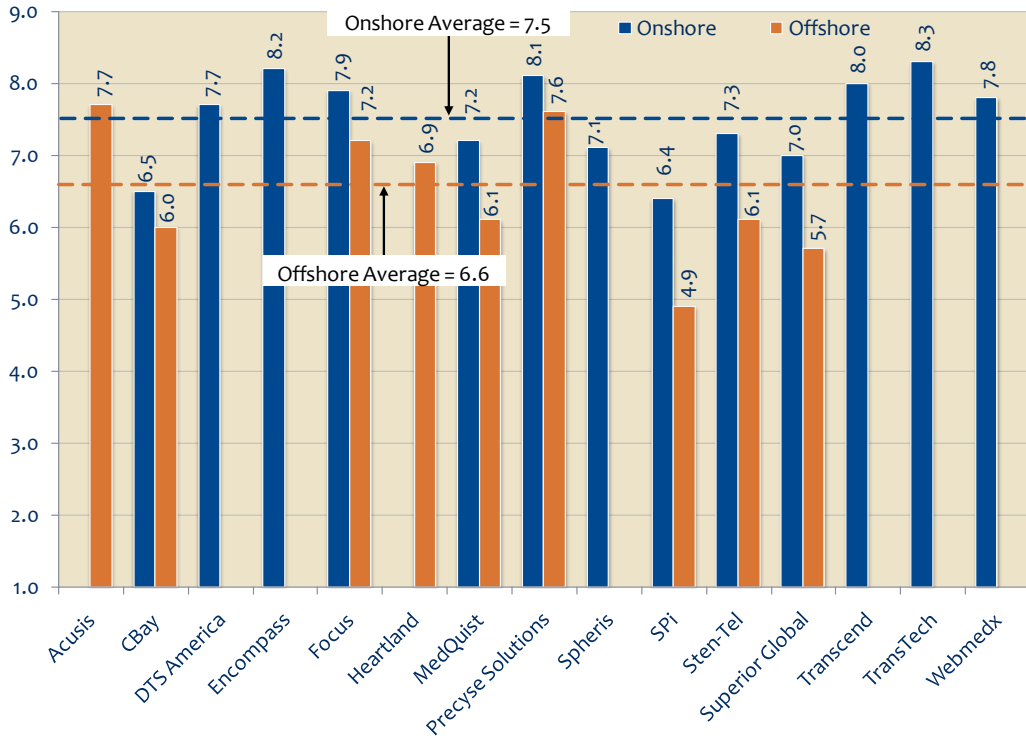


Figure 157: Onshore vs. Offshore Ratings – by MTSO (onshore n=165, offshore n=113)



Note: No data is shown for any area with less than six data points.

Figure 158: Overall: If not using offshore services, what is your perception of it? (n=139)

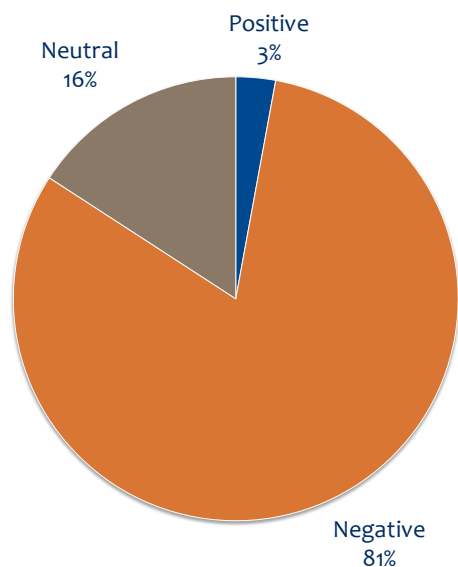


Figure 159: Overall: If not using offshore services, what is your perception of it? – Trend

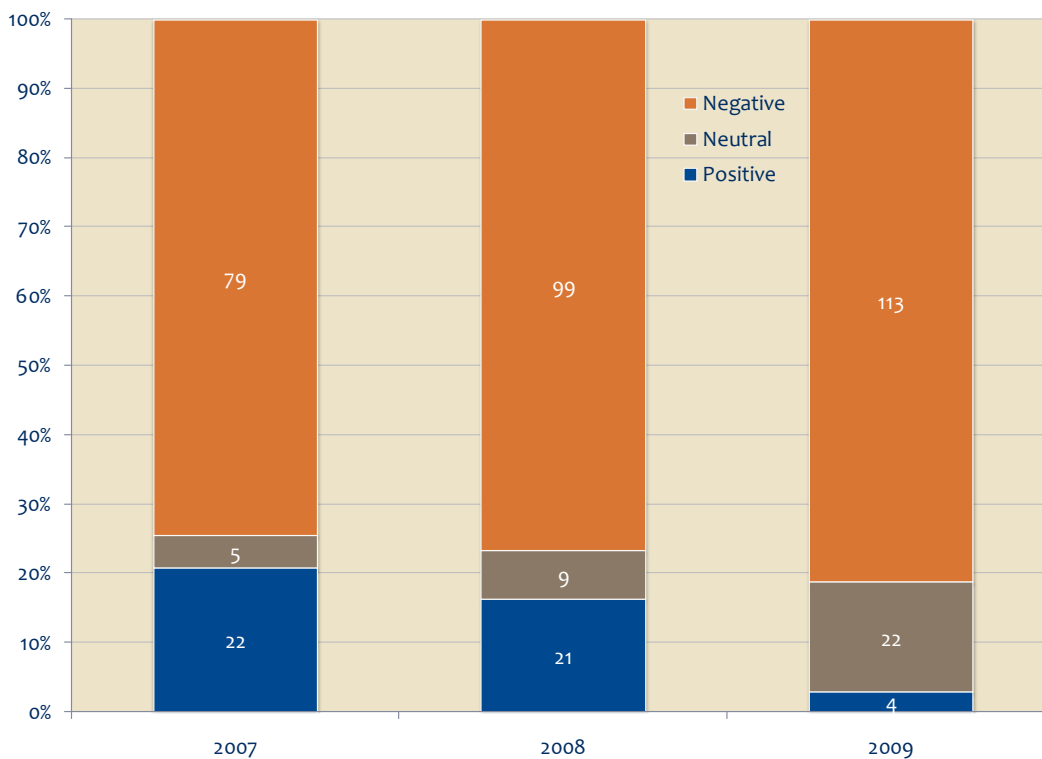


Figure 160: Overall: Did you outsource your medical transcription prior to your current MTSO? (n=298)

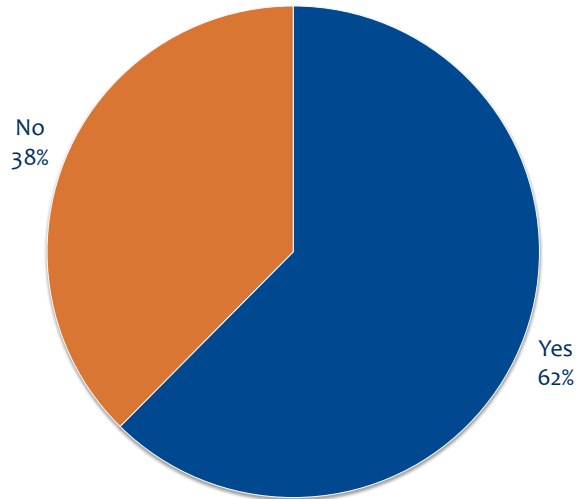


Figure 161: Overall: Did you outsource your medical transcription prior to your current MTSO? – by MTSO (n=298)

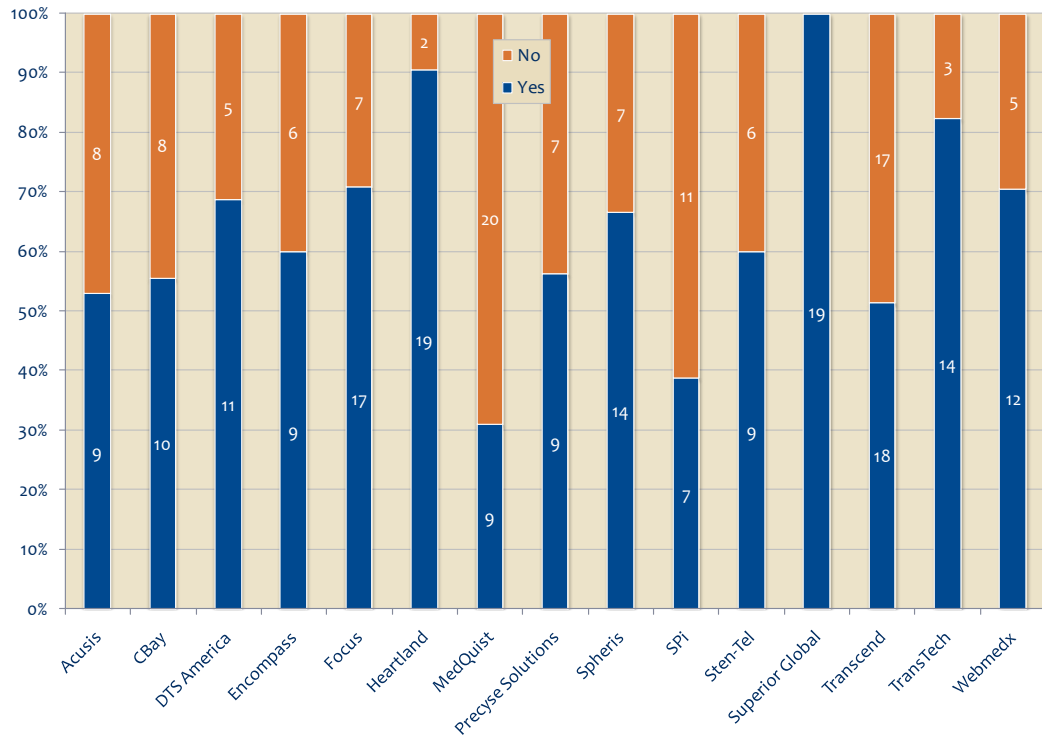
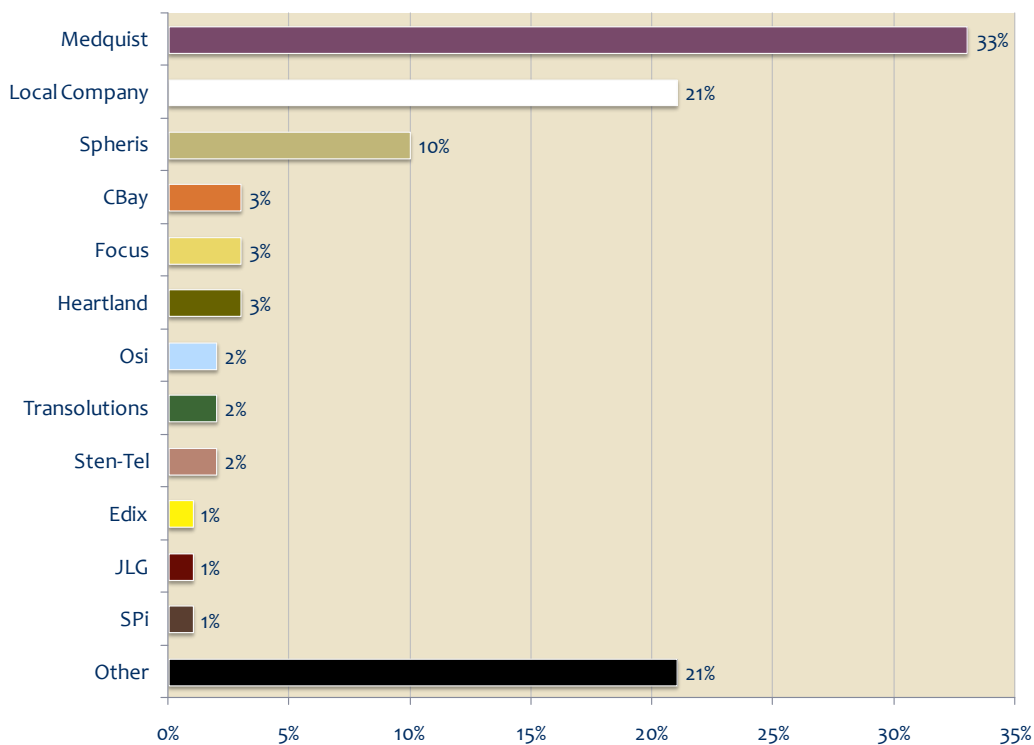


Figure 162: Overall: If yes, who were you using? (n=166)



Note: Other includes A Stat Transcription, Absolute Document Services, Acusis, Central Transcription, Continuum, DDI, Dig. Records, Inc., Encompass, FastChart, Infrahealth, Johnson & Associates, Keystrokes, MDI, Medical Transcription Corporation, Medical Voice, MediScript, Medscribe, MedSolutions, MVTS, Nightingale, OmniMed, Perfect Transcription, PMT, Precyse, Proscribe, Rostex, Signal, SmartMed, Spryance, Superior, Transcription Plus, TransHealth, Webscribe and WorldTech.

Figure 163: Overall: If yes, why did you replace them? (n=141)

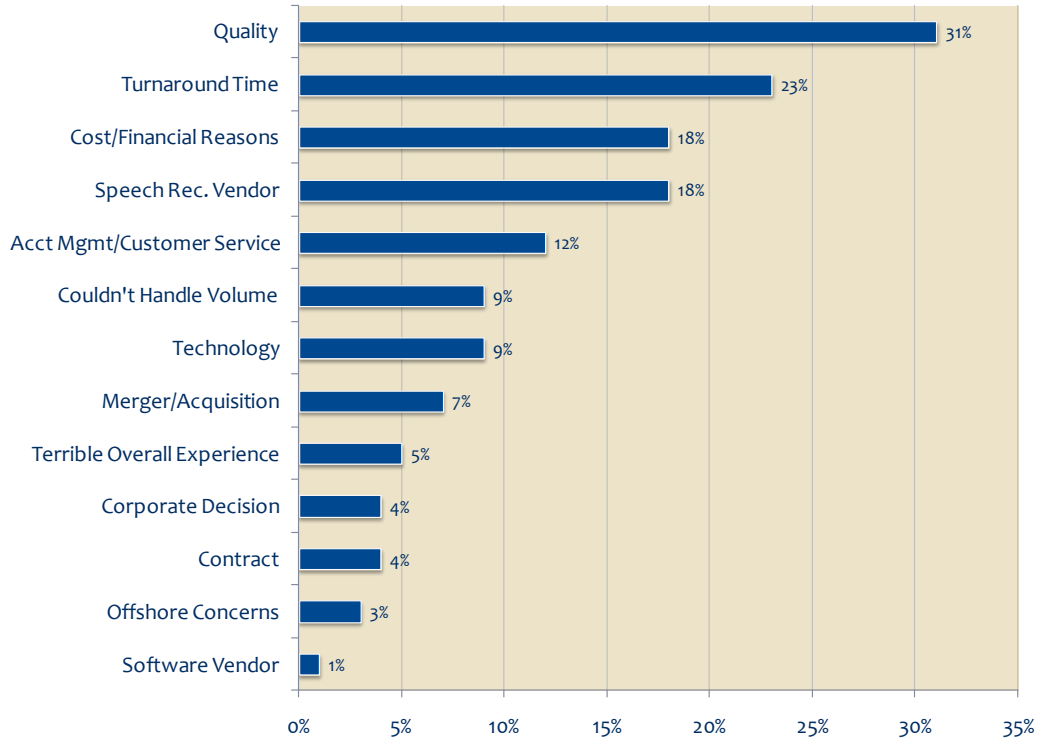


Figure 164: Overall: If yes, why did you replace them? – Trend

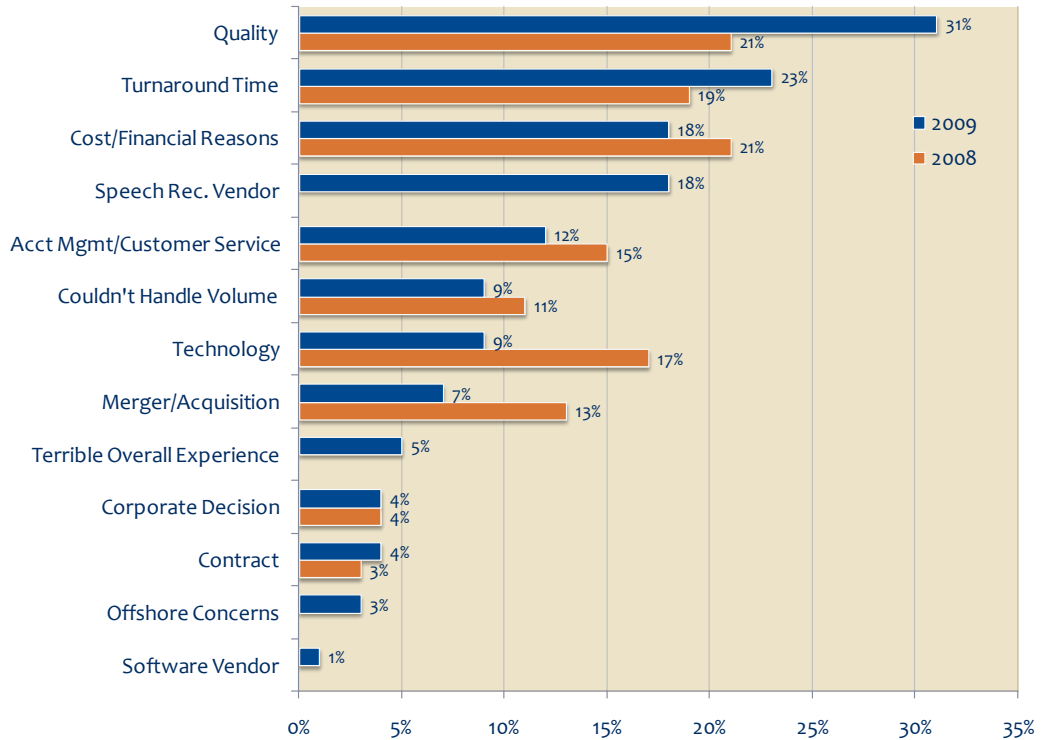


Figure 165: Overall: Reasons Why Selected (n=46)

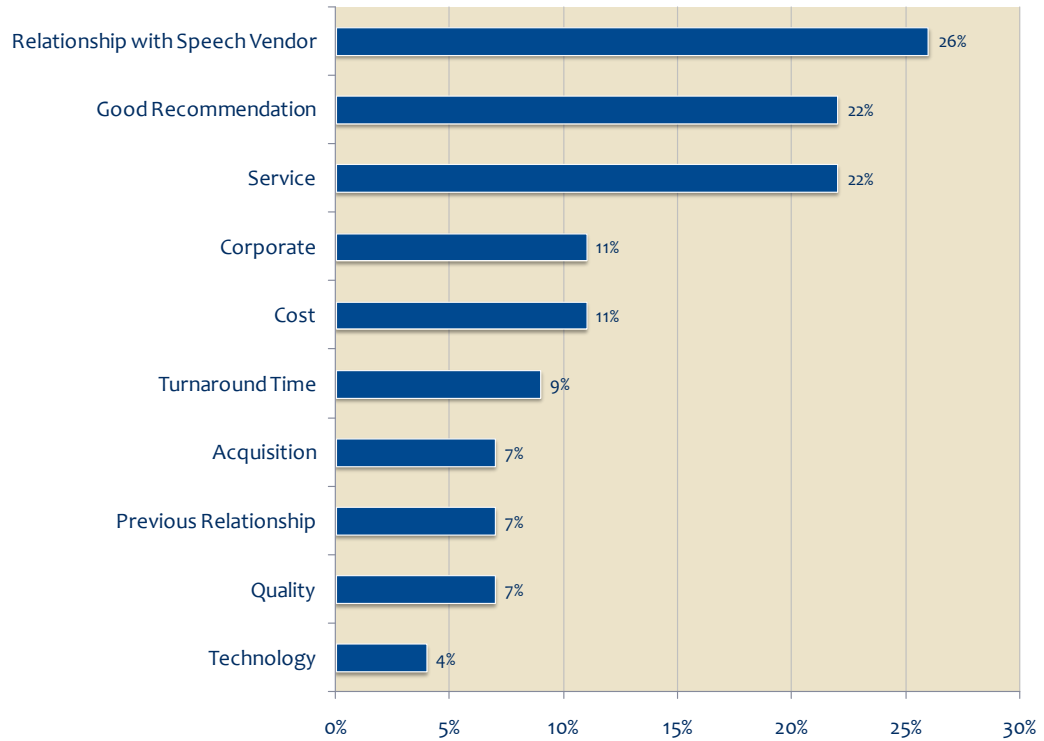
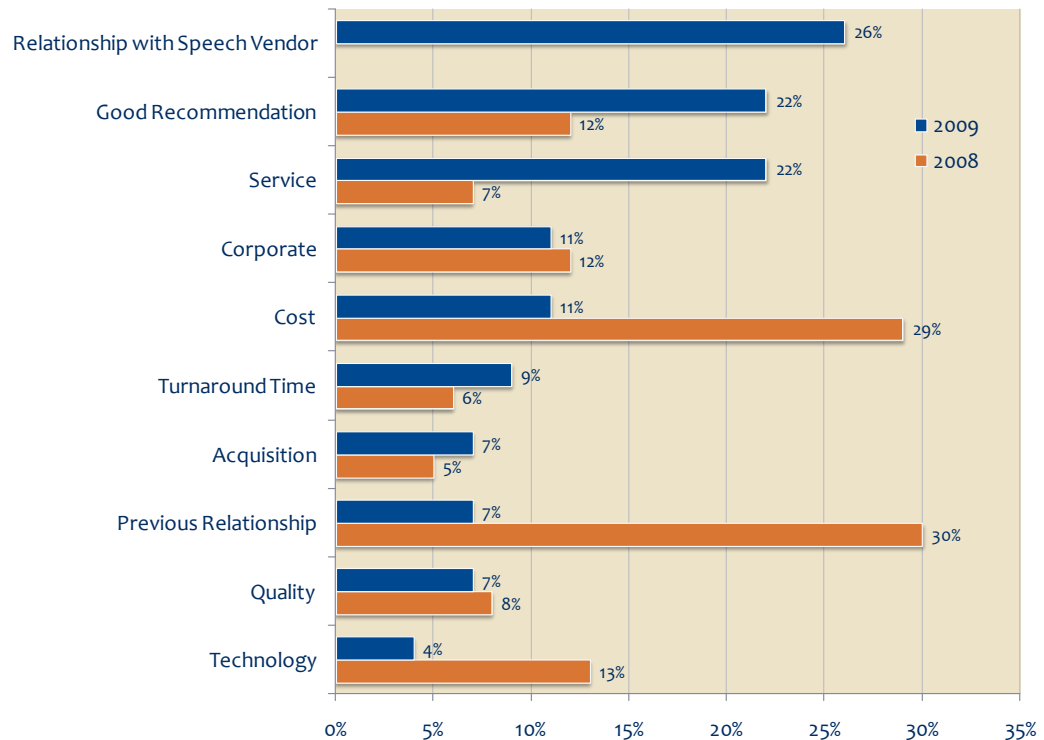


Figure 166: Overall: Reasons Why Selected – Trend





KLAS Performance Data

■ **KLAS PERFORMANCE DATA**

Figure 167: Performance Indicator Scores Table

| Indicator | Acusis | CBay | DTS America | Encompass | Focus | Heartland | MedQuist | Precyse Solutions | Spheris | SPI | Sten-Tel | Superior Global | Transcend | TransTech | Webmedx |
|--------------------------------|--------|------|-------------|-----------|-------|-----------|----------|-------------------|---------|-----|----------|-----------------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| Lived Up to Expectations | 7.6 | 6.8 | 7.6 | 8.0 | 7.1 | 7.7 | 7.2 | 7.9 | 6.5 | 7.1 | 6.7 | 7.2 | 7.8 | 7.9 | 8.2 |
| Money's Worth | 7.6 | 7.2 | 7.8 | 7.8 | 7.3 | 7.5 | 7.3 | 7.8 | 6.7 | 7.0 | 6.8 | 7.2 | 7.8 | 7.9 | 8.0 |
| Worth the Effort | 7.8 | 7.3 | 8.0 | 8.1 | 7.2 | 7.7 | 7.6 | 7.9 | 6.8 | 7.3 | 7.2 | 7.4 | 8.1 | 7.8 | 8.5 |
| Executive Involvement | 7.5 | 6.9 | 8.3 | 8.2 | 7.5 | 8.0 | 7.4 | 8.0 | 7.1 | 7.4 | 6.8 | 7.5 | 8.2 | 8.3 | 8.6 |
| Contracting Experience | 7.6 | 7.8 | 8.4 | 8.2 | 7.6 | 7.9 | 7.4 | 8.2 | 6.8 | 6.9 | 7.6 | 7.6 | 8.1 | 8.5 | 8.4 |
| Services Delivered as Promoted | 7.8 | 7.6 | 7.8 | 8.2 | 7.3 | 7.8 | 7.3 | 8.3 | 6.7 | 7.1 | 7.3 | 7.4 | 8.1 | 8.2 | 8.7 |
| Service Delivery on Time | 7.8 | 7.6 | 7.8 | 8.2 | 7.7 | 8.3 | 7.6 | 8.4 | 7.3 | 7.2 | 7.2 | 7.8 | 8.2 | 8.3 | 8.3 |
| Quality of Services Staff | 7.7 | 7.0 | 7.3 | 7.8 | 7.3 | 7.3 | 7.3 | 8.1 | 6.6 | 7.3 | 7.2 | 7.4 | 8.1 | 8.2 | 8.4 |
| Real Problem Resolution | 7.6 | 7.1 | 7.6 | 8.0 | 7.5 | 7.8 | 7.3 | 8.1 | 6.7 | 7.2 | 6.5 | 7.5 | 8.2 | 8.3 | 8.3 |
| Helps Your Job Performance | 7.4 | 6.9 | 7.5 | 8.0 | 7.0 | 7.4 | 7.5 | 8.1 | 5.9 | 7.1 | 6.8 | 7.3 | 7.9 | 8.3 | 8.4 |
| Overall Satisfaction | 7.6 | 6.9 | 7.9 | 8.1 | 7.1 | 7.6 | 7.5 | 8.1 | 6.5 | 7.1 | 7.2 | 7.3 | 8.0 | 8.3 | 8.4 |
| Performance Average | 7.6 | 7.2 | 7.8 | 8.0 | 7.3 | 7.7 | 7.4 | 8.1 | 6.7 | 7.2 | 7.0 | 7.4 | 8.0 | 8.2 | 8.4 |

Note: The highest score for each indicator is highlighted in green; the lowest in red.

Figure 168: Business Indicator Scores Table

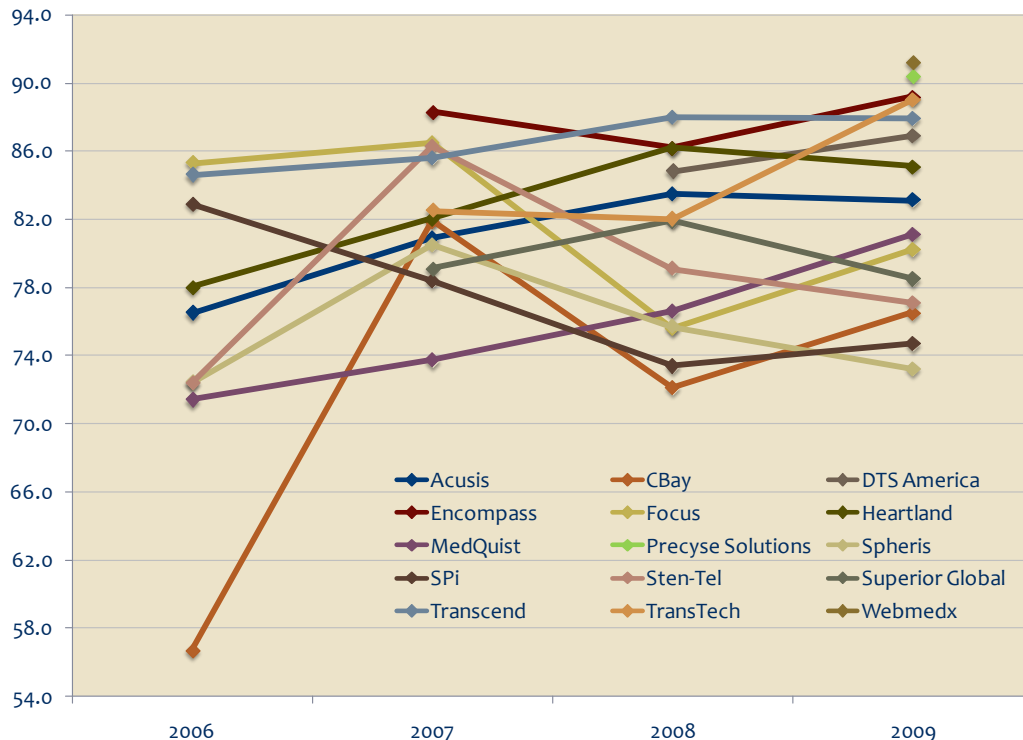
| Indicator | Acusis | CBay | DTS America | Encompass | Focus | Heartland | MedQuist | Precyse Solutions | Spheris | SPI | Sten-Tel | Superior Global | Transcend | TransTech | Webmedx |
|---------------------------------------|--------|------|-------------|-----------|-------|-----------|----------|-------------------|---------|-----|----------|-----------------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| Would You Buy it Again | 89% | 82% | 95% | 97% | 79% | 85% | 85% | 95% | 76% | 80% | 71% | 81% | 93% | 100% | 96% |
| Avoids Nickel-and-Diming | 84% | 85% | 100% | 97% | 95% | 96% | 87% | 95% | 85% | 81% | 92% | 88% | 100% | 90% | 91% |
| Keeps All Promises | 89% | 77% | 86% | 100% | 78% | 96% | 80% | 95% | 63% | 57% | 85% | 77% | 91% | 96% | 96% |
| Client's Best Consultant Experience | 25% | 5% | 47% | 41% | 28% | 30% | 30% | 61% | 38% | 13% | 13% | 21% | 23% | 32% | 50% |
| Services Delivered within Budget/Cost | 100% | 95% | 100% | 100% | 97% | 100% | 99% | 100% | 89% | 84% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Would You Recommend to a Friend/Peer | 84% | 77% | 95% | 97% | 93% | 92% | 87% | 95% | 71% | 67% | 80% | 81% | 100% | 100% | 95% |
| Business Average | 80% | 71% | 87% | 89% | 78% | 84% | 79% | 91% | 71% | 66% | 72% | 73% | 85% | 86% | 88% |

Note: The highest score for each indicator is highlighted in green; the lowest in red.

Figure 169: Overall Score Trending

| Indicator | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 |
|-------------------|------|------|------|------|
| Acusis | 76.5 | 80.9 | 83.5 | 83.1 |
| CBay | 56.7 | 81.9 | 72.1 | 76.5 |
| DTS America | | | 84.8 | 86.9 |
| Encompass | | 88.3 | 86.2 | 89.2 |
| Focus | 85.3 | 86.5 | 75.6 | 80.2 |
| Heartland | 78.0 | 82.0 | 86.2 | 85.1 |
| MedQuist | 71.4 | 73.7 | 76.6 | 81.1 |
| Precyse Solutions | | | | 90.4 |
| Spheris | 72.4 | 80.5 | 75.7 | 73.2 |
| SPi | 82.9 | 78.4 | 73.4 | 74.7 |
| Sten-Tel | 72.4 | 86.3 | 79.1 | 77.1 |
| Superior Global | | 79.1 | 81.9 | 78.5 |
| Transcend | 84.6 | 85.6 | 88.0 | 87.9 |
| TransTech | | 82.5 | 82.0 | 89.0 |
| Webmedx | | | | 91.2 |

Figure 170: Overall Score Trending Chart



PROVIDER COMMENTARY

Figure 171: Percent Positive Commentary – by Vendor

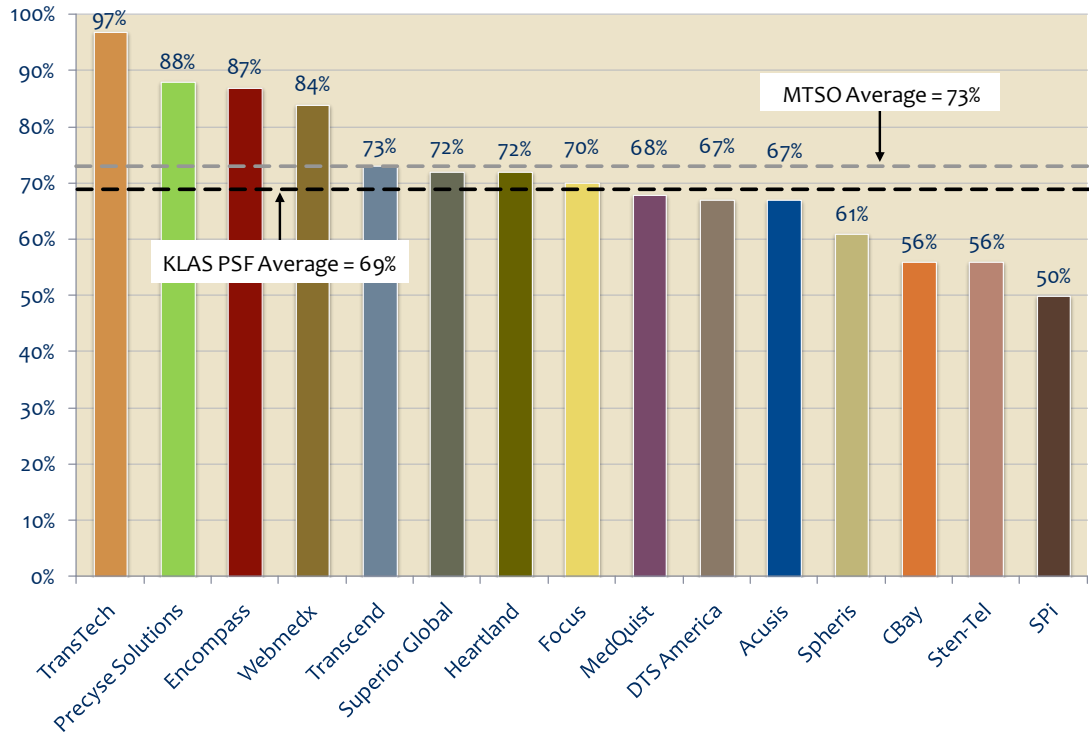


Figure 172: Positive vs. Negative Commentary Overall

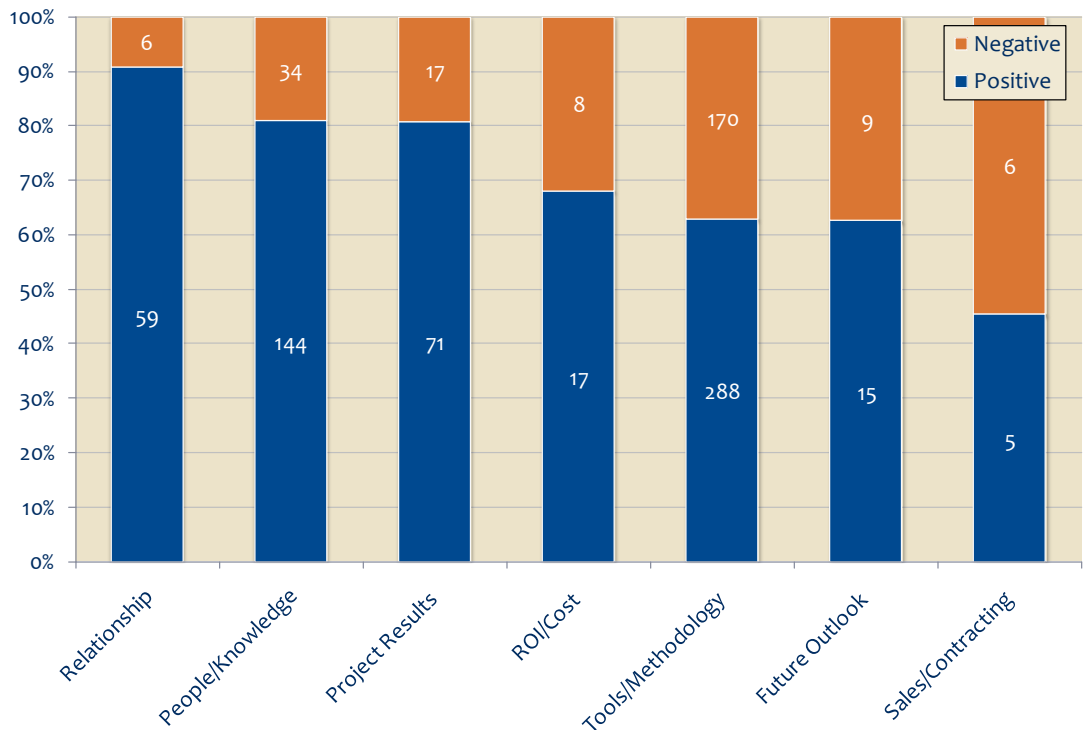


Figure 173: Percent Positive Commentary Summary Table

| Indicator | Sales/ Contracting | People/ Knowledge | Tools/ Methodology | Project Results | Relationship | ROI/Cost | Future Outlook |
|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|--------------|----------|----------------|
| Acusis | -- | 75% | 61% | 100% | -- | -- | 33% |
| CBay | -- | 50% | 52% | 75% | 100% | -- | -- |
| DTS America | -- | 67% | 59% | 75% | 100% | -- | -- |
| Encompass | -- | 92% | 85% | 89% | -- | 75% | -- |
| Focus | -- | 67% | 69% | 86% | 71% | 67% | -- |
| Heartland | -- | 86% | 69% | 83% | -- | -- | 67% |
| MedQuist | -- | 89% | 55% | 67% | 100% | 100% | -- |
| Precyse Solutions | -- | 100% | 76% | 100% | 100% | -- | 100% |
| Spheris | 0% | 68% | 52% | 78% | 75% | -- | 50% |
| SPi | -- | 69% | 38% | 67% | 67% | -- | -- |
| Sten-Tel | -- | 75% | 47% | 33% | 100% | -- | -- |
| Superior Global | -- | 90% | 65% | 80% | 75% | -- | -- |
| Transcend | -- | 92% | 64% | 80% | 100% | -- | -- |
| TransTech | -- | 100% | 94% | 100% | 100% | -- | -- |
| Webmedx | -- | 100% | 77% | -- | 100% | 67% | 67% |

Note: Categories with less than three comments are not displayed.



Addendum KLAS Performance Data



ADDENDUM KLAS PERFORMANCE DATA

The table below displays the pieces of data we have for the vendor/product in this section. For each applicable segment, a score is shown followed by the number of unique and total surveys contributing to that score.

| Data On: | Overall Score | Unique/Total Surveys |
|---------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Amphion | 89.4* | 21/23 |
| AssistMed | 86.4* | 7/7 |
| DSG | 89.3* | 8/11 |
| Transolutions | 84.0* | 14/19 |

* Preliminary scores do not meet KLAS' minimum confidence level

Note: Although Amphion has a significant number of unique surveys, they appear in this addendum because they do not meet the minimum number of sites that have over 1 million lines.

Figure 174: Performance Indicators – Addendum MTSOs

The objective of this table is to focus on product and technology related issues, which are of significant importance to healthcare IT executives and end user department directors.

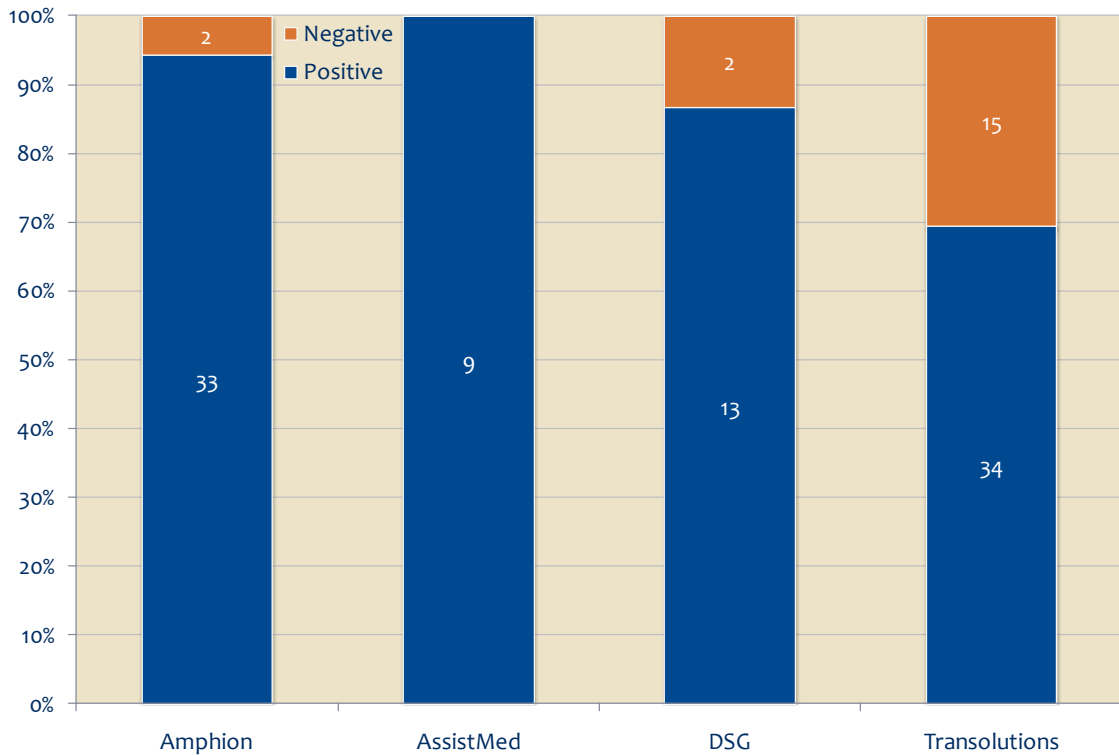
| Performance Indicators | Amphion | AssistMed | DSG | Transolutions |
|--------------------------------|---------|-----------|-----|---------------|
| Lived Up to Expectations | 8.0 | 7.9 | 8.0 | 7.7 |
| Money's Worth | 7.7 | 7.3 | 7.9 | 7.4 |
| Worth the Effort | 8.2 | 7.6 | 8.4 | 7.7 |
| Executive Involvement | 8.3 | 8.0 | 8.3 | 7.7 |
| Contracting Experience | 8.1 | 7.6 | 8.3 | 7.7 |
| Services Delivered as Promoted | 8.1 | 8.4 | 8.4 | 7.8 |
| Service Delivery on Time | 8.1 | 8.0 | 8.1 | 7.5 |
| Quality of Services Staff | 7.9 | 7.9 | 8.2 | 7.5 |
| Real Problem Resolution | 8.1 | 7.8 | 8.4 | 7.3 |
| Helps Your Job Performance | 8.3 | 8.0 | 8.2 | 7.2 |
| Overall Satisfaction | 8.3 | 7.9 | 8.3 | 7.7 |

Figure 175: Business Indicators – Addendum MTSOs

This section identifies factors that deal with a vendor’s performance during the installation and performance with post-live support as reported by their clients.

| Business Indicators | Amphion | AssistMed | DSG | Transolutions |
|---------------------------------------|---------|-----------|------|---------------|
| Would You Buy it Again | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Avoids Nickel-and-Diming | 100% | 100% | 91% | 89% |
| Keeps All Promises | 100% | 86% | 100% | 83% |
| Client's Best Consultant Experience | 24% | 17% | 20% | 36% |
| Services Delivered within Budget/Cost | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Would You Recommend to a Friend/Peer | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Figure 176: Positive vs. Negative Commentary Summary – Addendum MTSOs





Transcription Services Detail

- **Provider Commentary**

■ **ACUSIS****PROVIDER COMMENTARY****People and Knowledge – Positive**

Acusis has quick turnaround times. Their quality varies depending on the physician they are typing for. Some of the accents are hard, but Acusis can understand some physicians we cannot. That has been a plus.

We receive really good attention from Acusis, and their account management is great.

My account representative and some of the technology people are top notch. Our account representative not only knows her business, but she is also fun to work with. We enjoy doing things with her. She is attentive, responsive, and has good follow-through. If I have an issue, I go to my representative first and then go to the executives.

All of our transcription is done overseas. Acusis is very well thought of by the faculty. We had an opportunity to switch vendors at a lower cost, and the decision was made to stay with Acusis. Issues include trying to get past accent issues with the offshore people. The turnaround time is pretty good with Acusis. I have not heard a lot about errors, especially with the number of foreign-born physicians we have.

Acusis is very eager to offer good customer service. When we have issues and we discuss them with Acusis, they really strive to correct those issues. We have had some repeat problems, but Acusis is very cooperative in trying to accommodate our needs.

Acusis is very good at the work they do. They do our cancer center transcriptions, and they are very good at the cancer work types, research, and protocols.

People and Knowledge – Negative

From time to time, we have issues with the customer service from Acusis. Being able to communicate well with them can be a challenge. I do not have issues communicating with people from other countries, but I do when it creates a communication barrier. We have definitely experienced some of that.

We would like to have Acusis be better at customer service. Our account representative is in another state, and others are on the coast and are not communicating well.

Tools and Methodology – Positive

We recently changed our contract to 24 hours, so we had a tighter turnaround time before. But the times are still satisfactory.

I have benefited from DRC being purchased by Acusis. It did not mess up my workflow.

Acusis does very well with the regular expected workload every day.

Acusis could handle some of our very tough dictators, such as one doctor who thankfully doesn't dictate anymore. I have been doing this for a long time, and I cannot transcribe this doctor.

Things are going really well with Acusis. Our number one priority is probably turnaround time, and it is still very good. The thing I like most is that Acusis is really quick with customer service and getting back with us if there is a problem or an issue. I can't think of anything we need Acusis to improve on.

When Acusis brings in somebody new, there is always an education curve. Sometimes we get a newbie from Acusis, and then we have a repeat of an error we thought had already been ironed out. Then again, I have also encountered this problem when I have brought a new staff member on. Even though we sometimes have issues, Acusis helps us overcome some of that frustration with their open communication. Acusis really gets involved in trying to correct these issues.

We are still very happy with Acusis. In the very beginning, Acusis had to work on their quality with the language barrier. However, they have gotten better. As I understand it, the same person or group of people does the transcriptions for certain accounts, so the transcriptionists get used to a specific doctor's way of dictating. They get a feel for the doctor and learn the ups and downs and adapt that way.

Acusis has a couple of different transcription options from a technology standpoint. We have a direct interface. The doctors dock their devices, and the files get saved on a server. The files are then pushed to Acusis, and they push the report back to us and it is automatically integrated into our EMR. A lot of configuration and work went into that setup. I was impressed because Acusis did everything themselves. They looked at our EMR and built the interface kit. EMR interfaces are no walk in the park, but Acusis took care of everything. Acusis also has a Web interface where we can view the record as a Word document. We can also listen to the voice file too.

We are really pleased with Acusis. Their turnaround time has been very good, and the quality is excellent. The account management is especially good.

Acusis is flexible, and they meet our account's specific needs. They are reliable to follow through on what we have agreed on or what we have requested. When we have had problems or need something specific, like tracking a specific doctor, Acusis is very responsive and they always follow through. Their follow-through has been very good on the administrative and account management side.

Acusis has fast turnaround times, and we get our reports back the next morning. The physicians have access to their reports and can sign them electronically.

Tools and Methodology – Negative

The only problem I really have had with Acusis is that they make the same mistakes in transcription, even after I have given them a heads-up on what something should be. I will usually email them with the corrections and then I will hear back from them about how they will let the entire group know what the problem was. There have been no major problems with Acusis and we are fairly happy, but they can do better with improving their consistency and quality.

Acusis has done everything to keep us. We have tried to get better quality for awhile. There are too many blanks. The MTs over at Acusis did not understand our dictators or something. Acusis could not correct the quality issues. We tried to get the problems resolved for a long time, but at last we threw in the towel.

Acusis cannot take on additional work and get it turned around in a timely manner. They often refuse extra work.

With the quality, Acusis has been pretty good. I would probably give them a seven or an eight. The only problem has been with giving them extra work. If I call any of my other services on a Friday night with five hours of work we can't get done, they will take the extra work without any problems. But if I call Acusis, they will not take the extra work. They are very structured and very regimented, and they do fine just as long as we don't give them any extra work. But if we do give them extra work, it throws everything off.

I have had times when we have had to call Acusis for help, but they have just never been able to drop everything and help because they are not flexible enough. Acusis just says they can't do it.

The one improvement I would like to see is in communication. That can go a long way to improving issue resolution when problems do arise.

Sometimes there are problems with the English language because Acusis sends the work offshore. When a physician dictates that a patient lives with a significant other, the Acusis people did not know what that meant at first, but they are learning.

Project Results – Positive

Acusis has helped us streamline our processes. The vendor we used prior to them was awful. Using Acusis has forced us to be very streamlined and to do the same things.

The physicians just download the digital dictation right to the Acusis website. We try to keep the turnaround time right to 24 hours. Acusis is usually way under that.

Acusis does good quality work, and their turnaround times are good. Most of the time, when Acusis doesn't meet the turnaround time, it is because we have overloaded them or we have given them something that is older than it should have been when they got it.

Acusis seems to be pleasing all my doctors, who have not complained. Acusis has always done everything we have asked of them.

Relationship – Positive

Acusis is a good vendor to work with. They have built a strong relationship with us. We have been with Acusis for a long time, and we are very happy because they have done an excellent job. I like their honesty and the fact that they are willing to work with us.

Every year, Acusis has a customer summit. I really enjoy the summit, but I would like to see Acusis be more open to other voice recognition options.

ROI and Cost – Negative

We sometimes feel nickel-and-dimed in that our dictation will include an acronym that we are just fine using, and they come back all spelled out. We get the feeling they are spelling everything out, so they can get to more lines of text and thus charge more.

Future Outlook – Positive

Working with Acusis has gone pretty well. We are currently looking at changing our process to where our voice file flows to Acusis as normal, and then they have a speech-recognition system that converts everything to text, and then the Acusis staff proofreads the file. If we go with that format, we will be saving 25 to 30 percent on our dictation work.

Future Outlook – Negative

Acusis has their own speech platform, and they don't want to work with another company. We are using eScription, so Acusis is going away.

Lately, we have heard nothing but complaints about Acusis. We would never have chosen Acusis; the company we used was bought by Acusis. We can't wait to find another transcription company. They have been awful in the past six months.

SPECIAL QUESTIONS COMMENTARY

If there was an increase or decrease in volume, what has been the main cause?

Allscripts has had a huge impact. We decreased our transcription costs by half. It was pretty significant. Our costs are much lower now. I think the only reason that that cost has decreased is because the CEO is adamant that Allscripts be used. There is a lot of opposition from the doctors, especially the older ones. We employ close to 100 doctors here.

Our volume for the past six years has increased 9–10 percent every year. The hospital is continually adding new clinics, and this past year we opened a new clinic. PowerChart, RadNet, and PathNet have not reduced transcription like we had hoped, and that is the simple fact. That was the goal, but it has not been realized.

We are doing more surgeries, which means more dictation. We don't have an EMR or speech system, so our doctors dictate everything.

When it comes to paying for dictation, our costs are going down. So many of our doctors are starting to use Dragon, and that is having a big impact. We save a lot of money by using Dragon. The Dragon software is very expensive. If we get a brand new license, it costs \$1,000. However, that quickly pays for itself, and everything after that the product is practically free. We are trying to do more templating, which has decreased our dictation.

We added a new psychiatry unit, and that adds to the volume. We did not have that last year. We don't have an EMR yet, but we are moving to one now.

We have Dragon and 3M. We are saving thousands of dollars a month. The doctors talk to their computers, create their own documents and edit them. It is pretty great. Last year we also saw a small decrease because of the EMR.

Ratings Comments: Onshore Services

Onshore services have been awful in the past six months.

Ratings Comments: Offshore Services

We have good TAT and quality. The account management has been excellent. The other firm we use has less quality with the offshore work.

Acusis had English-language problems, though I will say that they can do some pretty amazing things. They can transcribe some doctors that I think would be impossible. Acusis has some quality problems, but they are still good, and they do get the job done, despite being foreign.

The only difficulty the transcriptionists have had is with the English language, but they have overcome that. Their medical terminology is excellent.

Primarily, my communication with Acusis is through email, so the dialect is not that much of an issue. I have been on conference calls with the site leads or with the product team in India, but whenever that occurred, I always had a third party on the line. Acusis is based out of Pittsburgh, and I had someone on the call to facilitate whenever there might be some need for that. So I can't say that the offshore work has ever been a real challenge.

Acusis is doing a better job with consistency in quality. I correct them, but then they will make the same errors sometimes. So, that needs to be fixed.

If you are not using offshore services, what is your perception of offshore MT services?

Now is not the time to be using offshore services. America needs the jobs.

Why did you select this MTSO and who else did you consider?

No comments.

■ **AMPHION**

PROVIDER COMMENTARY

People and Knowledge – Positive

Amphion's management staff is very responsive to quality issues. They have an experienced staff and expertise with our speech recognition software. Working with Amphion is like having someone working within our own organization. They really step up to the plate and are ready to go.

Amphion is very accommodating. They try to meet whatever needs we have. If they do not have answers, they will escalate the issue until they find an answer.

Amphion has a very elaborate QA program. They do their quality reviews on their employees and share that information. They do the work we need and will take on more if we have a crisis in staffing.

Amphion knows the business very well. They have a lot of experience in the field. They have very good customer service. I like the fact that they are timely and sensitive and that they understand our demands.

I am able to contact Amphion's main transcriptionist when there is a problem. They find out what the problem is and tell the other transcriptionists what needs to be done. They have a consistent 24-hour turnaround, which is wonderful. They are very good with problem solving. We have had problems with downloading at times. They are good at working with our IT department to solve issues.

Amphion has great leadership. I really like the people I work with when I have a problem. They are easy to work with. They are accommodating, and I can get a hold of them. They are very timely.

The transcription account manager is doing very well. She is very willing to work with us, and her response time is phenomenal.

I find Amphion to be very responsive to the customer needs, and their technology department is really good. Even when we did not know that there were different things that were available, they kind of put it out there and let us know what we could do, and that it would be actually better for us. Amphion helped us with getting some technology pieces in place.

Tools and Methodology – Positive

Amphion is a very good company to work with. They have excellent turnaround times and are very professional. We have never had any problems with them.

Amphion has very good turnaround times. Their quality is exceptional. We requested that they do all of our work onshore, and that shows in the quality of their work.

Amphion has provided what we have asked for. They are accurate and have good turnaround times. They are very responsive when we talk to them.

I would like more reports from Amphion. When I request the reports, Amphion can give them to me.

Amphion has very good turnaround times. They are very concerned about the customer and are responsive to our needs. They are flexible. We use them a lot for backlog and overflow. They can handle our volumes no matter what they are, and the TAT is consistent. It is within 24 hours.

Amphion is very responsive. If there is an error or we are unsure of a process, they are very quick to care of it and respond to it. Their accuracy is good. They also have a very good turnaround time.

Amphion is very reliable. They are consistent with their quality and turnaround time. There are very few errors, and they follow what they are supposed to do.

Amphion is always willing to work with us. We have a significant amount of testing that we have to do, and Amphion is always willing to be very helpful when we test an upgrade to our EHR. They have great turnaround times. They are very accommodating in helping us with fluctuations in our volume. The customer service has always been good with all the employees we have dealt with over there. I really don't have any negatives to say.

Amphion is flexible and is very willing to go the extra mile to help us out. If we need something changed, they are on it right away. We have been very satisfied with them.

It is very easy to get the doctors set up with Amphion. Overall, Amphion is just very easy to work with.

The turnaround time from Amphion is very good. It is always within 24 hours, and the quality is excellent. I never see problems with blanks or errors. They will call us with simple problems or missing data and that will be it. They take care of problems on their own, really. The account management has been excellent.

We used to have to fax things to Amphion, but then they helped us set up a feed so that things can go more electronically from our computers to theirs.

Amphion got their foot in the door as a result of a previous relationship we had with them. They are doing most of our outpatient work types. While they have only been with

us for a short while, Amphion is improving. It is quite a challenge for them to be able to go through all the ins and outs of our information environment.

The Amphion quality is excellent, and the turnaround times are also superb. We are employing eScription to create the initial document, which Amphion then edits. If they stayed exclusively within eScription, they would not have to learn all of the data flows that are required for SoftMed.

We use a number of transcription services, and Amphion has really been a good addition to what we are doing here.

Tools and Methodology – Negative

We have had some connectivity issues from time to time with Amphion. We believe the problem is on their end because we have not had problems with other entities. It is not constant, but it does happen from time to time.

Project Results – Positive

I brought in Amphion for some overflow work because we could not handle our volume. I think they have done a great job. The contract and price were fine, and working with them has been easy. Their staff has been really pleasant. Overall, I have had no problems with Amphion. It is an expense I don't want, but the relationship has been good.

I would definitely recommend Amphion and have done so. They are convenient and have worked out well.

We have an auto importer from Amphion's Dictaphone system to ours, and that was Amphion's idea. They really kind of got the ball rolling and helped us with that, and we would not have really known that the auto importer existed otherwise.

Amphion is not as familiar with our doctors, but all in all, they do a pretty good job, and they are pretty good about communicating. If they have questions, they ask, and then we get the word out so that everybody on the transcription team knows how to spell a certain word or something, if it is something unique to our geographic location. Amphion is good about communicating.

Relationship – Positive

Amphion has been very responsive to any concerns that we have had. They have been great. If we have any questions or concerns, they deal with those right away. We get very good feedback from their administrative staff. They are very easy to work with. At times, Amphion has really gone out of their way to work with our doctors. Their quality and turnaround time are very good. When they put new transcriptionists on our account, there are sometimes issues with quality, but those issues are addressed right away.

We are completely satisfied with Amphion. They do what they say they will. They have good quality and good turnaround times. We are very happy with them. I cannot think of any areas of improvement for them. They have excellent communication.

Amphion's communication is awesome. They are very good about keeping the customer in the loop and giving us what we ask for.

We have been using Amphion for only a relatively short amount of time, and we have been fairly impressed so far. They expect great quality from their transcriptionists, and it shows. Amphion is also willing to listen to us about anything and they actually do something about it. For example, we send them a log of things that we feel are going well and things that need to be improved. We told them that they need more people there on the weekends, and they hired more staff. They even put a method in place for us to be able to quickly speak with an Amphion employee on the weekend if we need to. They have gone the extra mile for us.

The nice thing about Amphion is that they are willing to work with us. They are flexible and willing to find creative solutions. I can work with them to find answers. They will listen to us and vice versa. I feel like we have a nice working relationship. Even when we had some issues with our computers a while back, we were still able to send dictations to them and were able to come up with a way to get the dictations back, which was really slick. I thought that was a big plus.

ROI and Cost – Positive

Amphion never nickel-and-dimes us. They are willing to work with us on a price, and I feel like I get a fair and reasonable rate. Amphion has been very proactive in their pricing, and it shows that they understand us.

ROI and Cost – Negative

We are outsourcing only a portion of our transcription to Amphion. We are actually looking to decrease our use of Amphion. We want to bring the work in-house and stay local. Outsourced transcription is a cost that we want to cut out if possible. We are very happy with Amphion, and we have no problem with them. It is just a cost issue.

■ ASSISTMED

PROVIDER COMMENTARY

People and Knowledge – Positive

The quality is excellent. AssistMed has excellent typists who make very few mistakes.

When I call AssistMed, a real person always answers the phone, which is nice. I don't have to leave messages or wait until the next day for AssistMed to call me back. They are always right there, which is nice.

Tools and Methodology – Positive

AssistMed has been excellent. I am very happy with their work. AssistMed has excellent turnaround time. We usually get the transcriptions back from AssistMed in less than 24 hours. I am very pleased with that. The quality is good, but most importantly they listen to our suggestions and learn from past mistakes. I have seen improvement; they get better and I see that they respond and take action on our feedback.

AssistMed has a good system. The physicians load their digital dictations from Dictaphone onto their website. We can then see the transcription and review the documents online at AssistMed's website before we accept the documents. Then we download them into our EMR right from the website. The download is very easy and seamless. The data just goes right into our EMR.

I feel that AssistMed is heading in a positive direction. For awhile I had issues with their customer service. I felt like I had to initiate all of the calls and communication. AssistMed has really improved in this area, but they could be more proactive. The turnaround times are really good for this MTSO.

I like AssistMed a lot. Their turnaround time is usually less than 24 hours. We put that turnaround time in the contract, and they pretty much keep up with that. I am really happy with AssistMed.

Tools and Methodology – Negative

AssistMed can most improve on the operations side. AssistMed has good transcriptionists, but they can't help much with operations. AssistMed doesn't understand compliance and HIPAA privacy very well, or at least to the degree that they can offer assistance to the clinics with those things. They could help the clinics understand how to best set up the system and work with the EMR. I have had to do most of that, but it would have been helpful for AssistMed to fulfill more of that role.

I would like to see greater flexibility in AssistMed's tools. They have canned reports, but I would like to have the ability to do more slicing and dicing of the data.

AssistMed has a new product, and we have chosen not to use it here because of the way we transcribe things. However, I would like to have an easier management console so we can really see what work is out there.

I would like AssistMed to be more proactive with notifications, especially when they are having problems with the system. They should at least give us a heads-up when the system is down or is going to be down. Often we have to find out what is going on ourselves. Also, their quality has room for improvement. There are issues at times with misspellings, names, and so forth.

Project Results – Positive

We rarely have issues with AssistMed, which has been very positive for us. When we do have issues, AssistMed has been good to work with. Also, turnaround times have been excellent, and the quality of the transcriptions has been solid.

We are still with AssistMed, and we are still very happy with their service. AssistMed is really excelling in their turnaround times with the volume that we have.

Relationship – Positive

AssistMed is very nice and approachable. They are pleasant to work with, and we never have any major problems with them. AssistMed is a company I really enjoy working with.

■ CBAY

PROVIDER COMMENTARY**People and Knowledge – Positive**

As time has gone on, we have had a few more issues with quality. CBay has been very responsive when we have had issues. They work on the issues right away. Some of the things we see happening I just would not expect, seeing that we have only been with them for a year.

We have an account manager person or quality manager person whom we email directly when we have issues. She works on a lot of the issues herself to try and figure out why things are happening and how to fix them. She tends to be reasonably successful at doing that.

By and large, CBay is very consistent about keeping the promises that they make. They are good about turnaround times and resolving problems as they occur. I work with excellent account managers. There was recently a change in the account managers, and it was a seamless transition.

My account representative does a good job with follow-up. CBay is on top of things. If they know something is going to happen, our representative will call us in advance and tell us what is going on. Our account representative is on top of everything, and I feel like she does everything she can possibly do.

Our CBay account manager is wonderful, so I would say that the account management is very good. We have monthly calls with the operations VP, the account manager, and the QA person, and we have quarterly meetings with the VP of sales and customer service.

People and Knowledge – Negative

CBay has a vested interest in India. We would like to go with U.S. transcriptionists. We don't like sending things offshore since the economy is the way it is.

CBay is so big that we don't have a consistent staff doing our work all the time.

Things are fair with CBay, though there are some issues that need to be addressed. We are getting many inaccuracies back. The doctors on our end need to do a little more and be more accurate and accountable for what they are sending over to the transcriptionists. However, the transcriptionists on the back end make huge mistakes that should not be difficult to correct.

The doctors are not happy with the number of blanks we are getting back. We have used CBay long enough that the transcriptionists should be used to the doctors' voices by now.

CBay is very hit or miss with resolving issues. They can be good about solving problems at times, but other times they have no resolution or fix.

Tools and Methodology – Positive

CBay is pretty good at getting our reports turned around quickly. We get many of our reports within 24 hours. The report quality and the quick turnaround times have encouraged more of our physicians to get on board in using CBay.

I had no problems with the turnaround time. CBay has really improved. They are being consistent with the turnaround time.

We are a larger client for CBay. I feel like all I have to do is yell and they are here. I think their response is rather incredible. They have great response to our doctors as well. CBay is very professional.

We contracted for a 24-hour turnaround time. CBay has met that without a doubt.

We had some struggles for a little while with CBay. I had way too many complaints about turnaround times and missing files, but CBay really stepped up to the plate. They gave us a good customer service representative and fixed things within five business days. CBay does not nickel-and-dime us at all. They do some service recovery that makes us feel important.

I would say having CBay has made things a little easier. When we were transcribing in-house, we had issues with who was covering weekends and holidays. I don't have to deal with all that garbage anymore. However, what has been harder is that when I see errors, I can't just take the necessary action myself. I can't just walk up to these people and ask what they were thinking. That creates frustration for me, but CBay relieves the frustration with the whole staffing piece.

CBay Systems has been doing a lot better lately. They have set up a few things to make improvements. They have cut their error rate, so their quality has improved.

CBay has very good turnaround time. Another strength is that they provide us with the means to track the work we have sent them to the nanosecond. I can immediately determine the status of a job. I think that is a wonderful thing.

CBay has improved over the past year. We are much happier with the turnaround time. The physicians have not been complaining about the quality. Things are going well.

CBay has excellent turnaround time. They have a new team working with us, and this has been a huge improvement.

CBay's turnaround time is fine. CBay is outsourcing all the work overseas, and they get back to us quickly.

CBay has some challenges with performance, but they are really good about keeping their word. They have had some technology challenges, but they have stood up to the challenge and have fixed the problems. CBay is fixing their turnaround times and the quality of their reports. I think that overall, CBay is the most improved company that we have seen over the past couple of years. They pretty much do what they say they are going to do.

CBay is responsive, and their turnaround time has really improved. They are a good vendor. I would recommend CBay. Without question, I would go with them again.

CBay is very proactive at resolving issues. They initiate things on their own. They are phenomenal in that way.

CBay is one of the most responsive of all the vendors I work with. They are very quick about adding custom templates. They have a sense of urgency and are very flexible.

I have not really kept up on the charges for black characters. I have felt so comfortable with the way CBay charges that this really has not been an issue.

Tools and Methodology – Negative

The quality of CBay's transcription is not as good as what we had with MedQuist. We are having problems. Some of the doctors are really complaining to department on that. The difference between what was dictated and what was typed is where we are having quality issues. It makes me wonder if the transcriptionists know the medical terminology.

I literally can't think of anything that CBay does well for us.

The report turnaround time and quality are horrible. I don't know how we can survive with the situation we are in.

With CBay, I tend to see the same issue arise several times before getting resolved once and for all. That happens frequently.

CBay does work for our whole health system. One issue we had with them in my facility was I had to send in a list of dictations that did not come back to the person who actually dictated it. Whoever dictates the report has to sign it. I do not know what was happening on their side; it was just kind of stupid.

We have issues with CBay's quality. I think they have probably improved there, but we still have some issues.

There are many reports that do not have the correct account number placed on them. This information can be found through an ADT feed that is sent from our facility. While this problem has been reduced significantly since we started using CBay, it still exists.

Since we went electronic as an organization, there was supposed to be a feature in the tool that let corrections overlay the original transcriptions. But it has been months, and that function still isn't working.

Working with CBay really slows down my productivity because I spend so much of every day correcting errors in the transcriptions they send us.

CBay's turnaround time and quality could be better. They were usually a few hours off. The quality issues came from silly mistakes, like putting female when the patient was male.

I would like to see CBay's quality improve, though that is not a reflection on CBay alone. I think it is an industry-wide problem.

When CBay puts new transcriptionists into the pool, there are no safeguards to prevent transcriptionists from accidentally sending a report live that should have gone through QA. Every once in a while, we will get a really awful report that ends up on the chart. CBay's application does not override when somebody is on full edit.

We have stat dictations for patients who are being transferred to another facility. Those documents need to be turned around in two to four hours, and they are taken care of as they should be. We have to call CBay occasionally, especially on Saturdays, and on those days we get people who are offshore. The language barrier is a major problem that has created a lot of disgruntled physicians. If a doctor forgets to dictate his document as a stat document, we have to call and make it a stat dictation, which is a hassle because it is so hard to reach someone at CBay. We do not get callbacks like we should, and the manager is very defensive.

CBay needs to have a little bit more control over their MTs and have a way of communicating to make sure that everyone is on the same page. The quality of CBay's transcriptions is a problem right now. Because of the volume of the reports that we get, we cannot do QA on 100 percent of the reports, but it is getting to the point where we need to.

The turnaround time can be affected by the time of day that a stat report is dictated. Our turnaround time for a stat report needs to be two hours, and sometimes that is difficult.

Project Results – Positive

Overall, CBay does very well. We do not receive many complaints from the hospital staff regarding dictations. We went through a period when CBay was unavailable for a few days in the beginning of 2008. However, since that time we have not experienced any problems of that magnitude.

CBay has had excellent turnaround times and quality of reports. I have seen some real improvement over the last year, and I am quite pleased with CBay right now.

CBay is an average firm that meets our needs. CBay was very flexible in terms of not making us guarantee volume commitments. They did not expect that level and they were willing to accept our overflow.

Project Results – Negative

CBay is good with turnaround times. Generally, they do a fair job with their quality. Our goal is to give clinicians a report of good quality. Because of this, we are considering going with another firm.

Relationship – Positive

CBay handles our relationship very well. They are fabulous to work with. CBay came in and we told them what we needed, and they were very responsive in meeting our needs. They built an interface with our EMR and made it very easy for us. I have not heard of any problems from anybody.

Whenever I send a copy of anything to CBay, they always make sure the VP of sales and customer service is aware of anything that goes on.

We had a really tough start, but things are going well. I think CBay is one of the best service firms I have dealt with.

SPECIAL QUESTIONS COMMENTARY

If there was an increase or decrease in volume, what has been the main cause?

The doctors are doing more. Our nurses do their own charting right now, but our doctors don't.

We will decrease soon. We are doing discharge summary through our EMR, and this should save us a bit on the amount we send over to CBay.

Our dictation volume has naturally increased because we are growing; we are seeing more patients and adding new facilities. We have a centralized department here, and so we handle all the inpatient, outpatient, and ancillary work.

I do not know why there was an increase in our volume. A lot of times it has to do with new residents. We are a teaching facility, and new residents get here between July and August. The new residents are all excited because they want to use the dictation system, so everybody dictates. But then it fades away. July, August, and September are high-volume months. Overall, our volume has increased two percent.

We are unsure why we have seen the increase. Our dictations are up in our ED for patients we treat and release. This could be due to more consults being done in the ED. Some of our surgical areas have also seen increases.

Ratings Comments: Onshore Services

Some of our stat reports are done onshore.

I cannot distinguish what is done on or offshore. The HL7 Platform has given some problems. They have been sending us the same reports multiple times.

Ratings Comments: Offshore Services

CBay has continued to have high quality, and the turnaround time has been excellent. Their reporting capabilities will be improving with their new version we will be implementing in the next couple of months.

Offshore is never as good as domestic.

We have not been disappointed with the work CBay has done for us. Their offshore service has been great.

The quality has been poor.

As an offshore firm, there are going to be quality issues, especially with slang. But CBay is definitely improving, and they are doing well.

There are lots of blanks left in the document where it seems like the transcriptionists did not try very hard to figure out what the physician said. We have used CBay for a long time, so their transcriptionists should be used to our physicians' voices by now. There are also quality issues from when our physicians select the wrong information about the recording; however, the physicians give the right information in the recording itself, and the transcriptionists still don't catch it.

We have had a lot of complaints about the quality. There are a lot of blanks, and there is a definite language barrier.

The account management is not as good as last year, but that has been improving lately.

CBay has 100 percent of their work performed offshore, which has caused some challenges with respect to report quality issues. We see more blanks and grammar problems than other hospitals do. Also, CBay's turnaround time is not great. We are in the process of looking elsewhere for transcription services.

If you are not using offshore services, what is your perception of offshore MT services?

Language barriers with our offshore services cause lower quality of work.

I am adamantly opposed to using offshore services. I think we have Americans who need jobs.

I would like to see the work stay in the U.S. However, I understand that costs can have a big impact.

Why did you select this MTSO and who else did you consider?

CBay handles our volume very well and they will take every minute we give them. They are easy to work with, as the account manager is responsive and on top of things. They are constantly getting better.

■ DSG

PROVIDER COMMENTARY

People and Knowledge – Positive

DSG is consistent about keeping the same people on our account. I think that helps because they learn the account. I can call them anytime, and they help us to resolve our problems.

We are very happy with DSG; they have been great to work with. The account management is very good, they are diligent and determined to get the transcription right, and they work with us on any issues we have.

DSG's account management is great, and the executive involvement has been excellent.

People and Knowledge – Negative

Some of the MTs do not seem to be as accurate or conscientious as I think they should be. We have had some issues with the quality. DSG has been doing better, but they have a couple of transcriptionists who act like they are just not paying attention.

Tools and Methodology – Positive

Sometimes the new people at DSG make mistakes, but we stay on top of them until the issues are resolved. I would say DSG is the best firm we have worked with. We get a 24-hour turnaround time. The quality is pretty good. DSG is successful at keeping the same people on our account.

DSG has met our every need and expectation. The turnaround time is perfect. We never have any problems. We don't ever need to refer to the contract because the transcription is always here on time. The account manager is very good. I have access to her and two other employees. They are all very good. The quality has also been good. We have had no real problems.

DSG has great turnaround times. They quickly follow up on our questions and issues. Their administrative team is very quick to respond. I have a monthly call with my representative where we discuss issues that then get resolved. DSG's work is all onshore, and their quality is better than average.

DSG has great attention to detail. They do not give up if we have a hard dictator. They will keep working on it until they get it perfected. We have had some issues with turnaround times, but it was mainly a connectivity issue. If we need something faster than anticipated, they work with us to get it where we need it to be.

Most of the time, DSG does a good job with turnaround times. They generally get work back to us on a timely basis. DSG has an operations person who really helps us out.

DSG has very good follow-through. They really make sure that issues are resolved. They have also identified some problems for us. They meet our turnaround standards.

We have been using DSG for over three years and have found their services to be reliable and accurate. We recently shifted all of our volume from MedQuist to DSG because our patient census has decreased. DSG also provides better quality reports than MedQuist does.

DSG is good to keep abreast on what they are doing to correct any problems we run into. They are quick to respond to my emails. Our monthly meetings with them have provided good insight into what is happening on their end to ensure that we are being taken care of.

We have had some issues with DSG regarding the quality of their reports and errors, but they have responded very positively to correct these issues. Most of the problems revolve around our radiology reports.

Tools and Methodology – Negative

DSG has trouble with the platform. The transcriptionists do not see the final product before they hit the Send button. It takes time on our end to get things fixed.

Relationship – Positive

DSG is a good company to work with. They are responsive, timely, and professional. We are very satisfied with them and highly recommend them.

One of the things that we really like is we have a support call once a month with one of their VPs. I don't have anything bad to say, because if we have any issues, they are corrected during that call. The quality has been excellent. The turnaround time has been good.

■ DTS AMERICA

PROVIDER COMMENTARY

Sales and Contracting – Positive

The pricing we have established with DTS is fair and in line with industry standards. In addition, they have done a very good job of meeting all their contractual obligations. They have been very easy to deal with when it comes to doing new and updated contracts, as they negotiate in good faith and are interested in reaching fair and equitable solutions to any contract language problems. The contract, overall, is very user friendly.

People and Knowledge – Positive

DTS America is very good to work with. My contact people are very responsive. I am very glad to have DTS America as our service firm.

The DTS account manager who was originally assigned to our account was very nice, but she lacked the level of detail to monitor the quality of our transcription. The reports were full of mistakes, and we were spending too much time chasing issues. DTS provided a new account manager almost immediately after we asked for a change. We are very happy with the new account manager, and the quality review has improved considerably.

We have a new account manager from DTS America. Everything we need is now being delivered. This has been a vast improvement. The most significant improvement has been in turnaround times. Everything comes within the allotted period. Technical problems that we have with the interface are resolved much more quickly because the person working on our account is well versed with them.

Overall, we have had a positive experience with DTS America. I really like the way they handle issues. When we identify an issue, we are not only talking with the local account representative, but their executive team works with us to resolve the issue as well. We have a couple of executives that are included in the string of emails that will call to tell us what they are going to do to resolve the problem. Also, DTS America recently made a trip here to see how we were doing on our end. I appreciate that.

The highlight of working with DTS America is the personal service with the administrative team. With some companies we are assigned a representative. From the start, DTS America put the administrative team in contact with us and helped us work through our concerns. I was very pleased with that.

We have an outstanding account manager. She gets stat reports turned around much faster than previously. If I need something quickly, she will drop everything and type herself. Also, if DTS America is backed up with turnaround times, she will let me know.

She also proofs everything before it gets to me. I email her with any issues that come up, and she gets right on the MTs.

We got a new account manager, and he is excellent. He is very positive, and he has improved our service turnaround times. He is very responsive to our needs.

We feel DTS is an excellent company to work with. They are very responsive to all our requirements and needs. In addition, the people we deal with are professional and know the transcription business and how to handle a substantial volume that has a great deal of complexity, especially when it comes to medical terminology. For the most part, everyone in the company is very well trained in medical terminology, so we have very few problems with the transcriptionists not understanding the language used in medical transcriptions.

People and Knowledge – Negative

I don't know how my account manager can't keep track of our account. Our issues are concerning basic staffing, basic mistakes, and basic accuracy. It seems like she does not expect her staff to do the best they can do.

We have had some problems with our account representative. She has not been very proactive. At one point we were given the opportunity to have her removed from the account, but she said all of the right things, and we decided to stick with her. However, she is not doing what she said she would do, which is frustrating.

Those assigned to our account should be trained on our account. We had some serious instances where the person assigned did not know the account specifics. Because of that, we had some major problems with a lot of her work to the point that I had one of our doctors call to ask what was happening with this account. We should never have a physician call about problems.

I believe that the challenges we have had with DTS America all stem from staffing. DTS America does not have enough qualified staff to handle the volume that we provide or to meet the turnaround times that we require. When DTS America does get a new person, the quality is very poor.

Tools and Methodology – Positive

When we have an issue, DTS America works it out with us. We have implemented Nuance, and DTS America has been working one-on-one with us to resolve any issues. They have good turnaround times. We have only had one issue with turnaround time. Their quality is also good.

DTS America functions 24/7, including weekends. That has been a huge benefit for us. They have gotten a lot better with turnaround times on their Q/A reports. DTS America meets our needs.

DTS America has excellent customer service and account management. Our representative has taken our account very personally. DTS America makes sure we have enough MTs on our account. They watch our turnaround time daily to make sure it is 95 percent or better. They are very in tune with our account. Their turnaround time is now one of their biggest strengths.

We can call DTS America anytime with any problem and they will do their best to fix it. They do a really good job in that regard.

DTS America's turnaround times are always ahead of our expectations. Another thing that I really like about this company is the fact that if they do not meet the turnaround time on any particular item, we receive that item as a credit on our bill. I really like that.

DTS transcribes everything except for our radiology dictation. We have had a really good experience with them. The turnaround time is good. If they have a change in their staffing or if something happens that may affect us, they always communicate that to us. I know when they are adding new people to the account because I have to put those new people into my system for them to be able to get access. For the most part, if we have something that is a priority, we can contact DTS. I have an account person I work with. If anything is amiss, I can shoot her an email. Usually I will have a response from her within an hour.

I have phone numbers in case I need to call and discuss something. A lot of times I contact DTS because I find something in the report and want them to communicate that with the transcriptionists. If our system is going to be down for maintenance, we always communicate that and let each other know what is going on.

If a transcriptionist is not meeting a doctor's expectations, I can let DTS know. They can see the transcriptionist's initials and know who is doing that transcription and either take that person off our account or put that person on something more familiar.

For the most part, a lot of the transcriptionists who work on my account worked in-house and then moved to DTS. As a result, many of them are familiar with our doctors and their transcription styles. Of course, DTS has added additional people to the account for coverage purposes. DTS hired anyone who wanted to move, which was nice for our employees after they found out their jobs were going to be outsourced. DTS made the transition really smooth. They met with the employees individually and as a group. That was a nice personal touch.

DTS America is very good with their turnaround times on stat reports. They always seem to step up to the plate. They are also very responsive when we have problems.

As a result of the company's in-depth training and professionalism, we receive excellent quality on the transcriptions we send to them. In addition, the turnaround times are usually within hours, even for discharge reports. We are very satisfied with the quality and quantity and the turnaround times that we are receiving from DTS America. We have very few rejects and, in addition, we don't have to do very much work with the transcriptions that are sent back.

DTS is always honest with their billing. They don't play games. We do random audits, and DTS is always on the mark. It is all how we count a line, and DTS never wavers on that. We can take it to the bank.

DTS is wonderful for us. The first six months were very rocky. They were a small company, and I don't think they had a clue of what they were getting into. Things are working now, though.

Tools and Methodology – Negative

Every once in a while, DTS America has technical difficulties with their MTs. They should be a little more proactive about dealing with those issues.

The transcription activity is not monitored closely enough on occasion, resulting in inadequate coverage and negative turnaround times for reports.

For the most part, the quality has been good. However, there are times when we encounter problems with misspelled words, which is a pet peeve of mine. Also, at times the transcriptionists need to listen better. Sometimes they just type but do not listen to what is being said. For example, a doctor may say "type in my procedure here" and instead of typing in the doctor's procedure, the transcriptionist types what was said. I have a part-time employee who is dedicated to fixing the reports.

There has been some turnover with MTs that has presented some challenges. DTS America gets brand new MTs, and the new MTs don't always understand some of our account specific requirements. DTS America needs to provide more intense training on our procedures.

The jump start could have been better. Initially we had to do a lot more quality checks than we expected, and that was not very pleasant.

We have had an age-old problem from the beginning, and it keeps rearing its ugly head. For some reason, DTS America loses our report format. I wish they could find a solution. It is not like DTS America is not trying to resolve the problem, but it is getting frustrating.

We are having some quality issues with DTS America. The transcriptionists seem to rush through editing, and they make a lot of mistakes. DTS America does seem to try to get things fixed when there is a problem.

DTS America's help desk needs work. A lot of our stats are not getting turned around in a timely manner.

We have been trying to move more work to DTS America, but we have a particular work type that we have not been able to upload. The DTS America staff assigned to the problem either did not have the ability or did not make us a high enough priority to get the problem taken care of. As soon as their upper management became aware of the situation, they immediately stepped in and are now getting the ball rolling. DTS America's upper management is really how we would like to see any vendor work with us.

Project Results – Positive

DTS provides proactive service. When one of their transcriptionists left too many blanks, they pulled her from our account right away. The DTS transcriptionists produce quality work, and their final deliverable is excellent. We can call DTS at a moment's notice, and they will quickly jump on the problem.

DTS America's quality is far above other facilities' within our organization. We have a 99 percent accuracy rate with them.

We have been very happy with DTS America. They are doing all of our transcription work, and all of the work they are performing for us is done domestically. They have done a very good job with turnaround times.

Working with DTS America was rough at first, but things have improved significantly. We have a few reports that slip through, but most often it is because the physician has put in the wrong account number or work type. I only actually keep track of the H&P reports, and they are running in the low 90 percent accuracy range. I would assume that would follow through on the other reports.

We have been very happy with the turnaround times. In fact, ordinarily we have a 24-hour turnaround time, but I am getting reports in one or two hours. I am printing what was downloaded this morning.

DTS America came in at a difficult time. We were transitioning, and DTS America came in, took charge of our overflow, and got us all caught up. They have stayed pretty consistent throughout the years.

DTS America has good turnaround times and quality, and they are reasonably priced. They also have good customer service. DTS America does a good job of providing third-shift coverage for us.

Project Results – Negative

We took a big risk with DTS, which turned out to be better than our previous MTSO but not as great as I had anticipated or hoped. The initial setup with DTS was great. They helped set up the forms and profiles and did everything under pressure, because we had a lot going on. After that, I have been disappointed with the quality of the work. They make stupid mistakes. The issues we bring to their attention are common sense, things that we discussed before, or things that have been in place already as rules.

DTS is much better than our other MTSO. DTS is making aggravating mistakes that my staff deals with, but not ones that can impact the patient; Paul's cancer diagnosis is not being put on Chad's chart. The mistakes are constant, little aggravations. The lesson I learned is that whenever we outsource the product, we must understand they don't take personal ownership. My experience may be the standard for outsourcing transcription.

Relationship – Positive

Primarily, what has really been great is that DTS America is a good strategic business partner. They really try to look at the whole picture and how they can really benefit our organization as a whole.

DTS has been very responsive to our needs over the past couple of years. They try very hard to ensure that they are providing the service and quality that we require.

The executive involvement from DTS America has been excellent. A while ago, we were having a number of issues, and we were having problems with our account manager. I met with some of DTS America's head honchos, who made a number of promises. I wrote down all the things they promised, and they have delivered on most of those promises. I have a wonderful account manager, and things have gotten much better. I also met with one of their executives fairly recently and was given his cell phone number. I can call him anytime. It is nice to have that level of direct access.

ROI and Cost – Positive

Our contract with DTS America renews every year, so it is pretty seamless. I don't even see anything, and it is never a problem. DTS America never raises their prices.

SPECIAL QUESTIONS COMMENTARY

If there was an increase or decrease in volume, what has been the main cause?

The volume has stayed the same. The biggest change was our cardiologists, who are some of our biggest dictators. They have completely stopped dictating and have switched to this system. The radiologists' nurses are doing most of the work. However, the new orthopedic doctors always dictate, so things even out.

We have increased our staff within the organization to meet the increased patient workload. The staff is doing more dictation than ever. We are seeing more requests for dictations from many departments.

We have increased our dictation volume by adding new doctors and seeing more patients. We have reduced some of our dictation volume through front-end speech recognition. We have about 14–15,000 lines in self-edit.

The increasing volume comes from an increased confidence rate. We are adding additional work types, and the doctors really like the quality.

Since we are using PowerScribe in radiology, we hardly see any of the transcription now.

A large part of the decrease has come from the ambulatory world. The ambulatory transcription volume has been huge for us, but we are seeing less dictation from them now thanks to the Epic EMR, electronic documentation, speech recognition, and so on.

Ratings Comments: Onshore Services

We have worked out an arrangement with onshore services for stat turnaround within two hours. That has been really good. I have sent new templates for certain doctors, but they still use old ones and they still have trouble with retina.

The quality of the reporting has been good. We have had some instances of typing errors; however, DTS finds them for us.

We receive excellent service from onshore services. The quality is top notch and the turnaround times are also very good.

We have a new account manager, and things have really improved since he arrived.

Ratings Comments: Offshore Services

The quality for offshore is not as good as the quality is for domestic.

If you are not using offshore services, what is your perception of offshore MT services?

The quality from offshore services is terrible, especially for ophthalmology. The transcriptionists from offshore services do not complete sentences, their grammar is incorrect, and they do not know how to spell medical words.

It is too risky to use offshore services. We feel there is an overall lack of security. The quality may also suffer because of the language barrier.

I am not too keen on offshore services. They do not have good English grammar skills. I also believe in keeping our work in America.

I wish we could keep all our dictation services in America. But I know that to keep the price down, it has to be sent offshore. As long as I get the same quality report on the outcome, I am all right with it. As long as the MTSO doesn't raise their prices, which ours have not, then I'm a satisfied customer all the way around. So, if I get what I want at the price I want, then whether it is offshore or onshore in the end is not much of a concern.

The perception of offshore services depends on the physician. I am comfortable with offshore, but the issue is that there is a tendency to believe that any transcription errors are because of language differences with offshore services.

We have had bad results with offshore work in the past. I would not do it again. From a cost perspective, it is good, but the quality is poor.

I do not have a problem with offshore MT services.

My perception of offshore services is not very good. We know that offshore MT services can be much cheaper than onshore services, but we are not willing to compromise on quality.

I have never used offshore services, and I do not want to. I have heard that the quality is terrible.

I am not okay with sending work offshore. HIPAA standards are not followed outside of the country.

Why did you select this MTSO and who else did you consider?

We were referred to Dictaphone. We spent some time telling them our needs before we selected them. We also discussed costs and what we were willing to pay. Several factors went into our decision.

We considered Spheris and DTS. We liked the idea of working with a small vendor that offered a more personal level of service.

■ ENCOMPASS

PROVIDER COMMENTARY

Sales and Contracting – Positive

When we got the news that we would have to contract with Encompass directly, I had a hard time getting ahold of the contact I was given. It was coming down to the wire, and we were going to be on our own and I could not get anyone to call me back. Encompass replaced our original contact, and our replacement for this first contact was awesome. Whenever I needed to call her, she was there. She is still great.

People and Knowledge – Positive

Encompass has worked out well for us. We have a good account manager and are not really experiencing any problems right now with quality or turnaround times.

Encompass supports us 24/7. We have some in-house staff that transcribes for us during the week, but Encompass does all of our weekend and holiday work. They are very pleasant people to deal with. I really like our account manager. We are really happy with them.

Encompass is very responsive. They have recently added someone to work with us on a regular basis to resolve problems, and that is great. The size of their company is also definitely an advantage. They are able to flex a little more than a small firm would be able to.

The staff is great. Before we were with Encompass, we had another firm that gave us a lot of challenges. A great portion of this was due to the fact that they were not based in the U.S. The report quality and our communication with them were poor. Now, I can email or pick up phone to discuss issues with Encompass. Encompass responds quickly. Our biweekly meetings with them only last 10 minutes because of the great job they have been doing.

I think that Encompass is very timely and accurate. They always meet their turnaround times, and their quality is excellent. We have very few QA problems. Their account management is usually pretty good. If we cannot seem to find a dictation, they usually respond within an hour.

The support from Encompass has been very good. If there is a problem, they are all over it. We have an account manager we communicate with daily, and we also have access to their top executive when needed.

The people at Encompass are very nice to work with. They are very attentive to quality. Their IT staff is able to resolve issues and is very helpful to us.

I think that Encompass is very customer service oriented. Because of that, they manage to meet all of our customer needs in a very timely basis. They have stuck to that model.

Encompass could always improve their quality. They do a great job trying to improve when we point it out to them, however. Encompass has a good QA program, but we do get blanks where the transcriptionist does not know what the physician is saying.

Encompass is responsive to any requests or problems that we have. We have an account representative who is in very close contact with us. Encompass is very accessible.

People and Knowledge – Negative

Although our account manager is good, she does not quite have the best attitude. She is nice and helpful, but sometimes I think she could have a better attitude. That is important.

Tools and Methodology – Positive

One thing I really like about Encompass is they are very proactive. I see this in a variety of ways. For example, when a doctor finishes dictating, the voice file loads to Dictaphone. The Encompass MTs grab the voice file right off of Dictaphone, so we don't have to do any manual loading. Also, Encompass has a really nice QA process that happens automatically. The system keeps transcription errors from coming to us. It also allows us to review documents. On top of all of this, the turnaround time, quality, and account management from Encompass are all really good. I am very pleased with Encompass.

Encompass has continued to offer superior turnaround time and service. They get us our transcriptions well within the contracted time frames. They are very good about that and never miss. I love that. The service is also superb. I get an immediate response from my support team to every email. Also, if they see a dictation is incomplete, they proactively send me an email letting me know so I can fix it. My account people are just great.

Encompass is pretty good. The experience overall is still pretty positive. We have not had a lot of major problems. Our lead transcriptionist has more issues with quality than anyone else. There are some errors made with cutting and pasting and not being careful. Encompass has a quality control person, but some errors slip through the cracks.

Encompass has very good turnaround times. They have very good customer service and resolve issues quickly.

I would recommend Encompass to others. They do a fairly good job. Their turnaround times have improved. They are now able to turn things around every day. Also, we are not having as much turnover with our MTs. The quality has improved. Encompass has been more involved and better to work with us over the past year.

Things are continuing to go great with Encompass. The turnaround times are still good, and the account management is fine. The one thing I like about using Encompass is just knowing and being confident that the work is going to get done well and on time.

Encompass is timely, and there are very few errors. When there are errors, they are corrected within the hour and the reports are returned to us. I think Encompass is doing a great job.

The turnaround times have been excellent. In fact, for the last couple of weeks Encompass has been 100 percent with their turnaround times in every category. The worst they have ever been was around 90 percent. The quality has also been very good. When there have been quality issues, they have been very responsive and have worked hard to resolve the problems.

The transcription, when it comes back from Encompass, goes directly to the doctor's home. He has not complained once about the work. One can upload the dictation in several ways, but our doctor calls an 800 number and dictates after each patient.

I would like the turnaround times to be at 24 hours, but I could live with 48 hours before it becomes a pain. Encompass has been very responsive. I am not unhappy with them at all. We need a 24-hour turnaround time to be 100 percent sure the dictation is coming back when we need it. Encompass is right on top of that, though.

We just did a turnaround time average on all of our reports, and the turnaround time is magnificent. Our deadline is 24 hours, and Encompass usually kicks the reports out within two hours.

The quality of the reports from Encompass is very good. Also, Encompass provided us our reports within the time frame that we had requested. Most importantly, they helped us with a bunch of resources when we were in a pinch.

Encompass is very responsive when we have an issue. They respond right away, and they really do a good job for us.

I am always on call, and except on holidays, I need to have my transcriptions turned around within a day. The people at Encompass are very good about getting me exactly what I need within that time period. I almost never find mistakes in the work they send back.

The quality of the transcription from Encompass seems to be good. We don't have a problem with turnaround times, so we can't complain. Their cost is comparable to what we have here on-site as well, so it seems to be a very good arrangement right now.

We are starting to get a lot of errors with Encompass, so we had a meeting with them to go over quality. Otherwise, the communication is very good. They put a couple of their transcriptionists on a 100 percent review.

Encompass has very good turnaround times. The timeliness of their reports is excellent.

Tools and Methodology – Negative

Encompass struggles a bit with quality. Sometimes we have to pick up things that they missed in their QA. I think they need to focus more on paying attention to the encounters. Some things are difficult to figure out. If that is the case, they should put them in our manual review and let us decide where it goes rather than just picking an encounter.

Encompass is a little slow about sending invoices. A lot of our invoices are late. We do not get the invoices and then get a nasty letter from them saying we have not paid. They get behind on their billing and send out a statement with a notice that it is past due all at the same time. We have spoken to them about it, and it is supposed to improve.

We had an exclusive contract with Encompass, and when we decided to stop using them, it became harder to schedule them when we needed work done. This was a challenge.

Project Results – Positive

Encompass meets all my expectations. I really can't think of anything they could do better.

Our doctors love the reports that we are getting from Encompass. They have been timely and accurate.

Encompass is cooperative and responsive and very easy to work with. They are also timely. If we need a job done more quickly, they can accommodate that. The quality is excellent. I can't think of anything Encompass could do better because we are very pleased.

At this point, we have not had any issues with Encompass.

We are well taken care of by Encompass. All of the reports are returned in a time within the contract and there are no concerns with accuracy.

Encompass does a very good job at communicating. They are very friendly and responsive. They also have excellent turnaround time. We really like working with them.

Encompass has been a very good company to work with. Their response has been good when we have had questions. Also, we have been pleased with the quality of the transcription and the turnaround times.

The reports are pretty accurate. I do not get back many reports with problems.

Project Results – Negative

Encompass has not met our expectations for turnaround time. About 10 percent of our work does not meet the agreement. That percentage is not bad, but the doctors still complain. I would also like to see the quality improve as well. The staff is fast, but their editing could be better.

Relationship – Positive

Encompass is very flexible. They listen to what the customer needs. They are very accommodating in that way. Their customer service is fabulous.

Occasionally we have some disagreements, but Encompass ultimately falls in line and does what they agreed to up front.

ROI and Cost – Positive

On the price side, Encompass is comparable.

We have been really pleased with the outsourcing model. Now we don't have to worry about scheduling MTs. Also, the turnaround times are much better than when they were in-house. I usually get a backlog report every morning, and three or four times this month there has been zero backlog. We have never seen more than 100 minutes in backlog. When we were doing the transcription in-house every morning, the backlog was almost 600 minutes. Outsourced transcription is also less expensive. We went from \$0.23 per line in-house to \$0.17 per line with Encompass.

I would not say that Encompass nickel-and-dimes us. They have pricing tiers for turnaround time but I would not call it nickel-and-diming. I would rather not pay it, of course, but they are not charging us for editing or connection.

ROI and Cost – Negative

In looking at what we had contracted with Encompass, we realized that their fees were higher than most other vendors' fees. We wish we knew that going into it. Even though Encompass did do a good job for us, we are disappointed that their pricing was not competitive.

SPECIAL QUESTIONS COMMENTARY

If there was an increase or decrease in volume, what has been the main cause?

There are several reasons our dictation volume has increased. One is that we have new physicians who don't like to use the electronic tools we have with Epic and Dragon, so they dictate too much. Other doctors think that Epic is not sufficiently user friendly, so they don't use it much. Also, there is limited use of Dragon. I think if we used the electronic tools more, we might see a decrease in dictation volume; however, all I hear from the physicians is that they don't like the way the electronic tools work, and so they dictate.

Front-end speech has decreased our volumes. Although not all doctors have transferred over into front- and back-end speech, those who use front-end speech can create and edit documents themselves.

Encompass was great for what we needed them for, but after we got an electronic health record we just used Encompass for the extra back logs. When we went live with Allscripts Enterprise EHR we trained doctors to create templates and use the EMR. Now we have discontinued Encompass, but that is not due to any fault of theirs. We just do not need them anymore.

Epic has worked out well and we are measuring our line counts closely. We are running almost two million lines per month. It is a lot, but we are optimistic that number will be cut 30 to 50 percent pretty quickly with the EMR. There are specific EMRs that we looked at that are so template driven. It is just point-and-click technology. We elected to move away from that because we felt like it was not enough. It was never going to give us enough of what we wanted to see. We will go one-on-one with providers and begin developing full documentation tools. I know it takes a while to get to that point once we have been on an EMR, but we think we are going to see fewer lines per month as we implement ePrescribing and text messaging. That is some documentation that we will document inside the chart, so we will not have to dictate some of that. We are thinking that we will see some line adjustments by the third quarter of this year. I know there will be a significant savings to the organization.

Encompass is losing clients as providers roll into Horizon Ambulatory Care EMR. It is the same way with Transcend. Encompass was averaging 300,000–400,000 lines a month from our organization, but by the end of this year, they will have nothing. We are reducing our outsourcing needs because of our new reliance on eScription, Dragon, and Horizon Ambulatory Care.

Ratings Comments: Onshore Services

We used an offshore company before, and the quality was horrible. I spent tons of hours just correcting the work. It was terrible.

Our onshore reports were pretty correct. We have an exclusive contract with this vendor, but when we stopped needing them, it was harder to get them scheduled when we did need some work done.

We are happy with Encompass, but they could provide more useable and readable reports.

Encompass has been wonderful. We don't have any problems at all. The turnaround time, service, and quality have all been good.

It has just been fantastic with Encompass. The past year has been a rocky transition, but once we got an account representative, that representative just took care of everyone.

I have a wide variety of clients that need different kinds of documentation. I have set up several templates for Encompass, and they always do a very good job of turning around transcriptions that I don't need to correct. As long as Encompass has the spelling of all the physicians' names I use, they don't make mistakes. I try to be flexible with holidays, but my work can call on me seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Encompass is always available and able to turn the transcriptions around within a 24-hour period, and the transcriptions are always accurate.

Ratings Comments: Offshore Services

No comments.

If you are not using offshore services, what is your perception of offshore MT services?

I have a very low opinion of offshore transcription services because my previous experience with an offshore company was a nightmare. The quality was just so bad that I could not stand it.

I have outsourced overseas before, and it was horrible. The quality was horrible. They did not understand the dictation because they could not understand the doctors.

I don't like offshore transcription. Our prior MTSO, Rostex, sent work offshore and the quality was not as good.

We used to have offshore work, and I will fight tooth and nail that it never happens again. The quality is terrible, and they make stupid mistakes.

I am not excited about offshore services. I am concerned about confidentiality.

I have concerns about the quality of offshore transcription with accents; also, I just prefer to keep the work here in the states.

I use offshore with another of my MTSOs and I am fine with it. That MTSO's quality is almost as good with offshore as I get with onshore, and I get a better price, so I am okay with it.

I don't like offshore services at all. No, not at all. I think we should keep our work and jobs here.

I don't know where Encompass is farming my transcriptions out, but the transcriptions always come back within a day and the quality is almost perfect. As long as the speed and quality are there, that is what I care about.

Why did you select this MTSO and who else did you consider?

We use Dictaphone, which Encompass partners with, and so the integration capabilities of selecting Encompass were attractive. Also, the costs were not bad for being onshore. The cost was definitely one of the main reasons.

We would not consider anyone but Encompass. They have done a wonderful job for us.

Encompass seemed willing to help us in a pinch. We appreciate the flexibility and quality of work from Encompass.

With our EMR implementation, we did not want to be at risk for being backlogged. We wanted to remove that risk. We identified what we could carve out for Encompass on a daily basis, so that way we could afford to keep them on a monthly basis. That also did not affect our backlog, and we would have them available if we needed them. We wanted to keep our turnaround time around 24 hours. We can go with 48 hours before it becomes a pain. For the most part, Encompass has been very responsive.

We had an employee who knew a Dictaphone sales representative, and our decision was the result of an emergency networking decision.

Encompass and Sten-Tel both started with us at the same time. Our in-house people went to one or the other, which did help. They were both able to take on our workload because they knew our account. When we were looking into outsourcing, our manager at that time did all the reference work and made contact with the groups. I am not sure how they did that, but we ended up with both Sten-Tel and Encompass.

■ FOCUS

PROVIDER COMMENTARY

Sales and Contracting – Negative

Our contract includes a deduction for not meeting turnaround times. I have had to remind Focus of this. I think Focus should have been taking care of this, as it was in the contract.

People and Knowledge – Positive

Our Focus account manager is always accessible and follows up on all issues.

Our account manager is exceptional. We have a very competent project manager, so our rating might be different if we had another project manager. She is exceptional at customer service. She routinely contacts her clients to make sure their needs are being met. She provides 24/7 accessibility to her expertise and support. Our account manager is the reason why we have stayed partnered with Focus Infomatics.

Our account manager is outstanding and resolves every issue without complaint. She is efficient, effective, and proactive. She has great knowledge of the service the company provides and is an excellent representative of the company. Our team leader is magical and has extremely broad knowledge of the work he performs and the expectations of his clients. The company, through their representatives, stands head and shoulders above the competition.

Our Focus account manager has been good about cracking down on our quality issues. They are doing more QA to ensure we get the right transcriptionists on our account. Focus also started keeping me informed about who is new on the account and who they have taken off.

The Focus project managers, both in the U.S. and India, are very attentive to our account. They are very proactive on any issues that may arise. My one account manager here is just superb. I could not have any better. It seems that any time, day or night, I can send him an email and he will get right back to me. I swear he is checking his emails in the middle of the night.

The account management at Focus is wonderful. The MTs that are assigned to our account communicate well with us regarding processes and specifications to our account.

Focus has a pretty responsive administrative staff.

Focus is very responsive to what we need. They understand that we have them doing our stat transcriptions because we know they will get things done right away.

Our account representative is great. He knows what he is up against, and he does all that he can with what he has to work with. He does a good job with the limitations that have been imposed on him.

People and Knowledge – Negative

My expectation might be unrealistic, but it would be helpful if the Indian MTs had a better grasp of conversational English. Their accuracy with straight medical terminology is quite good, but their understanding of conversational English is so poor that they are not able to avoid glaring errors in the text.

The expectation has to be realistic when outsourcing transcription offshore. These are Indian MTs who live in Bangalore and all report to a Nuance-owned building. From that standpoint, the quality can be controlled with a supervisor who is right there on-site. They don't speak English well, so for long, rambling dictations, like a consultation, the quality drops like a rock. We occasionally find some pretty bizarre things in the reports, but they are never critical. I restrict what I outsource to them. I outsource things such as rhinitis or lacerations where if there is a mistake on the other end, it is not likely going to kill the patient.

The MTs' English and medical terminology skills could always improve. The MTs make grammar mistakes that an English speaker would never make, and they don't understand our idioms all of the time.

We have had some difficulties with the report quality. We notice that it takes the new transcriptionists at Focus a while before they get their quality up. Since their staff works in India, the biggest challenges for them is to learn our quirks and language. We have some good laughs at times when we get their reports.

The quality of the work still is not up to where we would like it to be, and I suspect that is a result of it being done off-shore. Most of the concerns we have are regarding grammar, spelling, and things of that nature. Sometimes we find that there are blanks left in the report, but when we listen to the voice file, we can understand it. I don't know if that is because the Focus employees can't understand the language.

Tools and Methodology – Positive

The turnaround time is usually less than the contracted times. Their report quality is much better than our previous vendor's.

The turnaround times are fantastic. I have turnaround times of under an hour. I am extremely happy. We are a 24-hour discharge facility, and the longest I have ever had to

wait for a discharge summary is 4 hours. I have nothing but good things to say about Focus.

Focus is always willing to change to meet the needs of our organization. We do not have to wait for things to get done. They are done almost immediately.

The quality was average at first. It was not exceptional. We have worked with Focus, and the quality has become exceptional. They do not send us anything that has not gone through a quality check first. They have a lot of checks and balances.

The turnaround time is awesome because we send work offshore. The language barrier has not been that big of a deal. It is great that we have a contact here in the U.S. who we can communicate problems to. Focus addresses problems immediately. They have been a good company to work with.

I have seen improvement from Focus Infomatics since last year. They have definitely stepped up the quality and consistency of their transcriptions in the last six months. We had some problems a year ago, but then we started having monthly meetings with them, and they also hired a new quality manager. This has really made a difference and improved our general satisfaction.

Focus does a very good job with turnaround times. They also follow up on problems.

When we have quality issues with Focus, our issues are usually with the offshore work. Focus responds well to issues that we have, though.

Focus takes care of anything I ask them to do. They are very responsive. It is easy to get in touch with my account representative. Focus is very hands on and gets things done right then and there. They do not wait to resolve issues. They have good turnaround times and good quality.

Focus has the perfect blending of resources. The transcriptionists work offshore, but the QA process is managed by the onshore staff. This arrangement is a true win-win situation since it works so well for them and for us.

Focus Infomatics is meeting our turnaround time for outsourced transcription. We have had their service for a few years, and I cannot recall a time when they were not meeting our expectations for turnaround times.

Even when an unexpected problem came up that was out of the vendor's control, they slowed down for about 5 hours but rerouted the Internet messages around it. They did quite well, considering. Within 12 to 24 hours, they were back to normal and things were caught up.

Focus Infomatics is very good with problem resolution. We track the issues in an Excel sheet and mail that to Focus. They respond back to us with an update on how far they have addressed and resolved the problem.

Focus has excellent follow-up. Whenever we have issues, they respond immediately and we have an action plan immediately. They are very quick to respond. Our turnaround time is very short. We average about four hours across all of our facilities for all of our work types. We have been fine with their quality.

We have worked hard with Focus. We have had many conference calls and we finally have them where we feel we need them to be, especially in regards to quality. I believe their QA process has improved.

Our physicians appreciate the turnaround time from Focus. They are good about getting our reports back to us quickly. Sometimes we get the reports back earlier than we expected.

As far as quality, I still think Focus has a bit better of a quality process. I guess the difference between the two is that Focus is proactive in making sure their quality is up to a higher standard. Focus catches it before it happens.

If there are no issues at all with a document that Focus transcribes, it goes right to our electronic medical record. If they have an issue with a document, like there are four blanks in the report because the physician has a heavy accent or for whatever reason, they will send it to us and we will have to review it.

Focus has very good turnaround times. When I send in my transcription, it comes back the next day. They are very accurate. We have not had any problems with them.

I think things have gotten better with Focus. Their turnaround time is more consistent. There were some ups and downs with that. Their quality is better. Usually it is not quality; it is the clinical aspect of the report with account numbers and doctors. That can be tricky but they have actually gotten better.

Focus does a good job for us. They handle part of our business, and their turnaround times are great. We have very few issues with accuracy. I am under the impression that they do not send any business offshore.

Turnaround times have had some issues, but they are not terrible. The quality of the transcription, even though it is offshore, has been good enough that the doctors don't complain about it.

Over the past year, Focus has really improved in their turnaround times, and the quality of their reports seems to be improving as well. They are staying on top of things, so we are not experiencing the backlog that was occurring in the past. I used to get reports

with a lot of blanks that needed to be completed. Today Focus is sending more of the reports through their own QA process, so they are handling more of the errors and sending us cleaner work.

We started having some quality concerns with Focus and as a result, we reduced the volume of our work with them. We had even contemplated removing Focus completely. However, they did regain our confidence, and the quality of the work has gone up considerably.

Focus is doing a considerable amount of work for us. The majority of what they are doing is editing files that are processed by way of speech recognition, but they are also direct typing a small percentage of the work. The editing is done at a rate which is only slightly more than half of what we pay for the typed work that Focus does.

We really have struggled with the performance of Focus. What was initially a very promising vendor eventually became a sore eye for us. Since that time, however, they have brought their quality back, but at the same time we had to give away several of the work types that they were previously handling for us. That is what was required to get them to perform a little bit better. At this point, Focus is meeting our objectives.

We use a couple of different transcription services, and they both share some types of work. However, Focus exclusively does all of our stat work, discharge summaries, progress notes, and so on. They turn the work around fast.

Focus really does a good job for us, and I feel like they are getting better since they moved to using eScription. The quality of our reports is better with Focus than it is with Sten-Tel, our other transcription vendor. I am really very pleased with Focus and what we get there.

Focus has done a great job for us. We are in an ambulatory setting and are part of a larger organization. We are busy and Focus is busy, but they always keep their turnaround times below 24 hours. That is vital for us and our patients. I would definitely recommend Focus to anybody.

Tools and Methodology – Negative

Nuance changed the billing to a new format, and we had previously had some areas excluded from the bill I receive, and it was billed directly instead to that respective area. That took months to work out initially. Now, they have lumped everything back under one bill again, and we are in the process of trying to figure it out with them.

As far as quality goes, Focus Infomatics does not do as well as we would like.

My biggest stickler with Focus Infomatics is that they tend to do very good on the technical medical part, but they do not always seem to grasp some of the basic English

language, grammar, and punctuation. Formatting cc addresses seems to be a big struggle for them.

The only thing Focus needs to improve on is they need to do a little more QA on the reports before they come through. We have had a couple of errors that were blatant when we listened to the dictation and then looked at the report.

Focus needs to improve their invoicing. They are sending me incorrect invoices that do not match the number of lines that come out of my transcription system. We share the same transcription system, so the number of lines should be pretty straightforward. However, a lot of times there are discrepancies, so I always have to look at the invoice. It seems like it takes forever to get this resolved.

The MTs at Focus need better training. The biggest area they need training on is the format of our letter work type.

Focus has not been one of our favorite vendors since Nuance purchased them. There has been significant internal turnover, and the quality of their work has seriously deteriorated. In the last couple of months, there has been some improvement; however, it has come to the point where our physicians are complaining about the quality of the reports and the turnaround time. If things do not improve, we will shift our business to one of our other vendors.

It is questionable if we would buy from Focus again if given the choice. Initially, the problems were with the quality of the reports. I believe it had to do with their sale to Nuance a couple of years ago. Focus was the first vendor we worked with. They had really high hopes and plans for really huge volumes, and we hoped they would be able to tackle it. However, the quality was very poor and we had a lot of complaints, so we really had to pull back the volumes. Focus has certainly done better, but Transcend has outdone them.

It may be because of the language, but we have had some issues with the offshore work Focus does. We wish Focus would do a better job of managing their MTs. Sometimes the MTs have a difficult time understanding our dictations.

The report quality from Focus has slipped. In some instances, the transcriptionist has used the wrong template, and we often see reports that contain poor grammar. Focus uses offshore transcriptionists, so we believe that the language barrier may be part of the problem, even though QA is performed by onshore resources. We cannot quite put a finger on why report quality has slipped, but Focus has added more QA resources in order to correct the problem.

We have the same mistakes with Focus that we had three years ago. Things continue to wax and wane, and we don't see an end to it. We require an extra QA check on 30 or 40 doctors' transcriptions because we cannot trust the work. Before transcriptions are

signed by physicians, I have one person who looks at the work for mistakes before the doctors see it. We are not at all happy with the quality of transcriptions from Focus, and we have never been happy in the time I have been here. I just got an email saying that Focus is replacing five of their MTs for poor quality, so they are going to have to train someone new, which is going to mess up the turnaround times.

Focus is always doing an update. Focus puts out four or five updates a month. Sometimes I have to refuse to let the updates happen at certain times. For instance, Focus wanted to shut down our system at 5:00 p.m. I refused to let that happen. The pathology department does all of their work in the evening. Focus just has a lack of knowledge of when to do these things, and I would not expect that from somebody as big as Focus.

I think that some of the quality issues we had with Focus were because they were turning the transcriptions around too quickly. We had to tell them to slow down so they could focus more on the grammar and the basics.

However, the billing at Focus stinks. I have had five or six account people in the past year. It takes us 15 days after the end of the month to get a bill. I have to ask for bills. I think the invoicing department at Focus is terrible because they are in flux. Focus has downsized, and they have done all sorts of things over the past year. At some point this may straighten out, but as of right now, the billing is still terrible. However, their help desk is fairly efficient when we have a problem.

Project Results – Positive

Focus returns our documents within the contracted time frames and monitors the quality very well. We are now satisfied with the quality.

We are very pleased with Focus, and I have to say that things have been about the same. They get us our records on time and deliver good quality. We have a good rate with them, because we use them for editing. This is a plus also because they work seamlessly with our speech recognition vendor. This is actually an important reason why we went with them in the first place. We just want them to keep doing what they are doing and not give us any problems and fix any problems that arise in a timely manner.

Focus is now my number one choice for this service. Previously it was Sten-Tel, but we kind of had a little problem with them, so Focus has now become my number one choice.

Focus is very attentive to our concerns. They provide a nice monthly report that makes it easy to see that they comply with our turnaround requirements 100 percent of the time. They work through issues in a timely manner.

Focus has been great. They make my job a lot easier. Out of all of the transcription firms I have worked with, they are definitely the best. They are very user friendly. The program

that they use is very easy for me to train our staff on and easy to use. Whenever I have had a question or an issue, I have had immediate satisfaction as far as a callback and a walk-through. When I have asked for a one-on-one meeting, they have been right there.

Focus has been doing our work for a while now, and we have no problems with them. The quality of their work is probably up to par with other services.

Project Results – Negative

I can't complain about the turnaround time. I still see things from a quality standpoint. We made this move to save FTEs and money, but we have actually added people to do a quality review. We did not lose anybody; we converted them over to check the quality and actually added a couple of people. So this engagement did not achieve its end result.

Relationship – Positive

The cost of using Focus is very good. We switched to Focus because of the good price, but we have received much more. Their customer service has been great, from the implementation team to our account manager. We have received very personalized service. The account manager is very accessible and has great follow-up. She takes our suggestions in stride and is very willing to implement them and make improvements.

We have a conference call once per week, and Focus is completely on top of things. If I have an issue about the quality with one of the transcriptionists, the issue is resolved without any problems during one of these calls.

When we contacted them about our concerns over a recent issue, they sent their account representative down to us within just a few days. We were impressed with how quickly they scheduled a flight and made us a priority. The contact immediately went back and started working on the problems; within one week, we started to see noticeable improvement.

We talk with the Focus account representative. Focus has been responsive that way, but we would still like to see improvement in their quality.

Focus has been pretty responsive. I know that when we completely outsource like this, the quality of the transcription will often go down. We just recently had some feedback for Focus about their quality not being as good as we wanted it to be, and they were very responsive to that. We have seen the quality come back up, but we are still evaluating it. I would love to say that Focus is going to pull through 100 percent and bring the quality up so we will not have any more issues, but I don't know that we are there yet.

Relationship – Negative

I would like to see improved communication with Focus. What we say does not always make it to all of their MTs and support staff people. For example, if we mention a pattern of mistakes, we may continue to see those mistakes since what we said was not communicated to everyone.

The Focus representatives don't really contact me. I remember one time when a VP visited, but I have not seen him since. I have had a couple of conversations with our local representative, but he has never been here.

ROI and Cost – Positive

Focus bills per line, and their pricing was so low that I am not sure they are making a profit on this work. I think they bid it that low hoping we would increase our volumes to help offset the low costs. Focus apparently was very interested in our business and blew all the competitors out of the water regarding pricing.

Focus has been very easy to work with. When we did our kickoff, I was apprehensive about sending work overseas. We are using their services in India. We started out at 13 cents per line. This year it went to 12 cents and next year it will go to 11 cents.

ROI and Cost – Negative

Focus is a little pricey, and they tend to nickel-and-dime us.

Future Outlook – Positive

Focus has had some quality issues in the past. We have made this a focus. We hope that by working within our organization and with Focus, we will be able to resolve these issues.

Future Outlook – Negative

Focus has been a huge problem. We have been very unhappy with them. We recently starting giving some work Focus used to do for us to another firm because Focus was performing this work at such a low level. Focus may not be able to hold onto the other work we give them. Their quality and turnaround times have been absolutely horrible. We have had several account managers since we started working with Focus. Focus hires managers who have no transcription experience, so these managers just pass the information we give them to other people. This information never gets communicated effectively and gets lost, so we never get any problems resolved.

SPECIAL QUESTIONS COMMENTARY

If there was an increase or decrease in volume, what has been the main cause?

We keep adding different units to our load, and our volume increases as our physicians become more adaptable to voice recognition software.

Our volume has doubled. We have taken on a new program, and we now have our ED physicians on dictation. The ED physicians used to do handwritten notes.

Because we are ramping up on the electronic medical record, the clinicians have been asked to dictate more and write less. This has increased our transcription volumes.

I think our volumes are about the same. We had hoped that they would go down, but the implementation of the ED online documentation product has gone a little slower than expected. The volumes have not gone down too much, but we are working on that. I don't know that McKesson HED has any direct impact on our volume. We want to get more providers doing online documentation than have in the past. I am trying to get our ED physician group to use some software to do more of their documentation just for cost control. We are using the Wellsoft product in the ED. The nursing department has been doing online documentation for years, but the physicians have always resisted. We have mandated that the physicians will be doing the bulk of their dictation online by a certain date. I think the technology has already had a pretty large impact. Cost control and turnaround times are driving most of our decisions, and hopefully quality is thrown in there too. Quite frankly, from a cost justification standpoint, I can't go to the administration and say I can do things more cheaply in-house. Our productivity has gone up in-house with voice recognition and editing, but it is going to cost more if we bring it in-house. We are not going to quibble about a couple of cents a line. We would rather have the higher quality and pay a bit more for it.

Our electronic health record is with Epic and we have been able to get many of our physicians to type directly into the system. Accordingly, we saw an almost immediate reduction in our transcription. I was actually quite surprised that it could change that quickly.

Our volume has been pretty consistent. I thought Eclipsys SCM would have more impact on dictation volumes, but these are pretty old-school physicians, despite pressure from our administrative side to get the physicians to participate. Eclipsys will do the templates for the physicians, which I helped devise. Some of the newer physicians are using the templates for their H&Ps, and some of them are using them for standard procedures, particularly on the OB/GYN side. When the OB/GYNs do a caesarean section the templates are basically the same, except for special templates for the weight of the baby and the fluids lost. Thus far, SCM really has not affected our volumes. There are not many people on board who enter their own documents.

Ratings Comments: Onshore Services

Since Focus was purchased by Nuance, the quality of Focus' reports has slipped significantly.

When working with onshore services, it has been extremely frustrating to accurately get ADT data to the right place.

Ratings Comments: Offshore Services

Siemens sends all their work offshore. They only do work in the U.S. if a hospital complains enough. Siemens contracts with certain MTSO companies based in the U.S., but the contractors send all their work offshore.

Focus has a good process in place for managing their offshore group.

There is an obvious difference with offshore work. Our preference would be to have all onshore work due to language issues, but offshore firms do a lot better than they used to.

We have some language barrier problems, though we do get great turnaround times.

I know that the majority of the work is done offshore, but some of the work may be done onshore. Our quality in-house is higher than what we are getting from Focus. We are working with our account manager from Focus to address those issues.

The transcription work is done offshore, but QA is performed by onshore services. QA has pulled in second- and third-tier resources to monitor ongoing report quality issues caused when the wrong template is used or when there is poor grammar.

Frankly, I cannot tell the difference between onshore and offshore services. I am not sure how to rate this, as I am not sure what volume of our work is being done onshore versus offshore.

Our doctors have not picked up on differences from offshore services. They have been pleased. When I look at reports, I am seeing some things that I don't notice until it is too late to do anything about it. However, in general I do not think that we have had any problems that I could point out.

We are pretty pleased with our off-shore services. Off-shore services are cheaper, which is nice, and usually we do not have too many problems with errors. Occasionally, a doctor complains that the MTs did not understand him, or they did not understand local nuances. But I am not sure that someone here in the states would do better.

If you are not using offshore services, what is your perception of offshore MT services?

We have in our contract to not allow offshore services. Our health system does not allow for any offshore contracting.

It is not our policy to do offshore services. Security and privacy are the main issues.

I do not have a problem with offshore services. I am all for globalization. However, our organization does not allow patient information to go offshore.

Based on some security issues we have heard about from other hospitals, our corporate office has dictated that outsourced transcription must be handled in the United States.

Why did you select this MTSO and who else did you consider?

We chose those vendors that are certified with eScription.

When we were choosing an MTSO, we considered Acusis and Transcend. We wanted eScription and the willingness of Focus to take on our volume.

We switched to a larger provider because we figured they could at least handle the turnaround times. We also liked the fact that the voice files were not consolidated into one system. Sometimes in the past, my staff was running out of work in-house and could not access the voice files to do transcription. We want to be able to access those reports so we can work on them as needed.

We did not do a major search of vendors. Because of our relationship with Nuance, we decided to go with Focus.

We chose Focus because of their close relationship with Nuance.

■ HEARTLAND

PROVIDER COMMENTARY

People and Knowledge – Positive

After a lot of research, we went with Heartland and have stayed with them because we are very satisfied with their performance. They have very good customer service. They are immediate in their responses. They are very friendly and have a partnering attitude. They are willing to adapt or adjust according to the particular client's need.

The customer service is excellent. I can call support and know the people on support. I am very pleased. I have someone I have become friendly with over the years who owns transcription services who is always trying to get me to change to his service, but I have no intention to change because of my positive experience with Heartland.

Heartland has outstanding customer service. They are very responsive. I can send Heartland an email and they respond within 15 minutes. They also make sure that they resolve the issue, and they do not forget about things.

Overall, we have been pretty pleased with Heartland. We have asked for tweaks here and there, and they have been accommodating. Also, I have not had any complaints from the physicians, which is a real plus. Heartland's turnaround times are good. If a physician needs an H&P in 15 minutes, I can call Healthland and they will get it done. Our account manager is excellent. She calls and sends emails to check on us. She is attentive and extremely accessible.

Heartland has been more responsive lately. We have had a couple of special reporting issues come up, and Heartland has been flexible in giving us things that are out of the norm.

We are satisfied with the people we deal with at Heartland. They are responsive and professional. In addition, they take an interest in us and try to meet our requests and special needs. Overall, we are satisfied with how we are treated and the quality of the people we deal with at Heartland.

People and Knowledge – Negative

There are some language barriers with the people at Heartland. Sometimes I will get a transcription back that just has some wrong words. That could happen to anybody, but my coders catch it.

Tools and Methodology – Positive

I am relieved to have found such a great transcription company that I can rely on. In the past, we had extreme problems with other transcription companies. Heartland has been reliable with good quality and turnaround. There is such a stark contrast, so I think Heartland has been great.

Heartland has a lot of staff and, as a result, their turnaround times are very good. Overall, their quality is pretty good.

Heartland is very good about meeting turnaround times. They are very good about resolving issues if we have any problems. Heartland has very good quality. We have a lot of foreign doctors, and Heartland's offshore MTs seem to understand them better.

Heartland has very good turnaround time. We really appreciate that. They are also very responsive to any issues or problems that we have.

I have been very happy with the turnaround times. They are much better than my SLAs. The quality, although the work is done offshore, is better than when the work was done domestically. They don't have blanks. Occasionally the words don't quite fit, but they are there.

The tools are very good. Heartland has some great tools that are very user friendly.

Heartland's turnaround time has met our expectations. We receive our reports in a timely fashion. In addition, Heartland's quality has met our needs and expectations.

Whenever we have sent Heartland issues to help us with, the vendor has been good to follow up on those issues. Heartland wants to help us.

The quality of Heartland's transcription is pretty good. Once in a while, there are some little things that we run across, and we give Heartland feedback on those items. For the most part, the quality is pretty decent.

We get at least a monthly report that details Heartland's turnaround times for reports. We get a questionnaire on a quarterly basis, asking for our feedback about Heartland's performance. If I do have issues, such as a copy of a report not going to a physician that should have gone, I can email a supervisor and they are very good at getting back to me right away. Heartland also has a customer service line that we can call if we need something corrected on a report or if we need a report expedited. They take care of those things. Heartland's customer service is very good.

Heartland is transcribing all of our history and physicals, and they are also doing consultation, procedure notes, and discharge summaries for us. We go on Heartland's website to download the material, which works out pretty well.

Heartland can usually keep our turnaround times to within 24 hours. If a doctor comes in today and dictates, we will have the transcription by this time tomorrow, if not sooner.

Heartland's transcription quality is pretty good about 80 percent of the time. The other 20 percent of the time, the quality isn't up to what we expect, but that is attributed to the fact that the transcriptionists just can't understand what the doctors are saying.

The Heartland website is very good. If we have a confirmation number or an ID number for the patient, we can go back and retrieve transcriptions that we might be missing. We can typically go back two months for these transcriptions. We can even put in a patient's name and the website will list all of the downloads for that patient, which is a very good feature. We can also pull the notes in and save them to our own files. If a name is misspelled, I can correct it. I don't ever correct the transcriptions, as the doctor does that.

We are very satisfied with the services and performance we are getting out of Heartland for our outsourced transcription products. The turnaround times are being met on a regular basis. We are even able to send ER reports to Heartland and get them back in a time frame that allows us to use them for ER services. Overall, we are satisfied that they are meeting their contractual obligations and commitments.

When Heartland says they will do something, they follow through.

Heartland tries really hard to keep their promises. For the price, they are the best out there. They work very well with me as far as the statistics are concerned. The quality of the documents is better than the previous MTSO that we used. If we have a question or an issue, someone gets back to us right away. Heartland might not be able to solve the problem right then, but at least they get back to us and let us know what they are going to do about it.

Heartland's turnaround time is decent. Even if there is a very high volume, there is still not a lag time. We can have three reports one week and thirty the next and it is still the same turnaround time, more or less. That has always been good.

I think that Heartland's turnaround time is very good. Their customer service is very good at problem solving and getting back with us.

Heartland's strength is their turnaround time. They turn the reports around very quickly, usually in less than six hours.

Quality issues can be a problem, but we can call Heartland. If a doctor feels like Heartland did not transcribe correctly, they are really good about doing quality checks.

I have nothing but good to report. Heartland's customer service is unbelievable. Even if we need to reset our passwords for the thousandth time or we locked ourselves out of the system, Heartland always manages us professionally and politely. I am impressed all around; it is a class deal.

The turnaround time has been very good. It is usually six hours or less and often four hour or less. Heartland tells us they need two to four hours for stat reports, but they usually complete them faster than that. Our turnaround time can be up to eight hours, but they are generally pretty fast. We are not an enormous account, so maybe our low turnaround time is due to the fact that our volume is lower.

The quality under Heartland has not been as bad. The only exception is for patient names, but the physicians need to spell the names. Heartland is pretty accurate; I have not seen anything crazy in over a year.

Heartland creates QA reports for me, but I could do it on my own. The report writing engine is robust and flexible. I can create my own reports.

Tools and Methodology – Negative

Heartland misses certain words over and over again. It would be nice if they would correct those issues.

I like Heartland's management software, but I would like to see it more broadly expanded. I would like to see it do a lot more.

Heartland could use some improvement in the area of quality. They leave blanks, and that is our biggest issue. However, that is better than something being wrong. We would just like to see a little more QA work. It would be nice if they got that squared away before they sent the reports to us.

I would like to see Heartland improve some of the blanks they have. They could easily be corrected. When I listen to the transcription, I can easily identify them. I think some of their offshore transcriptionists do not understand English.

Heartland's turnaround times can use some improvement. Our administrators complain about that on occasion.

Because Heartland is such a big vendor, the service can be a little impersonal at times. I was a transcriptionist by trade myself, so I understand transcription very well. Physicians sometimes want certain things and ask that work be copied from another report onto their discharge summary, and Heartland doesn't provide that type of thing. If an addendum is done by the physician, we get that work in a separate report and we have to attach that as an addendum. I do truly understand why Heartland does it that way, but we lose that bit of personal touch.

The only problem we have with Heartland is when they don't put the patient names on the documents because they could not understand the physician who did not spell the name.

We have some concerns about the overall quality, since some of our physicians are complaining about the quality. There has been some slippage in the quality. Apparently, Heartland is sending more of the transcriptions offshore, and this is having an impact on the quality that we are seeing back from them. We are going to have a meeting with them to discuss where they are sending the transcriptions offshore and will be requesting that they keep ours onshore.

Sometimes Heartland's quality is a little iffy. Sometimes the words are not correct. I think it is because they send work to India and there is a language barrier.

Right now, I use Heartland's Web program to obtain our reports, but it is not working with the most current Web browser. Heartland cannot fix that. I have had to downgrade our system so I can get our reports. That is very frustrating.

I would like to see improvement on the language barrier with Heartland's offshore work. There have been some quality issues as a result of Heartland's sending the work offshore.

Project Results – Positive

Heartland's turnaround times are good. We have been doing some tweaking in terms of quality because we have a doctor with a heavy accent. Heartland has been very good about it. They are a little on the high end as far as cost.

Heartland has excellent turnaround times. They also have very good quality. They type exactly what the doctor says.

I felt Heartland was very good. However, we recently discontinued them and switched to MedQuist because of a corporate decision. I thought that Heartland was better. The turnaround times and quality of the reports were better with Heartland. The management reports were also better. Heartland provided very good service as well.

I think Heartland does a very good job for us. Their turnaround times are great on all work types, and we have everything back within 24 hours, including discharge summaries. Heartland does an awesome job there. They are doing all of our work, as we don't have transcriptionists in-house.

Heartland's quality has improved over the last year. We don't have to go back and fix transcriptions like we did last year. Heartland does a good job on the higher-level errors,

like medical terminology, which is very good. Heartland still needs to work on the minor errors where the physicians still need to make a correction.

ROI and Cost – Negative

I think Heartland's fees are crazy. They are much more expensive than what we were paying another MTSO at my previous job. I don't know who would have signed the contract.

Future Outlook – Positive

I think Heartland will be able to work out the quality issues we have had. They came up with a good plan and discussed that with me. Our providers are just so frustrated with the quality. Unfortunately, a cycle is happening. Everything is good, then it all goes to hell in a handbasket. We have significantly increased our work with Heartland in the last few years. When the account manager checked, there were way more MTs on our account than the contract allowed. Now, we have certain MTs who are dedicated to working on our account, so that has been rectified. I am hopeful the results will show. This change has improved the quality. The MTs have to be dedicated so that they can learn our account and our rules.

We were already using Heartland when I came here, and we have since renewed our contract. If we have corporate backing on these things, then we find we have greater leverage in terms of negotiations. Heartland isn't the only vendor that our IDN uses, and if I had issues with Heartland, then I would explore other options. But Heartland is doing well for us.

Future Outlook – Negative

Overall, Heartland's quality has never been that great, in my opinion. It is not something I could recommend. The work comes back with errors that are not acceptable. I can tell that there is a lack of editing and quality control. Early next year, we will not be working with Heartland.

SPECIAL QUESTIONS COMMENTARY

If there was an increase or decrease in volume, what has been the main cause?

Our volume has gone up roughly 12 percent from the year average for 2008 because of additional clinicians added in our ambulatory clinics and increased census. We tried doing electronic documentation, nurse charting, physician charting in Eclipsys, but it did not work. We recently went live on ChartScriptMD, and I have been working with the clinicians since then. We have less than 10 clinicians in our pilot and we are creating these templates, we have not gone live with any of them, but we will soon. The clinicians are excited. Especially given the fact that they will be able to template and if they need to dictate something additional in their impression, they can do that as well.

Our dictation volume has increased because the hospital has had more patients during the summer months.

We have Epic, but it has not had any impact on our dictation volumes. Our volumes are about the same as last year.

We are rolling out our ambulatory EMR from Epic. Physicians get charged for their ambulatory dictations, so they have three options for dictation. The first option is to type the report themselves. The second option is to use what Epic calls smart phrases. The third option is to have Dragon installed and interface that into Epic.

If anything, transcription volume has stayed the same or increased. Doctors are prone to doing more defensive dictating, or over-dictating. For example, in the ER doctors seem to pull in consultants more frequently. Also, if someone comes in with even a scratch they get three pages of dictation because of reimbursement issues, regardless of the problem. It is all defensive medicine.

Ratings Comments: Onshore Services

Heartland is overpriced and their turnaround times are not good.

I don't know which transcriptions are done onshore and which are done offshore. Heartland is based out of Toledo, OH, and they obviously subcontract work outside of the country.

Ratings Comments: Offshore Services

Sending work offshore has definitely helped with the turnaround time that we get.

The last hospital I worked for never had work done offshore. However, Heartland does a good job with turnaround times and quality. My issue is that they are very expensive.

I honestly cannot tell the difference between onshore and offshore services.

The trouble transcriptionists have is with patient names. There they come up with some pretty weird stuff.

The offshore transcriptionists have a hard time understanding our English and our grammar. They say the same thing but with different wording. They interpret the English language in a different syntax. Heartland has made improvements over the past year, though.

Heartland was a great vendor. I thought their service was good. The quality was great; it was definitely better than MedQuist's.

The quality of the offshore services needed improvement. Heartland's customer service was good, and their people were nice.

Quality has been good. In fact, it is better than it was when it was performed domestically. However, I do struggle with sending work offshore.

The offshore services have definitely caused problems with the quality, but it has been getting better. Heartland says they do QA, but maybe it is only on work that is already good.

If you are not using offshore services, what is your perception of offshore MT services?

As long as offshore service transcriptionists do their work correctly, I do not care if we use them.

Our previous MTSO did work offshore. We had some challenges where the MTs did not understand some of the colloquialisms. They might put a word in the wrong context. I am open to sending work offshore if the quality is there.

Heartland was using offshore services when we bought the hospital that used them, and there were a lot of problems with translation errors. We now mandate in the contract that it must be onshore work.

Why did you select this MTSO and who else did you consider?

We did not look at anyone else. We had worked with Heartland and they were a preferred vendor.

Our current vendor purchased our previous transcription company.

■ MEDQUIST

PROVIDER COMMENTARY

Sales and Contracting – Negative

Contract negotiations are one of the reasons we are changing vendors and moving away from MedQuist. MedQuist was not willing to negotiate with us on a competitive rate, but they have recently assigned us a new contact person for our customer support, which has improved everything in the last six months. MedQuist could also improve their availability of reports related directly to the facility, in regards to reconciling the invoices and the number of black character counts. All of MedQuist's reports need improvement because we have to rely solely on them for data.

People and Knowledge – Positive

MedQuist, generally, has good response to calls and good follow-up. Our issues get resolved in a timely manner.

We get great support from MedQuist's customer care manager, our product support engineer, and from the technical service group. All are quick to respond and find a resolution to any issues that we have. They try to accommodate us.

MedQuist has gone through some major operational changes and reorganization. MedQuist has tightened their ship and improved operations. I have the same key contacts, but MedQuist has improved. They continue to look for things to tweak. They are working on the quality, and that is the area where they have the most opportunity; there are some inconsistencies. I am impressed by what MedQuist is doing. It is not easy to take a huge company and make significant improvements.

We have a new account manager who is more responsive than the former and seems to be more dedicated. The turnaround times are fine; MedQuist has no problems there. The quality is inconsistent, and that is where the old account manager did not do a good job of communicating my concerns. The new account manager seems to be better.

MedQuist has been extremely good to us. The account manager has been available and very responsive. The customer representatives are very good about getting back to us and do a good job of resolving our problems. I work with the same people all the time, so I have a rapport with them.

MedQuist's customer support is excellent. They are always extremely attentive to our account. They problem solve with us and pretty much respond to any and all requests we have for quality audits, technical issues, and turnaround times. MedQuist's strength also lies in being able to have enough transcriptionists on the account to handle the huge volume of daily dictation generated here and constantly turn the volumes around.

The customer care from MedQuist has improved. Our representative now has direct contact with the MTs and can provide instruction and feedback to the MTs about our account. This makes a big difference because I don't have to go to a third party. Before, our representative's hands were tied up a bit. The new changes have made a huge difference.

Everything is going really well right now with MedQuist. We have a good account manager that I am happy with, and we have worked through any issues with reports that we had in the past. Our turnaround time last month was about three hours for all reports.

I have been with MedQuist for several years now and have developed great working relationships with them at all different areas, including sales, contracting, and support. Those relationships make MedQuist the very best vendor that I work with.

Right now, MedQuist has really good customer service, from the service representative on up the ladder. They do a good job. They provide people on site if there are problems.

MedQuist's major strength is communication. The account manager we have now is fabulous. They stay on top of everything. They always touch base by either email or by phone to see how things are going.

MedQuist's quality has greatly improved as has their turnaround time. We have seen a significant improvement over the past few months, especially. We have really seen things improve over the past six months since we got a new account rep.

The one thing that differentiates MedQuist from other vendors is how they stay ahead of technology and how they are constantly developing their tools. I think MedQuist offers better technology than their competitors. MedQuist is more advanced in what they can offer with their transcription services.

I have found MedQuist's executive team to be very responsive.

MedQuist has one to two people responsible for all of the work at each facility, which includes the quality control, the transcription, and everything else. We used to be told by the representative that he would have to talk to the supervisor, and then we lost track of what happened after that. MedQuist has really changed a lot of their focus, and they are more customer service oriented now.

Right now, I am receiving very good attention from the top echelons at MedQuist. My account manager is very attentive. I get face time monthly and even quarterly from the regional representative. We have only been fully outsourced to MedQuist for a little while, so I am definitely being well taken care of.

We feel that MedQuist pays attention to our requests and special needs. In addition, they demonstrate that they are always trying to improve quality and turnaround times. The MedQuist executives are accessible and responsive.

People and Knowledge – Negative

MedQuist has excellent equipment. Our issue was with the quality of work they were putting out. We tried to hang on with them because the turnaround time was excellent, but the quality of work was bad. We even had doctors threaten to quit because of the poor quality. Their document viewer and management were all good programs with good features. The engagement started off really great, but our account got moved to a couple of groups. With the last group, the quality went downhill very quickly. There were too many typographical errors. For awhile we thought they were running it through a voice recognition engine without QA because there were words that did not belong. We could tell some of the transcriptionists had little experience with certain fields. We were forced to move companies.

I have been a bit frustrated with our MedQuist account management. They have changed our account representative stating that we were going to be working with someone who is more familiar with the transcription work. That has been true. Our new representative is more like the transcriptionists. However, that isn't all good. I feel the representative is more nagging, telling us the bad habits of our physicians and what they are doing. I don't feel the change has necessarily been an improvement.

Tools and Methodology – Positive

MedQuist's turnaround time is good and as promised. They do what they say they will with turnaround times. Their customer liaison is very good.

MedQuist does quality work. They have a cover sheet, and when they feel something is not right about the transcription, they will indicate that on the cover sheet. They meet our turnaround times. We have not really had any problems with MedQuist.

MedQuist does a good job with the timeliness of their reports. Their help desk services are pretty good. The MedQuist account representatives are pretty good. I usually can get ahold of them, and they work with me to get problems resolved.

I will always try to improve the quality until there are no errors or blanks. We have a new clinical vendor coming into our organization. We have narrowed down the number of vendors on a preferred-vendor list. In some cases, we are trying to standardize across the entire system, so we can have only one vendor. In the case of transcription, we have narrowed the list down to four or five. We have also tried to standardize work types and templates for each facility. If the vendor, for example, with coding were QuadraMed, and we had 3M, we would need QuadraMed in place before going live with someone like Epic. One of the advantages of MedQuist is that we already have that interface

established with our new clinical vendor. If somebody goes up on it, it is already there. We have a long history of having that interface.

MedQuist is doing great. I get a daily call from MedQuist to understand any issues I am having. Our customer representative has been very good. I can always talk to and get ahold of him. Sometimes I have to call to follow-up, but that is rare.

I really have no issues with MedQuist. The turnaround time has been within the 24 hours that we give them, and the quality is good. There are times when there are too many blanks or errors, but I can just send the reports back and have them correct the transcription. We set that threshold at three errors or blanks, and MedQuist has delivered pretty consistent quality.

As of late, MedQuist is doing very well. They have gotten much better in meeting our expectations over the past year.

My problem is with MedQuist's QA department. My big beef for years has been with their quality. They are finally starting to make changes, and I have seen the changes take hold.

I think MedQuist has a very good turnaround time. The degree of accuracy in their reports is much improved.

I am very happy with MedQuist. I like their platform. I like their customer service skills. If we are having a problem, we do not have to go just to our customer care manager; we can go to one of the VPs. They are always available for us. They always meet their goals on turnaround time and quality.

I have asked MedQuist to limit the number of people who touch my account. With MTs who are not regulars but hit the account sporadically while working on seven or eight accounts, it is impossible to remember all the specifics and dictators. We have strict limits on the number of people touching our account, and I have seen an improvement in the quality since this change.

I want to give credit where credit is due. MedQuist has listened to what I have said. It has taken longer than I had hoped, but I did finally get the response that I wanted. Things are much better. It was definitely a process of seeing lots of problems and taking a long time to resolve and implement the changes, but at least it is better.

DocQScribe was recently instituted for held reports. This has been a wonderful asset. We can put the document on DocQScribe when it is on hold. With DocQScribe, I can get the reports a lot faster. If something is missing because a shell was not tracked, then as long as it is transcribed, I can retrieve it. This eliminates several hours of calling around. The documents are just automatically available to me.

I have always been pleased with MedQuist. They are responsive and provide us with great reports on a monthly basis so we know exactly where we are in terms of volumes and turnaround times. Our doctors seem happy, and we don't get complaints from anyone.

Our experience with MedQuist has been up and down, but it has generally been good. MedQuist's turnaround times are generally pretty good, with only a few times where they have slacked off. Previously, I had to go round and round with quality issues. This was more to do with turnover at MedQuist and putting inexperienced transcriptionists on an account that is fairly complicated. The important thing on MedQuist's behalf is that they have taken our concerns seriously and have addressed them. They have been able to address our major concerns quickly and effectively. MedQuist has been able to put together an effective relationship with us and their management team.

Our volumes have increased over the last year because our physicians are more comfortable with our EMR and dictating reports. Progress notes are the most-used dictated reports by physicians.

Overall, I have been pleased with MedQuist. They do a very good job with turnaround times and have very good communication. We had some issues with quality, but it was nothing major. We recently renewed with MedQuist, and we are planning to use them in the foreseeable future.

MedQuist's turnaround times are pretty good, and they have been willing to work with us as well.

One positive thing that I like about MedQuist is that I don't have to deal with the speech engine company and the MTSOs that I work with. I only have to deal with one company and talk to one group of people.

MedQuist gives us great access to administrative tools. There are some things I suppose could be better, but my staff can access the reports for whatever reason. For instance, if the report is sitting in quality at MedQuist, the staff members can still go in and find that report, so we don't lose any patient care. We can still access the report, even if the patient is being transferred and it has not uploaded into our system. We can just go in and print it out of MedQuist's system to fax over to another facility.

Things have improved with MedQuist. I would say that the turnaround time is very good right now, but winter is our busy time, so it is a little slower right now. MedQuist's quality is meeting my expectations, but I would still like to see more intense QA. We are a very big account, and I would say that we definitely get well taken care of. However, I see things as having improved recently, so working with MedQuist has not always been this good.

The administrative tools from MedQuist are excellent. They have pretty solid technology.

MedQuist's turnaround times for the transcriptions we send them are very good. We often get our transcriptions back within 24 hours. MedQuist has proven that they can handle our volume in a very efficient and effective manner. They also give us priority access and treatment.

Tools and Methodology – Negative

MedQuist needs to do a lot of work on their quality. They become more diligent as we complain. They have implemented some technology-based solutions and added some better quality checks. We are happy to see those changes being made.

I would like MedQuist to increase the speed with which they resolve issues. We asked MedQuist to tell us how much it would cost to create new templates, and it took them forever to get back to us. Sometimes, their customer service varies with the agent we are assigned.

MedQuist's corrections are done in a hurry, and if they are detailed, it may take several attempts before they are correct. Their corrections stink. It took over six weeks to get one correction made. That, to me, was inexcusable. When I talk to them, they sound like they have a good product, but when I need a change, they are less than average on the remediation of that.

We noticed a long lag time in QA, resulting in numerous calls for the release of reports. We were used to getting our reports within a few hours, so to have that jump to a few days was a shock. The problem was that the transcribed documents got stuck in QA for a long time. I had to call MedQuist and ask for the documents to be released. I am still not sure what happened, but the problem has been resolved now, for the most part.

MedQuist continues to send us transcriptions back with the wrong dictator names on them. This has been an ongoing problem for the past six months and does not appear to be improving.

MedQuist needs to enhance their QA process to provide complete and accurate documentation. I think that would aid in the turnaround time for transcriptions.

The only thing MedQuist really needs to focus on is their quality. Most of the work is good, but it only takes one doctor and one mistake to ruin that. Typically, there will be a blank in the report, which has improved, or the transcriptionist will pick the wrong key and run the wrong macro. The report will come out with something completely different that is only for females in an OB case or something like that. The doctor will get mad and call somebody, and then the whole thing unravels. MedQuist can't eliminate errors, but they should do everything they can to reduce the risks or chances of errors occurring. Anything they can do is a huge improvement. We hardly have complaints about the

turnaround times, and nobody cares about the price except for me and the CFO. The quality is the piece that MedQuist can invest in to help us.

The reports we get from MedQuist are not as good of quality as they should be. Even though they have been prompt in turning around the reports, we get more blanks than we would like.

We can always tell when there are new transcriptionists. Perhaps the training could be a little better. The quality is okay; it can be improved by being good more consistently.

MedQuist needs some improvement. We have struggled with turnaround times. We are somewhat seasonal. We are really slammed sometimes, and it is quite a challenge to get them to provide enough coverage, especially on weekends, to turnaround the documents in a timely fashion.

MedQuist could improve their overall quality. In the past few years, once we transitioned to the new platform, we knew there may be issues with quality as the pool of transcriptionists working on the account expanded. That has become a reality. Some physicians have brought the same issues to our attention over and over, so training could be enhanced for some medical services.

I would like to see MedQuist improve in creating new work types. It takes too long to create new work types.

We send a little over half of our transcription to MedQuist. Our in-house staff gets reports done more quickly, which is what we expected, but the thing we did not expect is the major difference in quality. Our in-house staff produces reports that are of much higher quality than MedQuist. A lot of MedQuist's errors are so elementary that it bugs us. It seems as if the vendor has outsourced their work to non-English speaking countries due to all of the language errors. This really needs to change. Even if MedQuist gets the reports back to us on time, we still have to do a detailed reading or electronic check to look over every single one of the reports.

MedQuist's turnaround times are excellent, but the quality suffers from blanks, errors, wrong terminology, and just silly things that don't make any sense. That last part comes from the fact that MedQuist uses foreign MTs, and we have a lot of foreign doctors on our staff.

We have a good relationship with MedQuist, but we get frustrated sometimes with quality control. MedQuist is good at quickly resolving and resending a report that contains some errors. However, they have a tendency to commit the same errors. For example, omitting the patient number is a problem. It gets fixed and is not a big deal, but it wastes time on our end because we have to go back and get MedQuist to fix it.

MedQuist gives us a 48-hour turnaround time instead of a 24-hour turnaround time, and there are more blanks than there were with Heartland. We do have speech recognition, but I am not sure we have seen benefits of that just yet. It may be too early to tell.

MedQuist's quality is horrible. They make so many mistakes that even our doctors are complaining. MedQuist is not willing to accept that they need to train their transcriptionists better. Also, I do not think that their management is very sensitive to our needs. They brush our complaints off to the side.

We still have too many typos in our reports, and the turnaround time is way too long for simple things that should not take that long.

The problem with how MedQuist does their programming is that they try to build their processes around what their transcriptionists are doing. Whenever a change is needed to accommodate one transcriptionist, it affects everything. When they get a new transcriptionist, it usually means we can expect a programming change or that something will break. MedQuist needs to establish a standard and help their transcriptionists work to that standard.

MedQuist has pretty good turnaround time. There are a few things that they could improve, such as the quality of the transcribed document. They also need better QA reviews of ASR. Sometimes new MTs on the account are not well trained or informed of our account's specifics.

Overall, MedQuist needs quality audits before the product goes to the customer instead of having the customer say the quality does not meet their needs on each document. There should never be a need for post-delivery corrections if the quality was checked before the report was delivered to customer.

One concern we have is that we have recently been getting some transcriptions back that have errors and bugs in them, such as misspellings and identification of patient names. We have had to increase our editing time to resolve these issues and get the transcriptions ready to go. MedQuist is aware of our concerns and is looking into where the problems are.

We have reaped tremendous benefits since we outsourced transcription with MedQuist. However, we have seen a decline in report quality and turnaround time with the last restructuring of the MedQuist organization. New transcriptionists have been assigned to our account that do not understand our preferences, and the turnaround time on weekends and holidays is slow. For the first time, we are talking about outsourcing our transcription with a different vendor.

Project Results – Positive

MedQuist is status quo. Their service has not degraded or improved over time. They are reliable. Their turnaround times are fine and agree with the contract. Several years ago we had a problem with MedQuist charging us for transcription that did not happen, but we don't have that problem anymore.

MedQuist has been excellent in meeting our needs with respect to turnaround time and quality. The service has been very good. We do not use MedQuist to the extent that we used to because now we use multiple vendors. We have found that we get better prices from all the vendors when we keep the situation competitive. MedQuist is still one of the best vendors that we work with.

We are a complex organization that sends out a lot of work to MedQuist, and they do a great job. We have looked at other companies that do this and we have always come back to MedQuist because of the great work they do for us.

I would say that the accuracy with MedQuist is about 95 percent currently. It has steadily improved over time as we have worked with them. When we first started out, the accuracy was not quite as good.

MedQuist is great for our hospital system because they can handle the sheer volume that we send out to them. MedQuist is one of the very few vendors that even has a chance of doing that. They get most of our reports back to us within the specified time, which is actually decent considering the amount of work that they have to do.

The quality of MedQuist's reports is good, and they hit the contracted timelines. We have a good relationship with MedQuist. We regularly put out RFPs near the end of the contract service life, and MedQuist works hard to keep our business. Their rates are always competitive, if not lower than most competitors.

We have used MedQuist for our outsourced transcription for over 10 years and have found their services to more than exceed our expectations. The quality of MedQuist's work and the turnaround times are excellent. They have most of the children's hospitals' business since they understand the requirements of pediatric facilities.

Overall, everything is very good with MedQuist. I find them to be very dependable. The turnaround times are excellent with MedQuist, and we always hit our contracted time frame. It is nice that we have been able to work out any issues with MedQuist. For instance, we can now get our transcribed documents into our EMR.

Project Results – Negative

I have been having a variety of issues with MedQuist. First, we were having quality issues. Those have been improving a bit, but we are also seeing some turnaround issues. Some

of our patients come to us from local nursing homes. After they receive care, we need to prepare a transfer summary before the patients can go back to the nursing home. We originally set up a turnaround time of a couple of hours for us to get those transcriptions back, but we are not getting them in that time frame. If I can't provide a transfer summary, then we have to do a lot of work and patients are waiting who could be going back to their facility.

The only time I have seen any involvement from the executives at MedQuist has been recently because of issues we are facing. The quality of our reports has been a big issue. I should not have to employ someone to do a quality check of the reports, but we spend a lot of time doing that right now. MedQuist says we receive reports after they have done a quality check. However, from what I am seeing, MedQuist is not doing a quality check, has inexperienced people doing the quality check, or does not care. What we are getting is not acceptable. In a dictation a physician could say the word stretcher and the report has the word sweatshirt. That should not be happening.

MedQuist used to do pretty well with turnaround times. However, they recently had a system failure and it does not seem like they have recovered from that yet. We expect them to be compliant with our turnaround requirement 90 percent of the time, but they are not there yet. They are getting closer, but they need to be more aggressive.

Our relationship with MedQuist was fraught with problems. It got to the point where our medical staff said we had to do something about it. The quality was horrendous; we had the wrong names put on reports. We knew we had to switch vendors.

Relationship – Positive

MedQuist keeps in contact with us and makes us aware of what is going on to resolve our issues. We currently have a customer service agent who communicates very well with us. The representative provides good follow-up.

I have been the director for about a year, and MedQuist has been really good to work with. I had some troubles in the beginning getting ahold of my representative, but I am working with different people now and it has been a good experience.

I have worked with MedQuist for a long time, and we are very familiar with them. That is comforting. We can get anybody on the phone. I can get the vice president on the phone if I need to. I like the ease of getting someone on the phone when necessary.

We have been using MedQuist's outsourced medical transcription services for a number of years now. I like them, and overall, we have had no major issues with them at all. Working with MedQuist works out well for us due to the relationship we have with our MedQuist account manager. We feel our relationship is unique, and our account manager knows our setup and all of our physicians, which is very nice for us.

ROI and Cost – Positive

MedQuist does around 12 million lines of transcription for us each year. We are a big customer. MedQuist is the first and only outsourced transcription service we have used, and I believe we have had a great experience. We have definitely received our money's worth.

We have changed from gross characters per line to visible black characters and have found this to be cost effective. AHIMA recently released a white paper stating that black character is the fairest and most accurate way to charge for transcription.

MedQuist charges us per character, and we are paying less than a third of a cent per black character.

Future Outlook – Positive

MedQuist has taken care of everything we needed them to do. Right now, I think that is really the benefit of MedQuist for us. We have been using them for about five years now, and I can't see us moving away because of what we are getting right now.

Future Outlook – Negative

We are trying to move to a different vendor. The reason we are looking to move away from MedQuist is their report-quality problems. They are using totally incorrect words and putting blanks in the reports.

SPECIAL QUESTIONS COMMENTARY

If there was an increase or decrease in volume, what has been the main cause?

I believe that as our doctors become more comfortable using the EMR and having the ability to dictate reports, our volumes have increased over the last year. The physician progress notes are one of the most dictated report types.

The more that we use eScript capabilities, the less volume we have to outsource. Originally, we were outsourcing 32 percent of our volume, but now it is down to 13 percent because of eScript.

Our volume has increased because we have added more types of work, such as a wound clinic. We are taking on more and more types of work. Also, Cerner really has not decreased our transcription volumes, even though we essentially have everything but physician notes. Perhaps those will decrease dictation volumes. I think only a full EMR, with all physicians documenting and putting in notes electronically, would impact transcription, but even then I don't know.

Our volume has decreased for several possible reasons. When we got rid of MedQuist, we found that they were counting lines wrong. Also, technologies like front-end speech and new ED systems have had significant impact.

We have done some work with our system for discharge summaries where the staff can key in parts of the discharge summary, so we have essentially eliminated any transcription needs for preparing the discharge summaries.

Perceived cost of transcription in the clinics is causing more doctors to do charting in Cerner. Since they are charting, we don't get a dictation. This has not happened in the hospital yet though, where we also have Cerner.

Ratings Comments: Onshore Services

We don't have an exclusion in our contract, so transcription work is done both offshore and onshore. When we receive our transcriptions, we don't know whether they were done onshore or offshore.

We don't allow the transcription work to be sent offshore. The report quality is improving, and the turnaround times are still pretty good.

MedQuist's turnaround time is great. We get most of our reports within 24 hours.

MedQuist is very prompt and gives us reports in a timely manner. However, the poor quality has generated additional work for our group.

Ratings Comments: Offshore Services

The quality of offshore is abysmal. They are good with medical terminology, but their English is a joke.

We had significant problems with language differences.

I only send my final summaries offshore, and the rest I keep onshore.

MedQuist is just terrible from a service and turnaround standpoint. They have a lot of internal change.

They do a lot of QA, so the reports are about the same as onshore.

The difference is whether the offshore people are transcribing an American doctor or not. If they are not, then the quality can worsen.

Originally, we did not allow offshore transcription work in our MedQuist contract. Later, we allowed a small part of our transcription work to be done offshore to get better pricing. We have been monitoring the quality of those reports, and we have found the quality to be pretty comparable to onshore services.

If you are not using offshore services, what is your perception of offshore MT services?

I am not happy with the idea of using offshore from what I have seen. The quality of the work coming back is poor. It can be difficult to get someone on the phone who speaks English clearly to address issues. Patient information violations are another concern.

I know that MedQuist gives a discount if we allow offshore services, but we have opted to keep everything here at home. We have more control when things are kept onshore.

I am not a fan of sending work offshore. I feel that transcription work should be kept here in the states. I have concerns about quality.

I have heard terrible stories about offshore transcription. It is something that I would never consider.

It is in our contract to stay onshore. We feel like we get more control if things are kept onshore. The service and quality is better and if there are concerns they can be resolved quicker.

We just don't allow the work go offshore. Privacy is an issue, but more importantly, we just don't allow it.

I really prefer to keep work here in the US. I don't like giving up control and MT does that a little bit already, so I like to keep things as close as I can in order to ensure that we can resolve issues quickly.

Everything we do is kept here in the states with MedQuist. I feel we get better quality that way and are less likely to have to deal with any privacy issues.

I have only heard the worst about offshore services. Security and confidentiality are concerns.

We should keep the jobs in the U.S. I am not a fan of offshore services.

We do not want to send work offshore. I know that from the director on down, they would like to stay in the U.S.

MT can be done cheaper offshore, but my preference is to keep the jobs in the United States.

Even though I have never dealt with any offshore services, I want to keep our jobs in the U.S. It may cost us more to keep the work here, but with the recession it is important to keep Americans working.

We have in our contract that there won't be any offshore services for our account. I have heard of quality and security issues and I just don't want to have to deal with that.

I do not think I approve of sending work offshore. I think we should keep it onshore. It is hard enough to hear a foreigner and what they are saying. I do not understand how one could understand foreign transcription.

I really don't feel comfortable with the idea of our transcription being done offshore. I would not use that kind of a service.

I think offshore transcription is fine. I have used onshore and offshore in the past and I think both can be good. We are looking at utilizing MedQuist's offshore services and will give this as an option to the clinics to save cost. The international price is better.

Why did you select this MTSO and who else did you consider?

We looked at three vendors when making our selection, and we had heard from customer references that MedQuist was excellent, but our experience with them was not good. MedQuist was unwilling to work with eScripton because the use of eScripton would decrease the lines of transcription we would send to MedQuist.

We had no say in the matter. I actually preferred Heartland. Their reports were better, the quality was better, and the turnaround time was better. For example, Heartland gave a 24-hour turnaround time, but MedQuist gives a 48-hour turnaround time.

Prior to using MedQuist, we did all of our transcription in-house. We chose MedQuist because they purchased Lanier, which provided all of our transcription equipment. At the time, Lanier had a great reputation and we had been a customer for many years. They provided fantastic service and they were more cost effective. We had hoped the same would be true from a transcription standpoint, so we went with MedQuist. We really didn't do a lot of vendor comparison.

We chose MedQuist because of the web-tracking technology, and also we had a history with partnering with MedQuist. MedQuist is ahead of the curve for technology.

■ PRECYSE SOLUTIONS

PROVIDER COMMENTARY

Sales and Contracting – Positive

Precyse does not do any off-shore transcriptions for us, and that is part of our agreement. All of the transcriptionists they use are stateside only. In fact, this was part of our selection criteria as well.

The account representative I have at Precyse is very good.

People and Knowledge – Positive

Precyse put in a new account representative maybe five or six months ago, and she has come up to the plate. She is helping turn things around and has worked very hard to keep their promises. I can say nothing but positive things about her.

The account representative I have at Precyse is very good.

Precyse is very good. We have been with them for several years and have no plans to switch. They have very good turnaround times, and their quality is also good. Precyse has a very nice group of people that is committed to helping us when there are problems. They also have an excellent management staff.

Precyse has been excellent. The quality has been great, so I have no complaints there. The account management is also excellent. The account manager is easy to work with and responds quickly to any communication.

I would say Precyse is more proficient with the HIM transcriptions than they are with the diagnostic transcriptions. I just don't have as many quality issues with their HIM transcriptions.

Precyse is very good at keeping in contact with us. If I have an issue, I have a go-to person. If the help desk is not giving me what I need, I can then contact a client manager to assist me.

I cannot stress the response time and the support. The support is there from the account manager down to the lead of the transcription group. Support responds to the physicians if they have any complaints. Precyse is more than willing to correct anything that comes up.

We demand a lot from Precyse, and they are pretty much on top of everything. Turnaround times and quality are kind of up and down, though. We went along beautifully for a while, then things changed at the company and it went down again. I

complained, and then things went back up again. However, we do demand a lot and we have tight turnaround time requirements.

There are not any quality issues anymore. We had an MT that was not getting transcriptions done, so I told Precyse I wanted a different MT. They gave me a new one, and since then this young lady has taken ownership of our account and is very protective of it. There are no mistakes, which is what I expected. My doctors should be taking care of patients and not correcting grammar. Before, the doctors were spending too much time editing what the transcriptionist was supposed to be doing. So if the MTs cannot do their jobs, I will find someone who can. It is amazing how many people respond when I put it in those terms.

Precyse helped me tremendously when we first went to the electronic record. Instead of having our jobs sent to a network printer, they are now sent electronically so they can be imported. Precyse has been wonderful at problem solving and troubleshooting some of the issues we have come up with. I look at Precyse as more of a partner than as a vendor.

Our current team has excellent follow-up and customer service. Our issues are resolved quickly and accurately. Precyse's communication is excellent and timely and their staff is courteous and knowledgeable. Precyse took the time to get to know our account and to educate the team on our account. This is how a service should be run.

We have been a long-time customer of Precyse's. In the beginning, the staff was top notch, and there was not a complaint to share. For the past several years, however, the quality of the service and follow-through of the staff has diminished significantly. There has been constant turnover on our account. After much complaining, we were moved to a different support team, and it is like working with a different company. The quality improved, and follow-up and follow-through are outstanding. The team's communication and knowledge are excellent. The current team rates a nine in all areas, but because the past several years were not so hot, I rated them an eight. We have been on board with the new team for about six months, and I hope that this improvement is sustained. The team that we were previously on is still intact and serves a large part of Precyse's transcription clients in the south-eastern U.S.

Precyse delivers what they promise. They are willing to customize to customer needs, and their employees are highly trained professionals.

I really like Precyse. I have dealt with them for years, and I have always felt like they were very professional and that they delivered on their promises. Precyse makes sure their customers are happy. I just think they are a quality company.

The account representative I have been dealing with for the past couple of years has been fantastic. She goes above and beyond what is expected of her.

Precyse is very good at communicating with me. If I need something or need to discuss something with them, they are always available. If I need to speak to someone higher up, I have that option. We talk about our needs and discuss how those needs can be best met.

We have an account manager who does a fantastic job. We have now formed a partnership that took some time to develop. Now that we have this partnership, things are great between us. We understand each other.

Tools and Methodology – Positive

We really like Precyse. They have very good communication. The program is fully accessible for us. I can work in their portal and fix what I need to or check on things.

I cannot begin to say enough good things about Precyse. The implementation was incredibly smooth, and they are thorough and knowledgeable. I have no issues with Precyse about anything. They are always responsive and timely and always connect me with the right people. I never get the runaround.

They are very responsive. Precyse meets their turnaround times. They double check everything for quality before sending it back to us. This is much appreciated as we have some difficult dictators.

For a while, the quality was really poor, but it has picked up now. It is improving.

Precyse provides a good service. They are good about resolving problems. We had some challenges with turnaround times, but they have taken care of those.

Precyse's quality is fair. We are split between onshore and offshore transcription. Initially we saw issues with the quality overseas. We had some complaints. However, Precyse has been very good at solving the problems that we have had.

We have made a lot of progress since our initial conversion to Precyse. Precyse has responded nicely to the issues that we have had to ensure that they are resolved.

Precyse has excellent turnaround times. Quality, overall, is good. The responses that I have received from the regional director of operations has been fabulous. We have a biweekly call to discuss issues.

I am very happy with Precyse's service. I think they are great. They have been with us the entire time I have been here. I would not even think of changing them.

Precyse's follow up methods are very good. They are very interested in making sure that they are doing a good job. Any time I need anything, they respond immediately.

Precyse has their own back-end speech recognition, and certain doctors' dictations are edited rather than transcribed. We have not seen any difference between the transcribed documents and the speech recognition. The turnaround time is about the same.

Precyse gave me a guarantee on the turnaround time, and it has been good. I am quite pleased with Precyse.

The turnaround time during the first 90 days was poor, but they told us it would be. They said we had to give them 90 days to get up to speed. Now, we are hitting 95 percent of the turnaround times. We have very few complaints about the transcription itself, except from one doctor who is a very fast dictator.

Precyse is not only meeting our defined timelines, they are actually exceeding them. By definition, we are expecting that transcriptions be delivered within 24 hours, but the typical turnaround time for our diagnostic transcriptions is less than four hours. We are passing transcriptions almost 24 hours a day around the clock.

We have never had a problem with formatting, new work types, or account specifics. Whenever we develop new work types, we do not have a problem with that at all.

The quality depends on the physicians, and some are worse than others. If we happen to have an MT that is making a lot of errors, then we report that back. Precyse is pretty good with quality assurance. I would say the overall rate is pretty high, which is somewhere in the high nineties. We do have some issues with turnaround time, but if Precyse falls out, they tend not to fall out very long.

The turnaround time from Precyse is absolutely the best in the business. I have worked with other vendors, and I fired them because they did not get it. Transcription is critical. I fired one company, and when we were not getting what we needed with Precyse, we talked about what I needed from them. They stepped up and I am tickled. I have recommended Precyse to others, and I plan on expanding Precyse to other facilities.

Precyse is extremely responsive to any issue that arises. For example, if I get a complaint from a doctor about the quality of the reports being received, I can call my account representative and they will put that doctor on 100 percent quality review. Precyse will go through every document and track down where the problems are; they are very diligent in that regard. Doing 100 percent quality review is an expensive proposition for them, but they do it. They find the source of the errors and get things cleaned up so they can take that physician off the extensive review process.

I like the way Precyse does business. They are what I consider to be straight shooters, and they work with us. If I have a problem, they will either email or call me right back, according to whichever response is appropriate. I do not have to wonder if they are going to take care of my problem. Precyse will either call back with a solution, or they will call back with more information about how to solve the problem. They do not blame any

problems on anybody within their company or on our end. Instead, they just say they will fix the problem, and we do not have to argue about it.

Precyse's account management is perfect. I have no problems with them. The bills are detailed. With Precyse, I can get a report every month that tells me every kind of report they did. The report breaks the information down; the international and domestic reports are separated, and the backup is a full listing of every single patient and every single report Precyse did, with the lines and the minutes. I can manipulate the reports in the report writer any way I want. We get the invoices on time.

Precyse has great reports, but I would have had to do a little bit of manipulation to sort the reports out and get a report that I could use to prove turnaround time to the medical staff. Precyse's reports are wonderful, but it would take me half an hour to work with the data and massage it to put it in a format I could use, so Precyse did it for me.

The quality of Precyse's transcription is excellent. We signed a contract with them for a two-blank maximum. At the most, we will receive our transcriptions with two blanks in the reports, and they are very careful to not exceed that.

The turnaround time is just phenomenal with Precyse. They don't even reach the limit for the turnaround times as dictated in our contract. They deliver the documents way under the times allowed for them.

Precyse has it set up so that I can actually listen to the audio for the transcriptions. Working with Precyse is nicer than working with any other system I have experienced.

The turnaround time for transcription is very crucial to me. Precyse does a great job with turnaround time. They are very quick, and I appreciate that. If they were not quick, I would go elsewhere.

We have had a few issues with Precyse in the past. We had some serious grammar and editing issues. It was frustrating to our physicians because they did not have the time to fix those. They had full plates seeing physicians. We have resolved those concerns and now things are strong.

Tools and Methodology – Negative

We had quality and ADT issues. We have a real-time feed for ADT, and Precyse kept having trouble with it on their end for some reason. They were not copying the appropriate physicians on the transcriptions, and everything was just a mess. Turnaround time went down too significantly at one time. I told them that the administration was saying either they need to either get their act together or they were out. Now, we are working with them weekly, but I am getting tired. I have more things to do than worry about transcription data.

There is something I see wrong with Precyse. Say I want a log sheet printed with all the dictation that comes in, and the dictation comes here whenever it is ready. It prints at all hours; it does not come in batches. So doing an interface always adds money. Any little project adds money.

I do not care much for Precyse's reporting program. I cannot get exact line counts in a report. It does not include headers and footers. My numbers are never identical to what is billed. I cannot just run a report and compare the invoice to the report. I do not like that.

There isn't a company that is perfect, but Precyse does a pretty good job. There are a few local names that they don't always get right, and they continue to get these wrong because they are not familiar with these small-town names. I think becoming aware of the locality before taking the account is something that would help.

Physician buy-in and training is one part of the front-end speech project that I would say that Precyse could improve a little bit. I have actually already addressed this with them. I think they need to communicate more with the medical staff members that are participating. Precyse needs to be more present and not just tell us that we need to transcribe and dictate more. They need to not just give the doctors facts, but really seek follow up, get feedback regularly, and be more present for support. Precyse has been present, and they have been coming out and are willing to help, but they could do better.

Precyse had some issues with assigning to correct accounts. We had some ongoing issues with that, so we have worked with Precyse to help limit the choices. We don't send as much over the interface for Precyse to choose from.

Timeliness is an area for improvement in the front-end speech project. When the project started, Precyse said they wanted to come out within a week to sit down with a number of physicians. That does not work well with physicians. They need a lot of notice, and Precyse needs to do what they need to do in a limited amount of time. It is difficult to get the physicians right then, as they may have to cancel last minute and come back. But everything worked out in the end.

One of the disappointments that I have had with Precyse is that it took over a year for them to get us a turnaround time report that we wanted. They had the data internally for their own use, but they really struggled with organizing that data into a report for their customers. Precyse is good at turning around the transcription work, but they really lag when it comes to turning around other requests.

Project Results – Positive

Precyse is doing about 35,000 reports a year for us. They do a superb job, and we are very pleased with their service.

We have decreased our turnaround time on transcriptions tremendously. We used to be days behind, and now it is a matter of a few hours. There is no more backlog. When it comes to transcription, I have no worries.

As an HIM director, I could not be happier with Precyse. In my estimation, they are the premier transcription company. Their turnaround time is incredible. For example, the average turnaround time for us to get back preop reports is little over three hours.

Because our previous MTSO was so bad, the doctors are raving about the quality of Precyse's work.

Relationship – Positive

Precyse has a great line of communication. They look at their customers as individuals and work with them to meet their individual needs. We do not feel like a small fish in a big pond. The service is very individualized. They are very open and receptive to feedback we may have when issues arise. They are very prompt in addressing our needs, and they get to the bottom of the problem so that it does not happen again.

I would say our relationship with Precyse is good. It is very good. Precyse is very attentive to our needs. I really like them, and I do not have issues with them. We have a few technical issues, but other than that, we have no problems. Precyse is solid on the technical side as well. Things have improved over the course of the years that I have worked with them. They are good about following up with us.

Precyse is both timely and accurate, but what really impresses us is their leadership and follow-up. They are always calling us to make us aware of issues. They are very timely in letting us know when the system is going to be down, and they follow up on things that they think we could improve on. Their managers and VPs are very hands-on, and we do appreciate that.

We have account management representation from Precyse, and we are speaking with that individual at least twice a month. Precyse is very interactive with us.

I think we have an excellent relationship with Precyse. We have even developed personal relationships with their representatives who come out and work on our system. They are very nice people, and they are very professional. With the transcription, there is a regular escalation process we go through when we have any problems.

I have worked with Precyse for many years. One of the things that I have valued about Precyse is that they are truly a partner. They are very professional and are always willing to help. They respond quickly to any requests or issues or problems we have had. I value the company, and I have stuck with them probably because of the fact that they are truly a partner.

We have stuck with Precyse from the beginning because they work with us, and we work with them. It is a give-and-take relationship. Although we have ups and downs with Precyse, we have a good working relationship with them.

The account management is excellent. It did not used to be, but it is now. We just came to an understanding, and Precyse was very responsive. I don't know if they did not understand my expectations, or maybe they just had not dealt with a customer like me who expected a partnership.

I am so pleased that Precyse stepped up to the plate when I asked them to. That is what I needed, and this was the expectation for me and my physicians. My physicians should be with patients, not being English teachers. It is amazing how Precyse responded. We had some growing pains, but it is amazing the relationship we have now. I look at Precyse less as a vendor and more as a partner.

Precyse took all of our MTs. We could not require Precyse to keep them, but if the MTs met the production standards, then they would get to keep their jobs there, which was certainly fair. We knew we had some issues, and all the MTs were given the chance to work at Precyse. They just had to make it through that probationary period.

When we joined Precyse five or six years ago, they were a fairly new transcription company. I think they had been around a couple of years, but we were one of their first accounts. The treatment we get when we are new is usually very good, and it was then too. We knew almost everybody that worked at Precyse with the exception of the at-home MTs. We knew all of the management team, the implementation team, the salespeople, and we knew the vice president. I would not have thought twice about calling anyone at any given time. They were truly like a family.

ROI and Cost – Positive

We approached Precyse and asked them if they could help us because we are trying to stabilize through some growth issues. They came back to us with a very good rate for our transcription services. We are now very pleased with our costs.

Future Outlook – Positive

Precyse is working on web portal access for physicians. We are looking forward to this functionality.

Precyse is doing very well at this time. We are using them for all HIM transcription. We have also recently signed a contract to extend our agreement to our surgical services as well. We had a smaller, local company doing this work previously, but we just were not getting the results we needed. Based on the good results we were getting from Precyse, we extended our contract to include this work as well.

Precyse is fulfilling their contract. There are a couple other companies out there that I have used in the past that I would look into, but being with Precyse right now isn't giving me any problems. I probably would not discontinue using them. Precyse is one of those companies that we don't jump up and down about, but we will not kick them out either because they are really not doing anything wrong.

SPECIAL QUESTIONS COMMENTARY

If there was an increase or decrease in volume, what has been the main cause?

Our volume increase is probably due to different dictating practices of physicians. The dictation tends to be lengthier when we get a new batch of residents, but I don't think it's been a significant amount.

Maybe down the road, once we are into it a bit more, Horizon will have an impact. I don't think I will see one initially.

We have the Eclipsys EMR in the ED now, and it is going live throughout the hospital. I am not sure if having the Eclipsys EMR in the ED has impacted the transcription. I am really pushing to have the physicians dictate all of their H&Ps. I cannot mandate that, but having those as an electronic record means they would be available right away. Precyse does the front-end distribution and interfaces to the various systems. Three physicians now dictate their progress notes, so those are available on a real-time basis.

Our volumes have decreased as a result of our PACS. With our PACS, the physicians can now do normals with a three-click report, allowing them to literally complete their own reports.

Our volume has decreased mainly due to our conversion to an electronic ED system with MEDHOST. Cerner has not had an impact on volume. With MEDHOST, the ED doctors transcribe their ER reports. Those are all eliminated now. The system just requires us to point and click, so there is no paper.

We are training the doctors right now on speech recognition, so we have not seen a difference yet. As the doctors start to use speech recognition, we will see some cost savings. I do not think that physician documentation will reduce dictation volumes. The doctors don't trust anything; we have to prove it to them. I think we will get there, but it will take a while longer. The doctors will still have to do H&Ps, unless everything becomes point and click and truly voice recognized.

I do not think physicians are dictating less. I think the volume of dictation is more dependent on the length of stay and the number of admissions. We have remained pretty steady over the last year, though our volume has gone down some. Precyse does back-end speech, though I am not sure what percentage we are up to. It is not something we would know or that the physician would even know. Precyse tried that about a year ago. I think it is working very well on their end, but again, it is not something we hear about. Precyse sends most of our work overseas now.

Ratings Comments: Onshore Services

Things like stat dictations are turned around here in the states.

There is an offshore option, but I will not send our work offshore. All of ours is kept domestic.

I made sure we only had onshore services, nothing offshore.

I cannot tell the difference between onshore and offshore work, to be honest. We are trying to gradually move more and more of the work to be international unless it is stat.

Ratings Comments: Offshore Services

I have not seen any quality or privacy issues, though I have heard about them in the news.

We have more quality problems with the offshore transcriptionists.

Offshore quality is not as good as domestic.

We cannot really tell a difference in the quality of onshore and offshore services.

I think the offshore services have been okay. I have not heard any complaints, except about this one dictator who does very poor work.

Our work is split where 60 percent is done internationally and 40 percent is done domestically. We used to have a bigger percentage of domestic work, but we are gaining confidence in the offshore work and are willing to let more go. We get a better rate with the international work, and all of the quality review is done domestically.

We don't send more work overseas because of the time difference. We can't get the turnaround time we need, which is two to four hours for some things.

It appears that Precyse assigns specific work types to their offshore transcriptionists. H&Ps, for example, might be done offshore. Frankly, I can't tell any difference in the quality between the onshore and offshore work.

That is a hard one. When we changed teams to the northern team, we sent the majority of our work overseas. A lot of our issues were related to the MTs. I would say the work was equally as good overseas as it was domestic. There are really not any major issues with the work being overseas.

If you are not using offshore services, what is your perception of offshore MT services?

We are not interested in using offshore services. Everyone I have talked to who has had offshore transcription eventually reverted back to onshore service because of quality

issues. I am concerned with not only the quality, but also the security and confidentiality of those records.

I have a personal concern for privacy and quality; and just in general, I do not like overseas outsourcing. There was an issue a few years back where Stanford University had farmed out transcription to a company, and that company had farmed out transcription to a third company, who happened to be over in India. One of the transcriptionists in India was holding the reports hostage and said that they would release them to the internet if Stanford did not give her a certain sum of money. So that certainly didn't give me a very good feel for the whole situation. I am sure there have been other similar cases, so I don't do outsourcing to overseas companies.

When we started with Precyse, the medical staff and hospital adamantly said no to offshore services. They wanted the work handled in the continental United States. It may be something I will want to consider and talk to Precyse about. They have an office in India. Offshore services would be cost effective, so I just may try it and see what the quality is like. It would give flexibility to both us and Precyse; if there are not enough resources in the states, Precyse could just ship the work out.

The hospital did not want to outsource work for security reasons. We have not revisited the issue again because we are happy with what we have through Precyse.

I explicitly asked that the vendor not send any of our work outside of the country. I do not believe in sending our work offshore.

I have not explored it a lot. There are pros and cons. One pro is that the work is getting done while we are sleeping. A con is that their communication skills are not as great as ours.

Why did you select this MTSO and who else did you consider?

We went with Precyse because of their turnaround time and their customer service philosophy. They treat their customers like they are important.

Because we are a nationwide network of hospitals, we have to select from preapproved vendors from the corporate level. Precyse was one of those. However, I have had previous experience with Precyse.

We ruled out MedQuist. They were in the big group before we narrowed our choice to the top three. We looked at CBay but ruled it out because we did not want to deal with the hospitals that did not have a certain volume of transcription. Precyse was very professional and always on top of things. They put in an RFP and came out on top. We have not been disappointed.

Our RFI went out to 25 companies. We narrowed it down to MedQuist, JLG, and Precyse. Our decision was not based on cost. Precyse was the vendor that convinced us that they could meet the requirements in our RFI.

Precyse came highly recommended to us.

■ SPHERIS

PROVIDER COMMENTARY

Sales and Contracting – Negative

I just hate the fact that I never saw the new contract. When I went with Spheris, I surveyed about ten different companies, and Spheris was the number one recommendation. This is my job and is what I do, so when the contract came up for renewal, Spheris should have talked to me, but they did not. That upsets me, and I think they snuck a few things in there that I did not know about.

It took us a year to get a contract with Spheris. It took us forever to get the contract finalized because of all the hoops Spheris had to jump through with their legal department. It was ridiculous, and we worked without a contract for a long time.

From the mere fact that we had a contract with Spheris, we thought we could expect certain things from them. There is a promise made by the nature of a contract that says if we have an IT issue or something, we can expect help. But I could not make Spheris do anything. I could not even get them to acknowledge our existence.

People and Knowledge – Positive

The account manager is very responsive. I can call his cell phone if I need to, and he has no problem with that. He handles everything very promptly. If I ever have a concern, Spheris takes care of it quickly. The MT supervisor is very on top of everything, so I get great quality from Spheris. I rarely have problems, but I am confident that they can fix any issue I have.

We have a great representative who does a good job and tries his best to get things fixed. He is fighting an uphill battle with the problems this vendor has. He is at the mercy of other people. When he thinks he has taken care of things on his end, we find issues.

Spheris has given us a great account manager. He does a great job of getting back to us. When we have problems, he does everything he can to get them fixed. The higher-level executives at Spheris seem to be very open to looking at and fixing our issues.

In the past year, the customer service has improved immensely. Prior to the last year, we would never hear back from Spheris or they could not help us. We would have to call multiple people to get an answer. However, the turnaround time is great now. I think Spheris has a new person who really emphasizes customer service. He has implemented some new customer service initiatives, and that has really made a difference.

I have not had better account management. The Spheris relationship has been excellent. We have had problems with quality, and especially with new transcriptionists. In truth, no

matter whom we go with, we will have problems with new transcriptionists and with quality. However, the Spheris account manager has been so great to work with and was always on top of that sort of thing.

Spheris gets back to us fairly quickly when we have a problem. They try their hardest. When I send a dictation in for correction, they usually get it back in a reasonable time frame. They are a big company, though.

The Spheris customer service is excellent. Emails are returned promptly. The account managers are attentive and knowledgeable. We are looking forward to the new Clarity system's capabilities.

Spheris has excellent customer service. When we have issues, we get a prompt response. They make it a point to keep in touch with us. They try and anticipate our needs and, to me, that is good customer service. Spheris has very good turnaround times.

Spheris has very responsive customer service representatives. We had some issues switching to the Clarity system; it was a nightmare. However, the representatives had not foreseen the issues and were very good about responding to them.

Spheris is trying to get better. They have made a number of changes organizationally that I feel have been very positive. We had an account manager that was not really responsive. Earlier this year there was an organizational restructuring, and one of the SVPs from Spheris who is over this region met with me on-site and laid out his new strategy and the new changes they were trying to implement. I was assigned a new account manager that has been very good. Since then, Spheris has been in touch with me on a regular basis. They check in to see how things are going. If I have an issue, I can email it off to my account manager before I leave and it will be taken care of by the time I come in the next morning. I have been very happy with the responses we have been getting at the management level. I think it must be frustrating to Spheris that we are bringing the same issues back to them.

Our account manager and customer service are excellent. If I have a problem or a document I can't locate or whatever, Spheris is very prompt.

Spheris has great turnaround times, and they have been excellent to work with. Spheris is cooperative and attentive. I have a great account representative.

I have been pleased with our account manager at Spheris. She has set up a weekly conference call to discuss issues and to provide updates. She has been attentive and responsive.

The account manager has been superb. She is very responsive and open. She has been on the ball with things and is resolving our turnaround time and quality issues. Things are getting better. Overall, we are pretty happy.

The account management has been fantastic from Spheris. They have worked really well with us on technology issues we have. The service is responsive, and we have a great rapport with the account manager. He is on top of things and is organized. He is a great communicator.

People and Knowledge – Negative

We are still on an old platform that Spheris is not going to use going forward, but not all of the customer service representatives understand this. We have to find someone who has been there a long time for certain issues, as many customer service representatives are unable to assist without extensive explanations.

This vendor's support is highly underdeveloped, and the interfacing is high maintenance. We have had four or five account managers in two years, so I don't even know who our current account manager is. The customer service is poor.

In the past, things have been very bad with the support from Spheris. They seemed to have a skeleton crew. Most of their people are low-tier people, and there are just a few people at a higher level who can handle escalated issues. There are times when I would call in with an issue, and I would not get a callback, but I would get an email saying that things had been fixed. That was frustrating, especially when I would notice that nothing had been fixed. Very recently, the Spheris support has been improving.

Spheris needs to improve the availability of reports for customer use. They also need to improve their troubleshooting. Account management does not always understand or listen to a full explanation of the issue to relay it to the technical staff. It would be better if there could be direct communication between the customer and the staff that is working on resolving the issue.

I would like to see Spheris do a better job of staffing Friday through Sunday. Their turnaround times suffer during the weekends.

Initially, the quality of the transcription was very good, but in the last year it has dropped, and I do not know the reason for that. I have to fill in what Spheris missed. I do not know if it is young, untrained transcriptionists doing the work, or if it is just that people do not care, because they are missing easy things.

We had our first account manager from Spheris for a while, and he was very excited to get things going. We started working on QA and things like that, and it was great. But then I got a call from someone who said she was going to be taking over for our account manager. I talked to our first account manager, and he was angry that he did not even get to tell his clients that he was moving. Spheris just moved him without warning. Our second account manager was all right, but then we got a third account manager, and she infuriated me. She never responded to any of my emails, so I did not even know who she

was. It just seemed like she did not care. We started giving Spheris less work, which should have been a big red flag for them to gear up and try to fix things, but they did not do anything. Then the MT who was helping us with QA quit, so we did not have anyone with any knowledge on our account.

Tools and Methodology – Positive

The turnaround time, quality, and QA process have all been wonderful. Spheris has always been very responsive to my problems, needs, and changes.

The Spheris management team is great with timely follow-up and problem resolution. I would say that the majority of their support team is timely and responsive to our needs.

Spheris has been super all around. Their turnaround time, accuracy, responsiveness, and technical support have all been excellent.

On a daily basis, the timeliness and quality from Spheris are wonderful. The relationship is working really well. We have to code and bill within 48 hours, and Spheris gives us the transcribed documents between 2 and 4 hours so we can do that billing.

Spheris uses a Web-based system. We are on the system all day long; we can see when a doctor dictates a report, when it is being transcribed, and when it is completed. Once the report is done, the system tells me it has been printed, and I can find it on my printer. That is very nice. I can also see if a doctor did not dictate so I can let that doctor know that it is possible to dictate from anywhere by using the Spheris system. This is very beneficial because sometimes a doctor is in a rush and may not dictate before leaving the hospital. This affects our business, so having the ability to dictate remotely is great.

Transcription is very critical; it is the only revenue we have. Because we cannot code and bill without the record, the transcribed document must come back to us as soon as possible. Spheris understands this and does not disappoint us.

If I have any technical issues with dictation, with reports not coming in, or with any other aspect of the service, Spheris takes care of them right away. Spheris knows how important this service is to us. If a report gets lost, Spheris finds it for us.

The implementation process Spheris had was excellent and very smooth. I liked how they handled the project team, the phone calls, and the follow-up. I had a couple of account representatives who were excellent.

The quality we get from Spheris is the same as most MTSOs. I would like to see a higher percentage of reports be reviewed, but Spheris is not any different than other vendors in this area. However, their response to our quality concerns is fine. When we have asked them to do a 100 percent review of an MT to check that MT's quality, they have been willing to do that.

Their quality has improved. Their turnaround time has also improved. We have been pleased with those improvements.

Our account representative has been pretty good. She is responsive to our needs. Also, the turnaround times have been good overall.

Spheris has done a great job for us. We are a small facility, so they have had no problems keeping up with our volumes. The service has been fine as well. We are in a remote area, so it made sense to outsource. We have not been disappointed with the turnaround times, quality, or service.

Spheris is very timely in their turnaround times. That has been their biggest strength. Their quality is okay. There have been some challenges, but most have been on our end with our doctors. Spheris resolves any issues immediately.

Spheris meets all of our goals in terms of turnaround time. We have a really good account representative. He goes above and beyond to make us happy. We also like that they send our reports over electronically. Their system is very easy to work with.

We enjoy working with Spheris. We have a high volume of transcription going to Spheris. I really believe that no one else could handle our volume. Spheris is hardly ever out of line with the contracted turnaround times.

The customer service is generally pretty good. When an issue comes up, Spheris is right on it. We usually get resolution the same day, within a couple of hours.

Spheris actually builds their use of speech recognition into the service. Spheris developed their own speech software, and they use that. We have a fairly small amount of doctors on speech recognition with Spheris. The doctors dictate directly to Spheris, and then on the back end Spheris will use their speech technology. That is all baked into the price. Right now, we are just getting used to the new Cornerstone application. The documents that came out of there were exquisite before, and now there are certain little things I can see. But, that is nothing we can't work with.

Spheris meets the turnaround times well. The website where we can monitor the status of our work with them is very good. The communication also has been good.

We have intermittent problems with the quality of the work. Spheris responds quickly and removes inexperienced MTs from our account.

Spheris has pretty good turnaround time. That is the biggest benefit to using them.

Spheris has fairly good turnaround times. Their quality has also improved.

Spheris is a funny company. I feel like they are performing well in terms of quality and turnaround time, but their business philosophy is very challenging. I am not happy with the way they do business. They are not transparent at all as a company and they do not define things well. Things need much more explanation in order to find out what Spheris is really talking about. However, their performance is good.

Spheris is meeting the turnaround time, and they are meeting the quality requirements.

The best thing Spheris has going for them is their fast turnaround times.

Spheris has had very good follow-up. The account management is good with the follow-through.

Tools and Methodology – Negative

In the past several years, Spheris has experienced growth. They have been developing their own service platform. During this time, we have requested an upgrade to our provided equipment in order to meet the networking infrastructure improvements. To date, Spheris has been unable to accommodate our request, resulting in less than optimal productivity.

Spheris says they are upgrading their system to a new platform called Clarity. The upgrade has changed things on our side, and our reports now look a lot worse. The reports have lots and lots of blanks that did not exist before. I now get so many complaints from the doctors regarding the transcriptions.

Spheris used to do a great job for us until they went to the Clarity platform. Things have been awful ever since. I have had so many physician complaints that I have been giving the Spheris support phone number out to the doctors. Spheris keeps telling us they will get it fixed, but I continue to call about the same thing.

Their service has gone down a little. A handheld product they have been installing for two years has been horrible. This product does not work. The doctors can't use it.

We have had some problems. For example, the dictation servers were down and the staff was not able to communicate the appropriate backup numbers. It was hard to give Spheris the work we needed them to do.

We are having issues with the Spheris report quality. We are seeing a lot of typos. Our OP reports have come back to us with everything mixed around. We will find that they added a paragraph to a report that actually belongs to another patient.

A lot of our physicians complain about the spelling and grammar in the reports we get from Spheris. The Spheris transcriptionists' quality has gone downhill recently; in fact, it has been a landslide. They misspell common words. The reports are atrocious.

We have added some new templates and physicians. That has not gone as smoothly as I expected it to. Also, Spheris has switched to a new platform, which has caused some problems.

The accuracy of the transcription continues to trouble us. The patient information is not always accurate. I think Spheris has a lot of new medical transcriptionists, and these people seem to need a lot of instructions. As a result, we are seeing a lot of inaccuracies. I think the vendor is trying to improve the accuracy, but it is still not good enough for us at this time.

Sometimes the problem resolution is less than satisfactory. Some problems keep popping up and have not been resolved. Spheris needs to stick to the problem until it is fully resolved.

Quality is something that we continue to work on with Spheris. We are doing a mixture of speech recognition and transcription. Spheris needs to make sure the process for each is working as expected.

Quality is the major issue that we have with Spheris. We have become increasingly frustrated. Spheris clearly needs a better QA process. I have doctors coming to me and asking why the system says 15 mg when they prescribed 50. I don't know how much clearer they could be.

We have had some quality issues with Spheris. There are too many blanks left in transcribed reports. No real effort has been made to improve this problem.

The biggest issue we have had with Spheris has been with quality. A simple example is that we have a physician assistant who always includes in his dictation who the supervising physician is, and Spheris always forgets to include the second signature line. We have problems where Spheris indicates that they will go back and talk with their MTs to get the problem solved, but a few days later we have another issue. We seem to encounter a number of recurring issues.

My biggest concern with Spheris is that the work is done offshore. I am looking into another system, and not having offshore dictation is going to be my top priority. Spheris does fine with the medical terminology, but they are not familiar with some nuances of the English language.

The turnaround time is good. I don't have any complaints with the reports that we need right away; I am just concerned with the quality. The physicians are sometimes frustrated with the quality of the reports they get back.

We were working with Spheris on a reduction in cost, and it was painful. We ended up getting a concession of half a cent per line, which was not even material. Our long-term

strategy, and we hope to demonstrate it with the EMR, is to continue to move doctors to point-and-click transcription or voice response transcription. Some doctors might get there and some might not, but that is an area where we spend a lot of money, and it certainly doesn't seem like an ideal architecture.

The documentation from Spheris is confusing and extremely limited. Spheris could pay attention to how the documentation flows. The transcriptionists are doing the best they can with the limited information they have available to them.

We are having challenges with the quality of the transcriptions we get from Spheris. The punctuation and grammar are not right.

At this stage in the game, I would have to say that I would not absolutely recommend Spheris to a close friend. Spheris made some changes to how they were doing things that they did not inform me about. I would like them to be more proactive with their communication and to be more up front. Also, the quality of the transcriptions from Spheris is still not where it needs to be. It seems like something new comes up every day.

There have been some inconsistencies in what Spheris is communicating. For example, we have been told the number of MTs that we have working on our account, but that number has changed several times depending on the person we are talking to and the time of day. Also, the quality reports show that Spheris has a high percentage of quality, but they are only checking a very small percentage of their reports.

Spheris does a great job with turnaround times. The only problem is that the quality is not very good.

We are having issues with the technology. The interface is not working smoothly. Also, our attending physicians must view the newest transcription first. Getting to the oldest transcription is a pain, and we can't adjust that. The physicians run into other hassles as well. Spheris would be great for non-teaching facilities, but their technology has given us trouble. Luckily, the account management and service have been excellent.

Project Results – Positive

This product works reasonably well and has good Web access to reports and transcriptions. The support is improving but has been terrible in past, and this company has very few knowledgeable engineers. The turnaround time for transcription is usually excellent. It is usually around two hours during normal hours.

The transcription service we receive from Spheris is good. We normally see our STAT transcriptions back in a couple hours, and other work is done according to our contracted turnaround times.

I am quite happy with Spheris, for three reasons really. One, we have great turnaround time on transcribed reports and even better turnaround time on the edited documents. Two, we are saving quite a bit since Spheris went to voice recognition. Three, the account management has been very good. Spheris is very responsive and I like that.

Spheris is very good at making sure we get our reports on time. They are diligent even if it is a 24-hour turnaround. Their quality is also very good. They respond very quickly if there are problems. Our physicians are very happy.

The turnaround time is amazing. Spheris exceeds the contracted turnaround time more than 95 percent of the time. Their work is accurate.

We have been very happy with Spheris. Their turnaround times and the quality of their service have been very good. We are moving to some new tools that we are excited about.

Our overall experience with Spheris has been very good. I have had good account managers, and my experience with dealing with the people at Spheris and getting reports back has been good. But in the last nine months, the quality of the transcription has suffered.

Project Results – Negative

We had a problem with an old server here and for nearly three days we lost a lot of doctor's dictations. Spheris did not notice that there was a problem. I do not think Spheris is the greatest company out there. I do not think they do a very good quality check.

The quality of the end result does not meet our expectations. This is true even with hands-on assistance from Spheris.

Relationship – Positive

Spheris has a commitment to quality. They have very good turnaround times. We really like the ease of the functionality of their software. They are very flexible on projects. They will meet the customer's needs.

Spheris is very approachable. They have weekly conference calls with me. The main account manager stays connected. Spheris tries really hard to meet the needs of the customer as best they can.

There have been a lot of changes with Spheris, and for a while, we had a rough relationship. However, we now have a representative who actually manages the client. When things are not working correctly, our representative knows how to get them fixed.

She has also communicated some things that need to be fixed on my end, which I appreciated. She is very proactive. This feels more like a partnership.

My experience with Spheris has been very positive. My account manager has been wonderful. I had a short period of time when the account manager was not good. I called and got a new one. When we have issues, and the account manager is not responsive, it can be terrible. With Spheris, there are different layers, and a really great account manager can go through the bureaucracy to get what we need.

Spheris has been responsive, which has been particularly true from the account management level.

Spheris listens to us. They are totally customer oriented. They don't tell us they can't do something; they ask what they can do to meet our requirements and needs.

Relationship – Negative

Spheris sometimes struggles with their follow-through. They could improve their communication by listening more closely. I have direct contact with the account manager, but having direct contact with higher levels would also be good.

Client notification is the one thing I would like Spheris to improve upon. They don't notify us in a timely manner. We always seem to find out after the fact that something has changed, and they don't consider how something will impact the clients when they make changes.

ROI and Cost – Positive

Spheris really amazed me. Our volumes have gone up since we first started with them. The economy is killing us. I went to them for a price cut, and they gave me one. I was amazed. They need business, too. They worked with me and came to the table.

Future Outlook – Positive

Spheris has been working on improving their support response. They need to be more timely. We have also had trouble with them knowing who we are. They have responded to our concerns, and the support is getting better.

I think Spheris is finally doing better on the turnaround time. It has not been very good in the past, and Spheris is apparently taking steps to improve the time by providing overtime and recruiting extra staff to cover us during weekends and holidays.

Future Outlook – Negative

I am now at the point where I want to give up on Spheris. I have given the vendor chance after chance to improve things. Things will get better briefly, but then we have the same old problems.

Spheris has had a big turnover in their transcriptionists, which is the reason why the report quality is so bad right now. We would like to see the quality improve dramatically. Otherwise, we may be compelled to look at replacing Spheris.

SPECIAL QUESTIONS COMMENTARY

If there was an increase or decrease in volume, what has been the main cause?

Our dictation minutes exclude our ER notes, which are about a third of the dictation. That means we are looking at about 100 minutes from ER. We don't do ER notes anymore because the notes are input electronically into the ER system. Last year our volume stayed the same, but compared to the year before it increased for a couple of reasons. In the ER, we started using physician assistants and nurse practitioners to see patients in the ER. But according to state law, a physician has to sign off on that documentation. Instead of just signing off, the physicians were dictating something, which increased our volume. The year before that, we brought in some residents and interns who were also allowed to dictate, and they were long winded.

Nobody wanted to type in the Cerner system because it was too hard to use. The doctors opted to dictate. The hospital decided they wanted to have outpatient documentation for our clinics. We do not scan any documentation into our EMR, so the physicians have to dictate or type.

Our dictation volume has increased 10 percent across all 10 facilities. We have more facilities than we had last year, but doctors still want to send their work out to transcription. We are having the doctors do more EMR documentation. Nobody has made the doctors at this facility do that yet, but I think at some point the facilities will make a policy change that the doctors need do their own EMR documentation or charge the dictation costs back to the departments.

A hospital in our census has been down, so we have had some decrease in volume, but that is just because of economic reasons and things like that. Hospitals are struggling, especially small, rural hospitals.

We have been live on our EMR for about 10 years. Initially we were told that we would see a big drop in dictation volumes, but that has not been the case.

Ratings Comments: Onshore Services

Spheris goes above and beyond to make sure the addresses are correct for pediatric referrals, which is a big deal for us. Spheris has worked a lot with our IS department to set up an email when data does not get dictated or when there are other issues prior to going into our EMR.

For onshore services, quality is a challenge; their punctuation and grammar are not right. Turnaround time is fast, but the quality is an issue.

We have had pretty good success with Spheris. They listen and help. They have done a really good job with communications.

Ratings Comments: Offshore Services

Spheris was charging \$0.14 a line for offshore transcription, which was more than our domestic services. They offered us a low rate because we promised them that we would add more facilities, which is exactly what we are doing with our current firm. Unfortunately, Spheris would not type within our database. They typed on their own platform, and we had to import their work. We did not like that.

Offshore quality is never quite as good as onshore quality.

At this point, I can't tell the difference between onshore versus offshore, so I can't provide an individual score for each. The vendor does, however, charge me different rates for each service.

Our volume is so much higher than when we signed with the vendor, and when we signed with them, they were sending less than 10 percent of their work to India. They are now sending over 90 percent to India. This means that their costs have lowered, so we got a price reduction, which was great.

If you are not using offshore services, what is your perception of offshore MT services?

Our agreement with Spheris was that we would have no offshore accounts. However, when we renewed our contract I never saw it, and neither did my director. We have seen the quality in our reports drop, and I think that might be because Spheris slipped in some offshoring. The first recommendation from our CEO was no offshore transcription.

I would assume the quality would be different with offshore services. The physicians talk so fast that it would be hard for the transcriptionists to understand. I have heard this from other colleagues.

It is in our contract that offshore transcription services not be used. I think the offshore transcription work is at a severe disadvantage. The transcriptionists are far less familiar with English terminology, and my opinion is that the quality is lacking.

We are not allowed to use offshore services. Our privacy officer will not allow us to do that, nor will the board of directors of the hospital.

I am against sending work offshore. The number one reason is to keep jobs in America. The second is quality. The third is the issue with privacy. Our laws do not apply to offshore countries.

We think the report quality is better with onshore services.

We have looked at offshore work because of the cost savings. We decided to go with back-end speech recognition instead. I am somewhat hesitant, but I am not necessarily opposed to it.

Offshore services are hiring transcriptionists from other countries. Because of this, English is a second language for them, and the time zone differences are a problem. In general, response and quality are negative. Quality is a higher priority for us than turnaround time.

Offshore services are probably okay. The issue that concerns me is the ability to deal with legal issues when talking to a company that is not subject to our laws. Corporate doesn't say we can't go offshore, but I don't think they are a fan of that model. In the past, offshore work has not been that much cheaper than onshore.

I would not do it. We are leery of it because of the quality.

I am okay with offshore services. I have worked for organizations that are adamantly against it and others that are okay with it. Organizations can have problems anywhere.

We used Heartland until early this year. Quality was definitely an issue with the offshore services.

Offshore MT services are not very good. I have never used them. I have heard that there are some good companies, but the ones that are good still need staff to proofread and edit. Many facilities have increased their staff to clean up offshore transcriptions or have gone back to onshore services. The offshore employees do not know how to type a sentence with proper grammar.

Offshore services are not as high of a quality as onshore, and they do not have to follow the requirements that the United States has regarding HIPAA and privacy requirements. For us, it is not a quality issue as much as it is a legal and privacy issue.

Why did you select this MTSO and who else did you consider?

We selected Spheris because they looked great initially. Their initial account manager was excellent; he was timely and attentive. Then Spheris took him away and gave us three or four terrible account managers.

■ SPI

PROVIDER COMMENTARY

Sales and Contracting – Positive

SPI charges by visible black character. I am not sure what the rate is right now because the rate has not gone up in several years. Whatever the rate started out at, that is what SPI is still being paid. They have held their price at the same place.

People and Knowledge – Positive

I am very satisfied with SPI. I am really glad we use them. If we have an issue, they are always on it. There is always same-day resolution. We usually get things resolved within two or three hours. They are very friendly and do a really good job. They have very good turnaround times.

Our experience has improved with SPI primarily due to our new account manager. We were having issues previously where SPI just would not respond in a timely fashion. Our new account manager is much more responsive and does a good job of letting us know if there is an issue, or follows up to address issues.

The only concern that I have had with SPI is the quality of some of their typists. However, they have stepped it up recently and have made some good changes.

SPI has very good customer service. They get providers added into the system in a timely manner, and they resolve things quickly and efficiently.

Over the past year, SPI has improved their level of service and quality that they provide us. In the past, we had significant issues with them losing reports and turning in reports late. We do not have nearly the same number of difficulties with them. They are still not where we expect them to be, though.

SPI usually meets turnaround times except on weekends. The quality of the work we receive is excellent. Our previous account manager was easier to work with than our current one, but they are usually responsive to our needs.

I am in contact with the people who first came here to show us the program, and they are wonderful. SPI's support people have been excellent as well. Over the weekend, we had a virus in our network and our IS people were working to get the system up and to get me access to reports, and SPI actually gave me access to their system so I could pull the reports that I needed. SPI has just been really good. Their technical person was excellent as far as helping me get the information I needed to know. I think SPI is a good company. We would stay with them if it was our choice.

For the most part, SPi's transcription is on time. Our new account representative does a pretty good job. If I send an email, SPi usually responds to it pretty quickly.

SPi has good quality. Once their transcriptionists learn to recognize our voices, the error rate goes down. The people at SPi are fairly easy to work with, so I do not have any complaints about that.

People and Knowledge – Negative

We have asked for a dedicated MT for our account because of the complexities of our organization. Unfortunately, the level of detail has been lacking.

SPi's account management has changed a little bit recently. We had an account manager that we worked very well with who is no longer with the company. I think SPi did some downsizing. We now have the person who used to be a senior manager over the person that we were working with, and I find it to be little harder to work with her. We just don't communicate as well, for some reason.

I don't work as well with our new manager, but I think it may be because she has only been in this job for about six weeks. She is still learning what we need and what to expect of us, and we are learning the same with her.

I think SPi is changing their account representatives too much. That is one area they could improve in.

Tools and Methodology – Positive

SPi is very dependable and accurate. They provide good quality. I have heard they send our work offshore, but we cannot tell the difference. They meet our turnaround requests and our stat TAT requests.

SPi wants to help. They have great reports that they generate that are very helpful.

SPi's turnaround time is fast. The account manager is available to listen to my complaints and does try to resolve them. The Web portal we use to retrieve the finished product is easy to use, which is good because so many corrections have to be made.

One of the things that SPi does that stands out is that they are efficient and their turnaround time can be the next day. SPi has been very good at providing what we need when we need it. We have not had any complaints from our physicians.

We are really happy with SPi. The turnaround time was good before, but it seems to be getting faster. We are a specialty clinic, but it seems that SPi has no problem with the quality. It is all very good. SPi has improved in resolving our issues quickly. The issue resolution has improved. We are pretty pleased.

SPI has very good turnaround times. We have had quality issues, but SPI seems to be taking care of those problems.

SPI's turnaround times are not quite there. However, SPI does give us a discount if things are not back in 24 hours. We still get some complaints about quality, but SPI is working on that.

On the first day of the month, I get a report that gives me SPI's turnaround times for every report type. We only need it once a month, so we requested it, and I get it on the first day of the month. I have not had any problems with getting things I need. If I lost the report or I did not ever receive one in the transmission, I usually notify SPI and they send it right away.

SPI is doing a good job for us right now. We had an issue recently, and they were able to resolve it quickly. They have improved their accuracy, and their turnaround times are great.

SPI's turnaround times are very good, and their Web portal is easy to use.

The technical capability of SPI attracted us to the company in the first place. They have some really good features. We can do dual signatures; we have residents who need to have an attending physician co-sign records. We like that feature.

Tools and Methodology – Negative

SPI is making too many errors in transcriptions, despite repeated requests and information sent with dictation for clarity on patients' names and other things. For the last year, I have had to correct 95 percent of their finished product. They have no method to resolve billing disputes other than to tell us that we have to pay it anyway.

We have had some IT-related issues that have been hanging out there for quite awhile. The issues don't appear to be very high priorities on SPI's side.

Sometimes things are held up for quality checks, which causes SPI to miss their turnaround times. That is our major issue.

We are seeing more errors on the reports lately, and I am not sure why. We turn the reports over to the account manager who then gets the reports fixed, but the past two or three months have not been very good from a quality perspective.

In the last several weeks, SPI has had server problems, which makes our transcriptions late. We have not been able to get the documents, which has been annoying. The nice thing is that I know that SPI is working on this. I am hoping that they will resolve the problem soon enough.

When requesting changes to style, formatting, or quality, have recently experienced some delays getting these changes made which has been somewhat frustrating. They have requested we use offshore transcription but our contract specifies no offshore labor – not sure we want to change.

We have a problem sometimes with weekends. We have been aware of this problem from the beginning. But the quality of SPi's work is excellent. So as long as I manage to send them something that I don't have to have back right away and they are doing overflow anyway, the weekend work has not really been a big issue.

There are a couple of things that have made our experience with SPi very bad. SPi leaves a tremendous amount of blank spaces. I expect occasional blank spaces on our reports because the physicians mumble, or they are eating. There is no way to know what the physicians are doing when they are dictating. But SPi leaves way too many blank spaces. They also put in incorrect information that isn't even close to what the physician dictated. I have a great transcription supervisor who listens back to what the physicians said, and when the transcription isn't close, that is an issue.

It seems as if the system is down a lot, and we have some communication difficulties with the help desk at SPi. We will email the help desk by 11 a.m. and let them know that we need a dictation by 1 p.m., and the report is still not getting typed at 12:45 p.m. We try to give SPi as much notice as possible, but our patients cannot leave our facility without a discharge summary. SPi needs to be more on the ball with things like that.

SPi bought out our local company. For a while, SPi continued to have a local presence, but then it became less and less local. As that happened, SPi got worse and worse. I would spend several hours of QA work every time I got a batch of dictations, which was a waste of time. The turnaround time, which used to be incredibly fast, started to suffer as well.

We have had a few issues with SPi lately, and I am a little bitter with them. SPi has been down several times lately. I know it happens, but it takes a really long time for them to get caught up. Without fail, SPi goes down at the end of the month. If they do not do their job, I cannot do my job.

I do not think I have used any MTSO that I would call stellar. They all have their little negatives. SPi really needs to improve their turnaround time. Sometimes it seems like SPi offers a turnaround time between 24 and 48 hours, but it does not always happen.

The report quality is pretty bad. The transcriptionists come out of India or the Philippines, and we can tell they don't speak English because what we read does not make sense. Up until now, we were addressing other things first, but now we are really getting into the quality. The staff at SPi has gone through changes. The people we work with now are a bit more on the ball and are working hard to improve the quality.

Our physicians complain that they have to make too many edits. They say they could have just written it or typed it faster.

The webpage has been down a lot. We asked SPi to change some things, like unnecessary extra clicks and other technical capabilities. One problem is when the system is in edit mode, the work type or header or signature line turn into codes and the physicians are able to delete those. That can sometimes mess up the entire report, which has been a problem for us. SPi tells us our physicians cannot touch those lines, but it is not like they do it on purpose. Sometimes it is hard to correct everything when the physicians are in a hurry.

We have had different glitches with the system that have been frustrating. Sometimes the documents will not be in the doctor's queue for the signature. The documents are in cyberspace somewhere.

Most of our problems have been corrected, but a few things have not been, such as the issue that the physicians can delete code lines. In addition, the system times out when the physicians are making edits. If the physicians don't save in a certain amount of time, sometimes all of the edits are lost. We have had problems where the phone lines have been down when the physicians have called up to dictate. That even happens in the emergency department. These glitches have improved, which is why we are focusing on the quality more.

The tracking system is not good. We have to change screens when tracking things. SPi was going to develop something new, but they said they could not implement it unless they put it across the corporation. The turnaround time is reasonably good, except for minor glitches. When we have a problem, we can't get an answer. SPi is not responsive.

Project Results – Positive

SPi's work is very good.

I am very pleased with what I have, and I hate to see that this contract will end. In fact, my boss said she agrees with me. She was also glad that we were able to extend our contract when we were able to.

Project Results – Negative

SPi needs to proactively inform our organization of problems. They also need to more effectively resolve problems or issues. The biggest challenge that we have is the accuracy of SPi's transcribed reports.

Relationship – Positive

SPi is a good company to work with. I rarely have to contact them. We can do it all online.

SPi is an easy company to work with. They will contact us when we don't send them enough work. They are very willing to work with organization's idiosyncrasies. When we contact them for help, they don't tell us that it is our problem. Rather, they are extremely proactive. Recently, they called us to inform us of a change that we seemed to have overlooked. It was nice of them to do that.

Relationship – Negative

SPi needs to improve their communication. We actually have a monthly meeting set up with them where we go over every patient account. Sometimes we do not hear about things until that meeting. My preference is to hear about it beforehand so that the issue is not sitting there for a month. Even after having discussed it with them, it does not seem like things have changed. It is discouraging that things have not improved.

ROI and Cost – Positive

SPi's major selling point is that they are low cost. Their turnaround times are pretty good.

Future Outlook – Negative

Turnaround times and quality have been have been very good. That said, we are planning to move to another MTSO vendor next year based on a corporate directive.

SPECIAL QUESTIONS COMMENTARY

If there was an increase or decrease in volume, what has been the main cause?

Our volumes have increased. We have been getting more physicians to do dictation, and more specialties are involved. We are pushing for more dictated notes. Because we have paper charts, we want dictation, since our dictated notes flow into Meditech and are then more accessible.

Our volume has stayed the same, or maybe has increased slightly. The volumes have been down, but we have brought in a whole new hospitalist group of doctors, and it seems like we just have a lot of dictation for them. But there has not been a tremendous change. The hospital volumes were down for a while and we were concerned about meeting our budget, but we have done okay.

A large percentage of our work is done in the ambulatory clinics. We are seeing more electronic documentation there, plus we have Dragon. Also, our doctors are documenting electronically in the hospital. We are pretty electronic, and we do what we can to reduce that dictation volume.

Ratings Comments: Onshore Services

The turnaround time is good, and SPi has a strong Web portal that is easy to use. One challenge is that they have changed account representatives a lot.

Our work is onshore only. We specified that in our contract. In fact, SPi would love to change that so they could give us better coverage, but we have not agreed to that, so SPi is honoring their contract with us.

Ratings Comments: Offshore Services

The quality is pretty bad. The transcription is outsourced to India, the Philippines, and somewhere else. I can tell they don't speak English when something does not make sense. Up until now, other problems with SPi have distracted us.

I cannot tell the difference between onshore and offshore services.

If you are not using offshore services, what is your perception of offshore MT services?

We refuse to do offshore services. Security is not guaranteed.

My perception is that offshore work has poor quality. The physicians also hesitate to use offshore services because of the language barrier.

I do not care for offshore services. I have better quality when our work is onshore, and the communication is much better.

We don't care if the company uses offshore services as long as the report quality meets our expectations.

To be honest, I have not had firsthand experience with offshore services. I have seen some offshore work, and I have seen solicitations from some offshore companies, but I was not impressed with them. I understand that the quality that is coming from SPi's staff in the Philippines is as good as what we would be getting from onshore services. I have been asked to speak with my boss to see if we could change our contract so we could use offshore services and get more help when we need it, but I have not done that yet. However, I don't know if offshore services would change anything, because we have a short-term contract. There is probably not much point in going through the trouble of training people that are only going to be working with us for a few more months.

I do not really care for offshore services. Too many of my friends have lost their jobs because organizations find it cheaper to send work offshore.

I would prefer to keep the work in the states. Sending work offshore adds more loopholes and opens up more risk of spreading information. I have concerns with security and privacy as well as the quality because of the language barrier.

Why did you select this MTSO and who else did you consider?

We didn't select SPi; they bought out the company we were using.

SPi was willing to use our speech recognition and play only an editing role. They also gave us a good price, which we used as leverage to get a better price from our other vendor.

■ STEN-TEL

PROVIDER COMMENTARY

People and Knowledge – Positive

Sten-Tel has done good work for us. We had a quality problem, but the account manager got that resolved. That was good. I have had no problems with the account manager.

Overall, we are happy with Sten-Tel. We have a good relationship with them, and they manage our account pretty well. For a while, I was going through account managers at light speed. Then Sten-Tel finally found one account manager who stuck around. My relationship with her is good. I have access to her when I need it, and she is personable and attentive.

Our account manager is excellent. I can call her if I have someone going on vacation in four hours, and she will work hard to get that person's dictation done before they leave. She has been very accommodating. If the system is going to be down, our account manager will keep me updated on the status and will let me know when the system will be up again. She has been very good to work with.

People and Knowledge – Negative

The only challenge we have had with Sten-Tel is the occasional issue with offshore communication.

Tools and Methodology – Positive

Sten-Tel has a very good turnaround time. They do a pretty good job of resolving issues.

Sten-Tel has very fast turnaround times. They also have good quality control. The reports don't have a lot of errors.

We work well with Sten-Tel. I have seen improvement in both the quality and the turnaround time. The account manager has done well with getting problems corrected quickly.

Sten-Tel is a little better than it used to be. We don't have a lot of problems. We have some issues, but with the amount of work that they do for us, we know some things are going to happen. They were very cooperative in working with us and were adding more transcriptionists when we needed them. They are pretty good.

A few weeks ago, we had an issue with Sten-Tel. There was a penalty, and they adjusted the bill for us. Sten-Tel tries to fix problems as they come up.

Sten-Tel consistently provides good transcription and good turnaround times. We keep Sten-Tel and Focus so if one vendor were to have an issue, we would not be completely shut down on transcription processing.

When we need something done immediately, Sten-Tel is good about getting it done for us. They are good at dealing with emergency situations that come up.

Sten-Tel's executive level and account representatives are being more proactive about our needs. They are putting more effort into monitoring our workloads and maintaining turnaround times.

Tools and Methodology – Negative

Sten-Tel needs to improve the quality of their notes. The quality is simply not acceptable. The quality of the work they send offshore is poor.

Sten-Tel is performing well in most areas right now, except in the quality department. They have overcome a lot of their previous mistakes, such as grammar, blanks, and other rules of proper English. Now, though, they have speech recognition on their end, and that seems to have created some weird problems. For example, I will get a report back that is fully transcribed, except it is missing the identifying data on the top and bottom, meaning there is nothing to identify the date, hospital, patient, or physician. I have a medical record not attached to anyone, and I can't do anything with that. Sten-Tel will have to figure out how to work that one out.

It would be nice if it were easier to reach Sten-Tel on off hours. When there are problems on weekends and holidays, it is tougher to get problems resolved.

The turnaround time is our difficulty with Sten-Tel. We have some dictation that occurs in the evening, and Sten-Tel has a difficult time getting those dictations turned around in a timely fashion. I think this is due in part to the fact that they have a much smaller staff to do those transcriptions after 7 p.m. I have spoken with Sten-Tel about this challenge and I have brought up the issue with their executives. I was told that the problem would be taken care of, but it has not been fixed at this point.

We don't get quite as good quality from Sten-Tel as we do from Focus. I really feel that Focus does a better job for us. The report turnaround time is just fine; I have no concerns with that, but I really feel that the quality of the reports could improve.

Sten-Tel needs to improve their IT services; they are not that good. The process that our physicians go through needs help. Accounts get crossed, and our physicians have to wait to dictate.

We had to take some jobs from Sten-Tel's contract because they were not meeting the turnaround requirements in the contract.

We have had some issues with Sten-Tel, and the communication to get these issues fixed has been a problem. Everything seems like it takes a really long time to resolve.

Sten-Tel has good turnaround times. We have had a lot of issues with their quality, though. There is a marked difference in the quality of the work that they send offshore. It is very poor.

Project Results – Positive

Sten-Tel honors the turnaround time quite well. We give them 24 hours, and they meet that time frame.

Project Results – Negative

We will most likely drop our contract with Sten-Tel. The turnaround time has not been as good as we wanted, and they have made some promises that they have not fulfilled.

We had a situation recently where we ended up getting overcharged because the line count had been significantly raised. Supposedly that process has been fixed, and hopefully everything will be fine moving forward. This seems like an isolated incident, so we are looking at getting back on track. We are just figuring out now how we will be reimbursed for the overcharge. Sten-Tel is no longer my number one choice right now.

Relationship – Positive

The turnaround time is not quite as fast as we would like. At times, Sten-Tel misses the contracted time frame for whatever reason. Sten-Tel is pretty responsive about correcting that, though.

Sten-Tel communicates well with us. They are transparent, easy to get a hold of, and responsive. I have seen that the account manager is having more success getting most of the MTs to follow what we suggest and what our account requires. The MTs have improved.

Sten-Tel does a great job of listening to what we want and need from them. I have never had an issue in getting a hold of Sten-Tel. They have user meetings and really listen to what we have issues with, and then they act on those issues. I really appreciate that. Sten-Tel really works well with the eScription product that we are using.

SPECIAL QUESTIONS COMMENTARY

If there was an increase or decrease in volume, what has been the main cause?

Our volume has increased as more physicians have become more comfortable with voice recognition.

With our growing use of eScripton, we are decreasing the volume of overflow that goes to outsourcing. With the use of eScripton, our volume went from 32 percent outsourced to 13 percent outsourced.

Within a year we are supposed to be going to an EMR. When we do, we will not need as many people in the HIM department so some people's jobs may change to become editors. The goal would be to cut out Sten-Tel.

Our numbers are decreasing. Currently, Sten-Tel has about 350,000, and they are going to continue to decrease. Sten-Tel's average used to be roughly 500,000–600,000. A combination of Dragon, Horizon Ambulatory Care, and eScripton is causing this decrease. We are rolling out Dragon. We are rolling out by departments next year, and we are scheduling through the end of the year. We do offer Dragon to our staff. We actually have some people who want to type out their notes when we get to the EMR, versus having it transcribed. HAC does have a generic transcription where our doctors can dictate into their tablets and have it transcribed.

Ratings Comments: Onshore Services

We were challenged with Sten-Tel not being willing to negotiate our pricing in line with their competitors.

Our challenges with onshore services involve accurately making sure that ADT data goes to the right place. This is extremely frustrating.

Onshore services have standard offerings, but turnaround time is a problem.

Ratings Comments: Offshore Services

We have had occasional communication challenges with the offshore group.

There are more quality issues with offshore services. The services are cheaper, but other things are more challenging.

The QA staff of Sten-Tel did not catch any of the errors in the reports they provided. The accuracy rate was extremely low.

We have a mix of accents here with our providers, and our offshore company does a wonderful job with them. I would say that initially we had to work with the transcriptionists a little more, but they have done almost as well as the onshore people.

We like that the offshore services are cheaper, and I feel that the report turnaround time and quality are acceptable.

If you are not using offshore services, what is your perception of offshore MT services?

There are quality issues with offshore MT services. They do not understand the language and put things in phonetically. At one point, some of our work was accidentally put offshore. The transcriptionists did not know the English language.

I personally am not against sending work offshore, but our organization does not want to send anything offshore.

We keep all clinic dictation outsourcing in the country. I am sure that there are some very good offshore companies, but we prefer to keep the jobs inside the United States.

Why did you select this MTSO and who else did you consider?

We selected Sten-Tel because they were rated as one of the top vendors for outsourcing. We should have done more research on the vendors and done a more thorough comparison. I believe we get what we pay for. We also looked at Encompass and Heartland, but we made the decision to go with Sten-Tel based on price. However, Sten-Tel terminated our contract because they considered our quality standards to be too rigorous. Sten-Tel basically ignored our protocols. For example, they would not follow our patient protocol, like addressing the patient by name in their specific report. They would only put in "patient" and not the name. Additionally, we could not understand why Sten-Tel would provide us with reports containing blanks. If we saw three blanks, we would reject the report, but Sten-Tel would let these go through. Sten-Tel's reports also had too many spelling errors. Sten-Tel told us they had an accuracy rating of 99.9 percent; however, we found too many errors to support this percentage. The error rate was too high for us to continue with them. We actually sat down with Sten-Tel and reviewed some of the reports submitted by them. They could not agree with us on what was considered an error, not even misspelled words.

When we were selecting our MTSO, we considered Transcend and Acusis.

When we were selecting our MTSO, we spoke to some of Sten-Tel's clients and got good reviews. We also brought in Focus for both campuses and looked at some other vendors.

Our manager at the time did all the reference checks and research, and we ended up with both Sten-Tel and Encompass. I guess she liked both of them. We have had them for a couple of years.

■ **SUPERIOR GLOBAL**

PROVIDER COMMENTARY

Sales and Contracting – Positive

The Superior rates are very reasonable. Our contract requires Superior to give advanced notice before they can increase our rates. They try to increase their rates, but since they always forget to give notice, we renew the contract without a rate increase.

People and Knowledge – Positive

Superior has arranged a weekly conference call where we can bring up our concerns. This has led us to be satisfied with their service.

We have a sales representative who we deal with and a manager that we have conference calls with every week, and they are both excellent. I would give them both very high marks.

Superior Global has excellent customer service. They consistently exceed out turnaround time objectives. They have introduced an additional lead on our account to provide a secondary layer of support. They have provided us with a very strong account manager.

Superior Global's IT staff is very supportive. We went through an application upgrade which they entirely managed.

Superior provides a secondary layer or lead person to manage day-to-day operations. That service has been very good, and our sites have appreciated that work. We did have one staffing issue, but it was addressed very quickly. Superior manages our requests very quickly.

Superior has good people working for them. They are organized and responsive, and they stay on top of their accounts. I really like working with Superior.

During our implementation, Superior was extremely helpful with their knowledge of the eScripton platform. They were very available to us.

We recently went offshore with Superior, and the customer service is actually improving. That is not to say the quality is, but the service is better.

I have a direct line to Superior's second in command if we have any issues, and he actually calls us from time to time to see how things are going. Superior responds quickly to issues, and they are always on top of things. We are really happy with Superior.

People and Knowledge – Negative

Superior's quality is pretty good, but they continue to have problems staffing weekends. We actually pulled some work from them and gave it to another company because Superior kept making excuses. We are going to move somewhere else and see if things are better.

Tools and Methodology – Positive

If we get more than two blanks on a report, Superior immediately determines the reason. Our physicians have been pleased with Superior's quality.

Superior has done an excellent job, and we have been extremely happy with them. Their people know exactly what they are doing, and we have had excellent turnaround times from them. I would highly recommend Superior to another facility because this vendor has performed at such a high level.

When we do outsourced transcription, we use Superior. Generally, around 10 percent of our transcription work is done through Superior. The rest of what we do is through our speech recognition and dictation system. There are times when our volumes require more work to go to Superior, and they handle the fluctuations just fine. We have been very pleased with the work being returned to us.

The turnaround time is excellent, and the quality is good. The quality is not excellent, but it is good. When we bring Superior's attention to problems, they act. Overall, the quality is staying about the same. It is hard, because MTs come and go.

We have had a few quality issues, but I think those issues are more on the physician side. Superior is going a good job with quality, but they are not doing a great job.

Superior has some good tools, but we have had some problems getting exactly what we want out of the system. Superior is working hard with us to get the information out that we need.

If I have any questions or concerns, I just have to email Superior, and I know someone will respond. We communicate mostly via email. We do have monthly calls, but we don't have a lot to discuss because Superior stays on top of turnaround times. They also respond to any problems in a very timely manner. So far, working with Superior has been unbelievably smooth when compared with our previous vendor.

Superior has had consistently higher quality since the beginning. They are running over 99 percent accuracy. We do an internal QA on both of our vendors, and we are very pleased with Superior.

I have been really pleased with Superior's quality. They have great attention to detail, and when we present them with evidence of errors, the team leads and account managers get right on the problem. Superior is committed to delivering the product they promised.

Superior has had some challenges with turnaround times lately. We have very short turnaround times for all of our work types, and Superior is a little bit over on one of our work types. If we point the problem out to them, they put more people on it and it is resolved in a matter of hours.

I like Superior and the fact that they stay on top of things. They watch their turnaround times, and they are extremely responsive to any requests we may have. Those two things are a big plus in their favor. Plus, the quality is good too.

I think there is always room for improvement when it comes to quality simply because there is the human error factor. Once in a while, Superior gets a little messy, but the team leaders are very responsive to anything we might find.

Superior communicates very well, and that communication includes both us and their transcription staff. Superior relays our concerns and follows up if necessary. When we make them aware of an issue, they are always ready to put their MTs on full QA. Superior will submit the results of the QA to our staff and let us decide when the MTs will be taken off QA.

Superior does a good job of editing and typing. Their customer service has improved.

Superior has very good turnaround times and quality, and they also have pretty good customer service. We have been pleased with their work.

I have had several MTSO vendors. I got left hanging by another vendor, and Superior jumped right in. Their contract process was very smooth and clean. When Superior says they will turn something around in 12 hours, they do it. Superior has had various people on our account, and they all seem to be very well qualified. The quality of the documents that we get from Superior is very good.

We find that Superior does a better job on the clinical side than on the acute care side. Superior seems to do better when they control the process.

We are happy enough with Superior. They stick to the contractual turnaround times. I have nothing to complain of with the account management.

Superior's quality has gotten 100 percent better. Their quality control behind the scenes has made a big difference. They kept in contact with us when we were having issues and were very sincere about providing what we were paying for. They are really heading in the right direction.

Tools and Methodology – Negative

Superior needs to improve the quality of reports and the turnaround times. The QA staff either is not trained or does not take the time to review reports completely because numerous errors are in the reports. The MTs don't review the reports against the dictation and make the necessary corrections, which causes the physicians to complain. We have resorted to doing our own QA process. The turnaround time is slowly improving as we have been communicating with the vendor more than should be necessary. The reports stay in the pending queue past the contracted turnaround times. The vendor does not appear to be monitoring our report status at various times. The vendor has made some effort to improve their quality and turnaround times, but we are a long way from satisfied.

We have always received good service from Superior, but since we added breast imaging, things have not gone as smoothly. Breast imaging is very specialized, and one word can make a big difference on the report. Superior has changed editors. They are continuing to work with us to improve the quality, but the reports are still not where they need to be. We would like to see Superior bring on more experienced people. We know that they would like mammography to just go away, but our contract is all or nothing. If they cannot provide quality reports for breast imaging, then we will look for another vendor.

One of our sites is all about turnaround time, and we were hearing some physicians complain about the quality of Superior's transcription. We are on a voice recognition system, which is going to make it difficult to find out what the QA issues are. If the voice recognition system is picking something up incorrectly, it has been going on for a year and a half.

Superior is meeting our needs everywhere, except in quality, which is an issue. In my opinion, the dictators are worse than they have been in years past, but I think that is because Superior has fewer experienced transcriptionists. Transcriptionists are retiring, and we are getting new people. Everything is in a production environment, so the new transcriptionists are not getting the training that the older ones had because they are under pressure. I think the industry is creating that problem.

Superior is reactive and not proactive. To me, that is not the way to do business. The quality of Superior's transcriptions is inconsistent, and Superior does not meet turnaround times.

Superior needs to be more timely and do the work as promised. They should check in with the account more instead of just when there are problems.

I have to impose turnaround time penalties on Superior because they never report those kinds of things. We do not know who works for them month to month because their turnover rate is so high.

Superior does not always make the necessary changes to what pre-populates with the dictation. For example, the date of service might pre-populate incorrectly. The clinician dictates it correctly, but it is not changed by the MT. We see that across the board with our transcription vendors.

I would like to see Superior improve the way they manage acute care because they are very difficult to deal with. Superior will not work with us on a high or low census, and they will only allow us a certain number of MTs.

Project Results – Positive

Superior has been a good transcription firm. They have been much better than some of the firms we have used in the past.

Superior's turnaround time has been right on. We send them everything expect our OP reports, and we are very pleased at how quickly they get reports to us.

The up-front preparation was very good. The upper management and executive staff were very knowledgeable about their business. They seem willing to resolve our issues.

Superior has continued to supply us with the same level of service and support that we have been accustomed to over the past year. As a hospital, we have been using them more for dictation support and editing. We are trying to get more and more of our physicians to use voice recognition systems. Superior has been evolving with us to help edit the dictations and keep things moving.

Project Results – Negative

We replaced MedQuist with Superior, and we now wish we had stayed with MedQuist. Superior has very poor turnaround time and quality. They do not do anything special that helps us overcome major issues. They also keep changing their staff; we have had several account managers and several quality review people. The Superior people are not really interested in talking to me about the turnaround time and quality issues.

Relationship – Positive

I find Superior Global to be very easy to work with. They are very good about planning for staffing. We had a large rollout and had no idea how well speech technology would take off. They were excellent with staff planning.

The experience is excellent. What I like best is Superior's responsiveness. I can't ask for more than that. They are not perfect, but they will fix anything for us right away. I enjoy working with them.

We have a quarterly call with Superior. We have completed an escalation process for things like off-hours, and Superior put an additional measure in place to make sure everyone gets the communication.

Relationship – Negative

We never hear from Superior, and we do not get responses from them. They really need to improve their customer service.

ROI and Cost – Positive

Nuance actually recommended that we go with two MTSOs, but to our surprise, our productivity increased so much with eScription that we ran out of work. We were able to handle more work, so it did not make sense to use another MTSO for such a small volume of work. Superior stayed on top of the turnaround times. We had a lot of issues from our experience with another vendor, so we were nervous about them in working with Superior, but we have not seen any of those problems with Superior. We felt comfortable choosing Superior as our MTSO.

Future Outlook – Negative

There are some things going on with Superior, so we are not sure if we would use them again. Superior has faltered several times.

SPECIAL QUESTIONS COMMENTARY

If there was an increase or decrease in volume, what has been the main cause?

ED PulseCheck, Dragon, eScription, and SpeechQ have all contributed to our dictation volume decrease. In radiology, we have such a high degree of self-edit that we don't have much volume. In the ED, we have almost no transcription at one site, while Dragon helps to keep dictation down in another ED. Then eScription helps keep our costs much lower. These technologies all have an impact in reducing our dictation volume.

The Epic EMR has had a significant impact on our volumes and the resulting dictation decrease has brought huge cost savings. Doctors are doing electronic documentation and dictating less. It has been powerful.

With our EMR, we expected a decrease. However, we changed requirements for dictation and added clinicians and specialties.

We have Eclipsys SCM, but the doctors don't use it as much as they could. Even though we thought there would be a big impact on our dictation, we have not seen it. That is not due to the system, but rather is more of a user choice.

Ratings Comments: Onshore Services

Superior has been extremely responsive. They always, I mean always, have someone available to respond to issues. I do not have that availability with other vendors. Since we use an EMR, one of our challenges has been having accurate data; it is very important that the right account number be selected so that the ADT data goes to the right place. Accuracy has been extremely frustrating.

One problem is getting in touch with the vendor after hours. However, in general the quality is good.

Ratings Comments: Offshore Services

I am told our transcription service is supposed to be onshore, but I think some of it is offshore. I just look at some of the transcriptions and I think that an ESL person must have transcribed; however, I could be wrong.

The quality with offshore services can be a challenge.

If you are not using offshore services, what is your perception of offshore MT services?

We have a policy not to go in the direction of offshore services. It has not been an option for us. Offshore services may be cheaper, but they are not the best quality.

We have a mandate in our contract that our vendors can only do domestic work.

We have concerns about the security with offshore services.

Our perception of offshore services is pretty negative. We had a bad experience in the past. Offshore transcriptionists do not get the lingo. The reports do not make sense.

We refuse to do offshore work because we are concerned about reliability.

I do not have a good opinion of offshore services. There is a definite difference in the quality.

We are concerned about security and privacy issues with offshore MT services.

Our administration has mandated that we use onshore services. However, with the advent of speech technology, that may change.

We have used offshore services in the past, and we struggled with them. The quality issues always seemed to be with standard English words.

I told Superior not to send the work offshore. I don't like medical records being in a foreign country.

If there is not a language barrier that affects quality, I do not have a problem with offshore services. I do not care if a monkey is typing records as long as they are correct and timely.

Why did you select this MTSO and who else did you consider?

When we were selecting our MTSO, we considered Transcend, Acusis, and others. We made our decision based on the vendor's price and willingness to take on the volume.

Basically, we relied on eScripton to give us some vendors they thought would fit us and they gave us two vendors. But when we got to talking with those vendors about volume and stuff, we found that just one might be enough. We had decided we were going to start out with Superior Global and maybe go with another vendor further along; but when it became evident that in-house services would be able to handle our volume, we just stayed with one vendor. And when we got to discussing prices, they had the better deal anyway.

We selected Superior because eScripton recommended their services.

We chose Superior because Nuance referred them to us. Superior was willing to step up in a hurry when we were dropped by Central Transcription, and no one else was willing to do that.

Superior was recommended by eScription. We did an RFP process and checked all of the references. Superior came back with very good reviews that were better than the others. I spoke with five or so clients, and the reviews were very positive. So far, the experience has been good.

Oddly enough, I would not have considered them because they offered the cheapest price. That scares me. Our transcription supervisor at the time said that we should not look at the price, but rather focus on how we feel when we talk to them. We sensed that we would have a partnership, and that these would be people we could work with. I have worked with two transcription companies, a very small one and a very large one. I considered them good for different reasons. I thought we shouldn't discard the little guy. My supervisor said she was most comfortable discussing things with them. She felt that they were more responsive and that we should give them a chance, so we did. They were the cheapest, but that would not have been the overall reason for me.

■ TRANSCEND

PROVIDER COMMENTARY

Sales and Contracting – Positive

We have used contract penalties for turnaround time and quality. That has been successful.

People and Knowledge – Positive

Transcend has been excellent. Specifically, our account manager is superb. She has the best attitude. Although I communicate with her often, she never makes me feel like I am bothering her. She is always ready and willing to help. She makes things happen. I know that if I have an issue, she will get it resolved. Also, the turnaround time and quality are very good.

Transcend has a good QA process, has amazing turnaround times with back-end speech, and an account manager who has been good. Transcend people know what I expect of them, and they deliver; when they do not deliver, they have good follow-up to correct any problems. I monitor them very closely, and they know this. I keep on them, and they stay ahead.

Transcend is doing a much better job than before. After numerous conference calls, physician input, and still not meeting expectations, Transcend finally placed a good team on our account, equipped to handle 24-hour transcription.

Transcend seems to have a really good customer service department. When we do pester them for help, they are good to get a lot of resources on our needs. Generally, they have been great and easy to work with. In addition, they work hard to get things fixed in a timely fashion.

We are working with Transcend to come up with new importing ideas to get the information into our EMR. As we transition from doing things the old way, Transcend has been supportive and good to work with.

The turnaround time is excellent. Transcend is always Johnny-on-the-spot with that. And the account management is very good. Transcend is quite easy to work with, and the account manager is on the ball for the most part.

The Transcend account manager has been very supportive as we work through turnaround time and report quality issues. She meets with us every other week in an effort to stay on top of things.

Transcend has very good communication. They are also very timely about responding to and following up on issues. They are in compliance with all our turnaround time and quality requirements.

Transcend has a team assigned to our accounts. This is satisfying for us because Transcend's people are familiar with our physicians. Their turnaround times are excellent. When we have issues, Transcend is quick to resolve them to ensure that we are happy.

I like that Transcend provides us a personal representative who I can call directly and who picks up the phone. Every time I call, he is always available. We have called him at 7 a.m. and at 6 p.m. He is there to help us resolve our issues immediately.

Transcend is a good transcription firm. They are prompt in getting back to us to resolve our concerns. Transcend has a lot of good people who are able to answer our questions.

People and Knowledge – Negative

The only weakness that I have seen with Transcend is their support. They have good people, but it seems that I have to tell them exactly what I need their help with. Basically, I have to know more about support than I need to.

Tools and Methodology – Positive

Transcend is a good company. Our reports get turned around in a timely fashion. Also, their quality tends to be good.

Transcend has excellent turnaround times. They provide good follow-through on problem resolution.

The turnaround time is good. If there is an issue, they respond. Transcend has a 24-hour call center, which is nice.

Transcend is the best. If we have an issue, they handle it quickly. We have called them and have heard from them within the hour. During the weekends, we have had occasions where someone called for a report and Transcend sent the report within 30 minutes.

I will have to say that Transcend has improved recently with their quality, so that is good.

Transcend has had excellent turnaround times as well as great response to our concerns.

Transcend has some nice tools and a transcription platform that automatically interfaces the transcribed document back into our transcription system. With Transcend's technology, we can track the dictation and transcription online, and it gets very detailed. We can see that it was dictated then sent to the transcriptionist's desk and then sent across the interface two hours ago, and we can see whether it was rejected. It is pretty

nice. We can even listen to the audio and verify whether the doctor said this or not. We can go into their system and edit the report, view it, and send it back across the interface.

The turnaround time is excellent, almost always within 24 hours. Everything is going great right now and has been great for a while. We are very happy.

The most positive part of Transcend's services is the turnaround time. We get our documents very quickly. The relationship is fine right now and we are very pleased.

The most important thing is the account management. We can fix turnaround times or quality with a good relationship. The turnaround time is very good, and the quality is fine. We will always have errors, but Transcend's quality is fine.

Transcend consistently produces accurate and timely reports. They also provide great customer service.

I think Transcend is doing a better job than the MTSO we were using that Transcend acquired awhile ago. The service and quality is better now with Transcend than when they were on their own. We had some problems initially, and I think it was because Transcend did not really understand the turnaround times that were in the contract. But things have been pretty good the last couple of months. Transcend also has some problems with weekends and nighttime coverage. But they do have a great call center.

Transcend Services Inc. assigns a personal transcriptionist to our account. The person is always available. If the transcriptionist is on vacation, we are notified in advance and provided with an alternate contact temporarily.

Transcend Services Inc. has a very good QA system. If they put a new person on our account, they monitor that person for several weeks before turning the person loose.

After trying out two other transcription vendors in the last year, we have ended up with Transcend. We made this decision because Transcend can integrate with eScripton. We use Transcend for our overflow transcription needs.

Transcend has excellent customer service. When we have questions on the reports that they send us, they are quick to get back to us to fix any errors.

Transcend is right on things when we have problems. I like the relationship that I have with the regional manager. They take care of our issues and are right on them with an action plan.

Transcend has been good to us. They have made a lot of changes to accommodate us specifically. They have excellent turnaround times.

Transcend's turnaround time is better than what we anticipated. We get our discharge summaries back within 48 hours. This helps us to efficiently discharge our patients.

The reports that Transcend sends us are helpful. In fact, I can have Transcend breakdown the data in the way that I want to analyze it. They are easy to work with.

Transcend has done a tremendous job for us. Their turnaround time is excellent. Also, they make it easy for us to get a hold of someone so we don't have to work through voicemail.

Of our outsourced transcription vendors, Transcend has been our mainstay. Although we have had some rough spots, we have worked through them and Transcend has been great.

Transcend is very good at providing reports, and they have good communication. They are very proactive and they have a very good management team.

Transcend provides very high-quality transcription. Their documents come through without many problems.

Transcend is a reliable partner of ours. They are good about getting our reports to us on a timely basis. When we have seen problems with the report quality, Transcend has made sincere efforts to resolve them. Much of that, unfortunately, is just the nature of the beast. It can be difficult for someone new who is unfamiliar with our doctors to understand their foreign accents.

Transcend has great customer service. They are always willing to help, and they get problems fixed right away.

Transcend came in here by default when they purchased the original transcription company that we employed. Transcend is handling our discharge and transfer summaries, history and physicals, and progress notes. We use multiple transcription services so that we feel we have a backup plan if something should happen to one of our MTSOs.

I would quickly recommend Transcend to a peer or friend within healthcare. Transcend is doing quality work for us.

We feel Transcend is meeting the contractual agreements and obligations they agreed to. They produce good, quality reports. The turnaround time is excellent, usually within hours. Even discharge reports are done and received back in 8–12 hours. In addition, the quality is very good, as we have few rejects. Overall, we are very satisfied with the quality of the work Transcend is providing us.

Transcend handles report corrections very well. Their support team is excellent. Their 800 number is answered by a live person. I get results within the specific time frame for my stat reports. I have direct contact with those in charge of acute and radiology transcription. Transcend also has an online Web consult that allows us to listen and correct little things if the physician needs it. They are a very user-friendly company.

We use Transcend for our overflow ED reports. We have found Transcend to be timely. The quality of the work exceeds our expectations.

Tools and Methodology – Negative

Transcend should do a better job in routing reports to the physician.

We have had some problems with Transcend. They use a different version of the software than we use, so getting them to see the header information that we need them to see is very problematic. That still has not been resolved.

I think Transcend is outsourcing overseas, so I am seeing a lot of reports that I have to change. There are some words that are consistently spelled wrong, and there are some problems with ages. I don't know if that is the doctors putting in the wrong report type, or if they are selecting the wrong report time.

Transcend needs to more carefully edit speech recognition reports for nonsensical phrases. They need to make sure the name of the patient is the same as dictated by the doctor. They also need to be sure that the correct work type is selected.

We have been having quality problems with Transcend. They don't seem to be doing a very good job with their QA process.

We have noticed that Transcend's quality has gone down. I am not sure why. Transcend does not seem to be looking at the reports to make sure that they are correct. Also, we have noticed that Transcend completely omits our macros from the documents. This is unacceptable because we provide them with enough feedback. We are worried that we will be negatively impacted by this. Our doctors are upset about the quality of their reports.

The quality could be better at times.

There have been some struggles, but overall Transcend does a good job. Weekends have been a challenge with turnaround times.

If we had the choice to make over again, I would not recommend using offshore services. All of our errors can be traced to language errors.

Transcend did a great job when they handled 50 percent of our transcription, but things have not gone as smoothly since we fully outsourced the department. Transcend has struggled to meet the agreed upon turnaround times and their report quality has declined. The expected turnaround times are 2 hours, 6 hours, 12 hours, or 24 hours depending on the type of report. Last month, Transcend failed to achieve the 2-hour turnaround time for 32 percent of our H&P stat reports. They failed to make the turnaround time in every major report category by 5 percent or more. Transcend has been trying to turn things around. They have retrained the transcriptionists, and they put the staff on audit to help improve the quality of reports.

I am a little frustrated with Transcend because I think they are a little behind the times. They are currently typing into our system rather than setting up an interface. That means that they are working on our platform, but we are not getting all of the functions we would normally get.

One area that some of our doctors feel that Transcend could improve on is their turnaround time. Some of our doctors get frustrated at times at how long it takes to get their reports back. Some of this could be due to unrealistic expectations on our part.

Transcend still needs to work a little on quality. We have had problems with blanks and typos.

We would like it if reports could fit on one page instead of two pages. I feel that is our only gripe.

I really did not have time to look at anyone else when DeVenture was bought out by Transcend. Transcend is doing okay, but they still have some issues to work out. They have to get better with their turnaround times and they need better quality. We have caught the Transcend people not even editing the transcriptions. There are a lot of little quirky things going on there.

Occasionally, we have some recurring errors. Sometimes these errors are due to technical issues, and sometimes they are due to human error. Either way, I think Transcend needs to work harder to eliminate these errors.

There are a couple of minor things I would like Transcend to address. If the physician enters the wrong work type, sometimes the transcriptionists do not catch it to update the document type. These little things are fairly infrequent. I deal with their team lead and we resolve the problems as they occur.

Project Results – Positive

Transcend has very good turnaround times. They have good response times with support, and they are very friendly. The quality of their reports is very professional. Transcend provides good support and has a great rapport with our management.

The experience with Transcend has been pretty good. There has been good communication between Transcend and us. They always follow up on commitments, issues, and questions. They follow through on problems until they are resolved. I don't even know where they can improve right now because everything is going well.

Transcend Services Inc. has not missed a deadline yet. They are the best vendor we have used. They do not nickel-and-dime us, and they are very patient with our doctors.

Transcend has very good quality, turnaround times, and customer service. They are also very responsive.

Project Results – Negative

The turnaround times are great, but the quality of reports is just not as good as it was a year ago, because Transcend was not sending work overseas then.

Relationship – Positive

Transcend does a pretty good job. They are willing to partner with us. Since we want firms that are onboard with us, we find their willingness to help us to be a positive thing.

We are using Transcend on a limited basis. There have been some recent changes and I was pleased to have one of their executives spend some time with me and our IT leadership. She had a good understanding of transcription and could easily talk through what we needed to work through.

The communication with Transcend has been excellent. Our account manager is really great, and I think that as long as the communication is open and there is transparency, then there is nothing that we can't resolve. We have a very open dialogue, and that is important. I can call my account manager and get a hold of her or get a return phone call the same day. This just makes it easy to work with Transcend.

I am having a very good experience with Transcend. The relationship is very good. The account manager is excellent. She has very good communication and is very accommodating to our requests and needs.

Transcend is the best transcription vendor we have worked with. We have worked with mom and pop shops and have worked with the big vendors. Really, we feel like we have a partner with Transcend.

Transcend is stellar in everything that they do. They are willing to do everything that I ask of them. They are good to incorporate the suggestions that we give them.

Transcend listens to us and responds to our problems and concerns in a timely manner. The Transcend executives are responsive and accessible and take an interest in working with us. We are very satisfied with the support we receive from everyone in the company. They are very interested in keeping our business and show this by their attitude and actions.

Twice a year executives check in with us. Our experience is that they take a personal interest in us. They do a very good job of situational management. We call our account representative, and she farms out the responsibilities to her team. It is a perfect situation for us. We do not have to deal with multiple people at Transcend.

Transcend has very good customer service, They are friendly, responsive, and timely.

ROI and Cost – Positive

There isn't any nickel-and-diming, and Transcend keeps all of their promises. They stick to the budget and quoted price. In fact, they are not even raising our prices since we renewed the contract. I would definitely recommend this product to my peers.

Transcend meets or exceeds our turnaround expectations. The quality has remained high. We have appreciated the fact that they have not raised their prices. We get a good service at a reasonable price.

Future Outlook – Positive

We are having ongoing issues with Transcend outsourcing some work to contracted MTs. The contracted MTs don't have the same level of quality. We can actually put it in our contract that we don't want this to happen, but we are working through that right now. Transcend is putting in some quality controls and implementing some quality initiatives to rectify this. So hopefully it will not come to putting something in the contract that would halt this outsourcing. I think that Transcend is earnestly trying to resolve this quality problem, and they have been good about responding to us. I am hopeful we will resolve it.

SPECIAL QUESTIONS COMMENTARY

If there was an increase or decrease in volume, what has been the main cause?

Our radiology physicians have started to use the services more than they did before. We are not sure why that is. Perhaps it could be that they feel that it has become easier to work with Transcend.

Our overflow dictation has decreased because of our use of eScription. We went from outsourcing 32 percent of our work to outsourcing to 13 percent of our work in the last year.

We are really encouraging physicians to dictate as opposed to hand writing reports, especially H&Ps because those are more accessible in an electronic format. Electronic documentation is better for patient care. We have also added some services and those services are growing.

We have physicians using Dragon and documenting in Horizon Ambulatory Care (HAC), which has caused the decrease in transcription volume. Physicians either dictate using Dragon and type out their notes or dictate into the encounter and have that transcribed. Eventually, the physicians will all have to use either Dragon or the HAC dictation system.

The volume of transcriptions has gone down because physicians are now documenting in the system for all ER visits and we are using more voice recognition for discharge summaries. We have been doing 100 percent order entry since last summer.

Patients are sicker this year. We are one of the few in our area that has seen an increase. We also have increased patient satisfaction, so more patients are choosing to come to us.

Ratings Comments: Onshore Services

Transcend does an excellent job of getting us the reports when we need them.

Our turnaround time is approximately two hours for our reports. We have all of our reports online for viewing.

Our vendor is meeting the contractual commitments and our needs and expectations.

Whenever we need help, Transcend is there to see us through it.

Transcend's turnaround time has been one of things I appreciate the most. We get the reports when we need them.

We have a lot of foreign dictators at the hospital, so there is a problem with the transcriptionists understanding the doctors. The transcriptionists have to correct this, which is a challenge.

We would love to get 100 percent report quality from Transcend, but we realize that that is unrealistic. With all of the different dialects and accents of the different physicians, even I have a difficult time knowing what is being said.

We are getting what we expected from Transcend. It is a comforting for our physicians to know that their reports get to them quickly.

Transcend has issues with quality and, to a degree, with turnaround.

Transcend has done a remarkable job over the time we have had them in resolving any issues with turnaround time or report quality.

The report quality and turnaround time have slipped since we started fully outsourcing our transcription work to Transcend. The account manager has been very supportive and is working to improve the performance.

Transcend has been a good firm to work with. We have never had problems with turnaround time or report quality.

We have had zero complaints from physicians for two years running. Transcend has unparalleled service.

Ratings Comments: Offshore Services

There is a problem with language translation when the vendor uses offshore services. There are differences in spelling and names.

If you are not using offshore services, what is your perception of offshore MT services?

I would prefer not to use offshore firms. Privacy and security issues are the major reasons we would not consider offshore work.

We ensured that Transcend was contractually bound to keep the work in the U.S. We do not like the idea of having our reports farmed out to others in India, particularly with the economy the way it is.

I would prefer not to send work offshore because the quality of the work is not as good.

We do not want any part of offshore work. We have a sister hospital that used offshore and had some bad outcomes.

I would prefer to keep our transcription onshore. We need the work in the U.S., and I am concerned about security.

In general, offshore services would be acceptable to us. The security has improved to the level we would trust our information being sent out. Offshore services are also probably cheaper.

My preference is to keep the jobs in the states. I do not want work sent overseas.

I am not too excited about offshore work. My thoughts are that we should keep jobs in America.

We went with Transcend specifically because they were an onshore business. We would never consider offshore services for any reason.

I have not personally had any experience with offshore services. The thing that keeps me away from offshore services is the fact that we lose control if there is some kind of HIPAA breach. The quality is probably fine, and I am sure there is a cost savings. However, I am worried from a HIPAA standpoint if a disgruntled employee tries sabotage.

I am concerned about offshore services meeting HIPAA laws. The laws do not apply to offshore services, so confidentiality could be breached.

I am worried about doing any of our work offshore. There are issues dealing with privacy and quality that we just do not want to deal with that come through sending this work overseas. Not having full control of the reports we send is worrisome.

I prefer to keep the work onshore. My concerns are around security and privacy. I think it is more difficult to ensure that patients' records do not get out into the public domain.

I would prefer not to use offshore. I think the quality is affected and I am concerned about the security of information.

I am concerned about having transcription work going offshore because of the privacy and security issues I have seen. Different countries have different laws. Our country does not have the ability or jurisdiction to enforce our privacy laws. This lack of protection could lead to a public mistrust of full disclosure of their medical history.

I am not in favor of offshore work because of the lack of control over the quality.

I never want my transcription going offshore. There is the language barrier that I don't want to worry about. I also worry about coordinating support issues with very different time zones.

We would not allow our transcription to be done offshore due to compliance, security, and quality issues that I would expect to occur.

We will never do offshore services. We are concerned that HIPAA laws will not be kept.

I have not had any exposure with offshore services. As long as the report quality and the turnaround time meet my expectations I don't think I would have a problem with it. My biggest concern would be sending jobs overseas when we have people here who need them.

I would never use offshore transcription. With what is going on in India and Pakistan right now, one could not afford any kind of breach.

Offshore transcription is as good as the weekend supervisory coverage. If they do not have QA people working 24/7, the transcriptions are not okay.

From a cost standpoint, I think we could save some money, but my personal preference is to keep people employed in this country.

I have worked with people who used offshore and were not happy with the quality.

Why did you select this MTSO and who else did you consider?

We looked at Transcend because we saw what other hospitals we were familiar with were doing.

We have been trying to find an outsourced vendor that would work well with eScription. We tried MedQuist and then Sten-Tel, and both have been disappointing. Our volume will increase as we add more progress notes.

We went with Transcend because they were referred to us by corporate.

We looked at Focus and Breitner. We had to choose a vendor who did eScription.

■ TRANSOLUTIONS

PROVIDER COMMENTARY

People and Knowledge – Positive

Transolutions notifies us about a problem before we even notice it. With this information, we can inform physicians about the issue before they ask us what is going on. The Transolutions customer service has been great and smooth.

We have had a lot of stability with our account representative. She has been our representative since we started using Transolutions several years ago. She is a former MT, so she is knowledgeable regarding what the MTs do. She is also quick to respond and works hard to get things resolved.

Everyone I communicate with via phone or email at Transolutions is very helpful. If there is a problem, they respond quickly. Generally, their turnaround time is good.

Our account representative has been great to work with. She is responsive and touches base with me once a week to ensure that we are happy. She takes care of every care that I have right away. Transolutions also does a very good job with turnaround times and quality.

I view my relationship with Transolutions as a partnership. Their management team is very responsive to me and my requests. I am also understanding of them at times when we are delivering an unusually high volume of dictations and they take a little longer to get the reports turned around.

Transolutions has improved over the years. They switched to a new system a while back. Since that time, the turnaround has been excellent. They get reports to us within 24 hours. Transolutions returns the records to us within that time frame 100 percent of the time. The quality also is very good. I can't say that we have any returned reports. We spot-check reports for quality, and we never have had any major issues. The account manager is also very good. She follows through and is very helpful, so she is dependable. I am very pleased with her efforts and the overall relationship with Transolutions. Other than reducing the price, I really can't think of anything they could do better.

The support we receive has improved significantly in the last several months. We now have a support representative assigned to us as an account manager. As a result, we are able to get faster response and resolution to questions and problems that develop from day to day. The account representative assigned to us is very dedicated, talented, and conscientious. As a result, we enjoy our dealings with the company much more than in the past.

The quality we receive from Transolutions is consistent and of high quality. It definitely meets our needs and expectations. Our physicians and staff are satisfied with the turnaround times and the quality and quantity of work that Transolutions provides us.

The Transolutions customer service department is excellent. Our assigned account representative keeps in touch with us on a regular basis and does a good job of keeping us informed as to what is happening within the company and with our site.

We have an excellent account manager from Transolutions who is always on the ball. She gets back to us in a timely manner, stays on top of issues through resolution, and is a pleasure to work with. I wish I could say the same for their customer service, but it is not quite as good.

The Transolutions representative that we work with is kind of the face of the company, and she is simply outstanding. She is incredibly responsive; I have never seen a better account manager.

People and Knowledge – Negative

We have used Transolutions for a long time. In the last year of services, they had staffing problems because they lost staff. They had a hard time getting people to fill our needs. In some cases, we had to wait weeks for reports.

I would like the customer support to have a better understanding of how a hospital runs and be more familiar with medical terminology. Some of their questions are odd because of their lack of healthcare experience. Over time, they have improved somewhat in this area.

The customer support is not as responsive as my dealings with the management. They are slower to respond to issues and don't seem to have the same level of urgency that we would like.

Their customer support has been improving, but I still do not totally trust them. Their representatives need to be trained a little more so they know more about their technology and transcription in general.

Transolutions has difficulty providing good turnaround time on our ED reports. In addition, the verbiage is quite different in the ED, and Transolutions has difficulty getting the verbiage put on the report correctly, especially from our residents because the vendor forgets that there are different resident statements that we use in our ED. We are trying to work through this problem with Transolutions, but so far we have not had success.

The Transolutions customer service is not as knowledgeable about the system as I would like them to be, so when we have technology problems, they are less helpful. The

customer service is pretty responsive, but they seem to need better training. However, I have seen improvement in their knowledge, which is good.

Tools and Methodology – Positive

Transolutions has come a long way in the last few years. They have become a true corporation with processes and training.

Transolutions not only provides transcription, but also the dictation systems. Our physicians dial into their system to dictate. That is one of the reasons why we decided to start outsourcing. Transolutions takes care of all the technology. Also, they are in the process of implementing M*Modal for speech recognition.

I don't get any complaints from my medical staff about Transolutions. That is a ringing endorsement to the work that Transolutions is doing for our organization. They are doing a good job with quality, and the turnaround times have been stable.

Transolutions makes me look good. Recently I had an incident where one of our surgeons decided that he wanted to use certain templates. I contacted Transolutions, and within two or three days the templates were created. The surgeon was very impressed, and that reflected positively on me. The doctor was very happy.

We feel the quality of the transcription services we outsource has improved significantly in the last six months. Apparently, Transolutions has been able to hire, train, and retain quality people. As a result, we feel the accuracy and quality are around 98 percent. This is extremely good. We have decided to increase the volume of work that we send to Transolutions.

Transolutions is more than meeting our turnaround times and expectations. We are receiving our ED reports and OR notes back within 12 hours. In addition, we now receive our discharge summaries back within 24 hours. These are the time frames that we contracted for, and Transolutions is meeting those contractual obligations. On occasion, they deliver services even faster. Overall, we are very satisfied with the performance from Transolutions.

Transolutions meets our turnaround time for documents. They resolve issues as quickly as possible. They communicate with our managers as necessary.

The strength that Transolutions has right now lies in the quality of the transcription. The transcriptionists consistently have good grammar, spelling, and lack of blanks. I am pleased with the quality more than anything else.

Transolutions has given us great customer support. They have provided fast and hands-on problem resolution. They are attentive to our needs and are willing to address them. They have been prompt in response to our requests.

Transolutions is willing to work through technical issues. Whether the issues are on their side or our side, there is no difference in how Transolutions works for resolution.

Transolutions has very good quality and turnaround times. We have no issues there at all.

We had some special needs, and Transolutions built custom programming to meet our needs, which was really nice.

Transolutions has good quality and good customer service. When we need to make changes, they are very quick. They also keep us posted on changes that they are making.

Transolutions has excellent turnaround times and quality. I have access to all of the reports and administrative tools that I need. If I cannot get something, Transolutions will do it for me.

Tools and Methodology – Negative

At times, Transolutions does not get our work back within the right time frame. This causes staffing problems on our end. Sometimes we have to transcribe the notes ourselves because we need them.

The quality from Transolutions could be improved. They struggle with terminology and with making sure things make sense. We would rather have blanks than have them guess.

If Transolutions places a new transcriptionist on our account, we can often tell it has occurred. We see more blanks, and the new transcriptionist has difficulties in following standards and processes and procedures.

The Transolutions technology is a little weak. I don't get many reports, and I can't see the work that Transolutions is doing. I want to know statistics for and more about transcription for individual doctors. I also want better printing capabilities and the ability to see and have more reports.

We have asked Transolutions for several things, especially in reporting. In the system we had before, we could do instant reporting. We would fill out the parameters, and the system would spill out the report. We do not have that with Transolutions. We have to go through the account manager, who gets us the reports we need. We miss being able to pull them up instantly. Before, we had the control over the system and we could do what we wanted. With Transolutions, we are very limited in what we can pull up and view, which makes things more difficult.

Getting the documents from Transolutions into Meditech is iffy. We used to get the documents as they were being sent, but right now they are sent through batches, and we get a batch every 15–20 minutes.

We have had some technical issues with Transolutions. They were going to move their equipment from their headquarters to another location, and they told us it would cause some downtime. We prepared for it, but then they did not make the move. We experience little annoyances like that. We have also had issues with our connection to the system that sends us our reports.

Project Results – Positive

After our experience with our previous transcription vendor, at first we were skeptical about what Transolutions was promising us. Surprisingly, they have been wonderful. Their report quality has been good.

In the start-up phase, we had some bumps, but Transolutions worked with us. Migrating everything from our previous transcription vendor was difficult.

The quality of the transcription has been very good. All work is performed onshore. Transolutions is much better compared to my previous MTSO. Since we switched to Transolutions, we rarely hear from physicians who are complaining about quality issues. Transolutions is putting their focus on getting experienced MTs who can produce quality work. They are paying those individuals a higher wage than others. Part of the pay package is an incentive program that is based on quality. The higher the quality, the bigger the bonus.

Transolutions has made significant improvements with turnaround times. They installed a new platform called APEX. Since that change, we have seen dramatic improvements in the turnaround times. The MTs transcribe and manage their workflow through this tool. Transolutions has added staff, which has helped.

We are very happy with Transolutions. They are reasonably priced, and we recommend them to other people who are considering a transcription partner. They have excellent turnaround time and quality.

Relationship – Positive

The leadership at Transolutions is very responsive to our needs. They always strive to work with us, assist our customers, resolve problems, or take on additional work. They are very dependable. Transolutions has been working with us for a while, and our experience has been consistent throughout that time.

Transolutions works with us as a team to provide services for our organizations. We don't feel it is an us-versus-them mentality. Rather, we are partners. Once a week, we

meet with them to talk about issues to resolve. This level of communication is extremely important for us.

Transolutions has been a fantastic company to work with. We are very pleased with our relationship and with their work.

ROI and Cost – Negative

Transolutions could improve two things. First, the price needs to be more competitive. Second, they could have better consistency in delivering turnaround time.

I think pricing is an issue with Transolutions. The price per line is too high, and Transolutions needs to quickly move towards voice recognition so they can reduce that price.

Future Outlook – Positive

We continue to have connectivity issues with Transolutions. We look forward to working with them in the future to satisfy more of our needs.

■ TRANSTECH

PROVIDER COMMENTARY

Sales and Contracting – Positive

The contracting with TransTech was a breeze. I found them on the Internet, and it was just a good fit. The whole process was pretty painless.

People and Knowledge – Positive

TransTech is very responsive to their clients' concerns. If I ever have any problems, they reply very quickly. They have pretty good turnaround times.

We had Superior before, and I would say that TransTech is better in every way. The turnaround time and quality are great. The account management is very good. I have a good relationship with my TransTech representatives.

The transcriptionists are not perfect enough in catching all of the words that need editing, but they are the best we have had and they respond quickly when informed about issues. Also, some reports are left locked but are not corrected. The supervisor should follow up with this at the end of a shift. TransTech responds quickly when informed about this, though. The number of instances of these two issues is very small, less than one percent. I am not sure we could find a better company.

TransTech has their own technical support that is skilled. Usually we need to send only one email to get the issue resolved. Any technical issues are rare. TransTech is very customer friendly. They listen and follow up rapidly. They are very professional.

TransTech has been great. The account manager has been excellent, and the support has been very good. We had a problem with improper formatting of documents, as each radiologist prefers his documents a certain way, but we were able to clear that up. Also, the turnaround time is very good, and the quality is fine. TransTech is very easy to work with, so we don't really have any issues.

Tools and Methodology – Positive

TransTech is very timely in getting our data back to us. They are easy to work with. They respond quickly if we have a question. They have good quality. It took a while to get the quality to the level that we wanted, but they are there now.

Our practitioners dictate into the phone using Dictaphone software, and the voice file is then sent to our transcription team. We have been very pleased with TransTech's quality and performance. We have an incentive program in place to encourage our physicians to use speech recognition, since this expedites the process for medical records. If the

majority of our providers use speech recognition, we get a discount per line from TransTech.

TransTech has very good follow-through. When there are issues, they follow up right away. Their turnaround times and quality are excellent. I love them. I would not go with anyone else. They are very customer friendly and thorough. They will even look into things that are not their responsibility in terms of our application. They are all about satisfying the customer's needs.

TransTech has great turnaround times. Their error ratio is very low. They have adapted to our physicians. We have a diverse group of physicians, and TransTech seems to be familiar with the way physicians dictate. TransTech gets complex things right. The quality is really outstanding.

TransTech has great customer service. They are eager to rectify a situation if it arises. Also, they are on it if we have a rush job. The biggest thing about TransTech is their customer support.

The turnaround time from TransTech is almost always within the contracted time frame, and the quality has been good.

TransTech is very autonomous; the process requires minimal effort on our part.

TransTech is handling all of our radiology that is not completed by the voice-activation system. We have voice actuation in-house, but we send a lot of ours out. We have a contract with the radiology group, so anything that can't be handled by the radiologist on-site is sent out.

TransTech communicates very well with us. They do a good job at problem resolution, and they are quick to correct mistakes and ongoing issues. We have been very happy with TransTech's performance.

TransTech is very responsive. When we give them feedback, they adhere to it right away. If something needs to be corrected, TransTech gets right on it.

TransTech is consistently meeting the turnaround times, which is important to me. The error rates that they have are consistently low, and that speaks to their quality. TransTech responds to issues in a timely manner. That responsiveness is what I feel really sets them apart from other vendors.

We get an excellent turnaround time with TransTech. The majority of our doctors use Dictaphone for speech dictation.

TransTech has excellent turnaround times. Their quality could use some improvement, but they are pretty good about responding to issues.

TransTech reports when they are not meeting our turnaround times. There is a financial penalty for that, and I do not have to ask them to do it; they just do it. TransTech does a good job of keeping their promises.

TransTech has excellent turnaround times for the volume that they do for us. That is the most important thing to me.

TransTech's turnaround time is excellent, and the quality of their transcriptions is very good. We have some small issues from time to time, but overall, working with TransTech is very good.

TransTech has very good turnaround times. Every day I hear physicians say that something came through that they just dictated. Anytime I need anything, TransTech is on it and takes care of things quickly. I can email or call customer service, and they are very easy to deal with. One of the people I deal with drops everything to help me.

Tools and Methodology – Negative

As far as the technical aspect of TransTech's program, it could do more. We would like it to do a better job of generating reports. Also, TransTech could do more training on the software so that when there are upgrades or changes, we are ready.

TransTech's quality is not all that desirable. Their QA needs to be strengthened. They run all of our reports through their speech engine, so everything is all populated. A lot of times they do not catch mistakes.

Project Results – Positive

TransTech is really good about providing value. If they do not hit turnaround times, and we send them documentation supporting it, they take it off the bill. They are very good about that. I have worked with four transcription companies. TransTech goes above and beyond with customer service to ensure we are getting our money's worth. They are very accommodating.

The overall quality of the transcription is excellent. We have had very few issues with TransTech. They are very responsive to errors and make an effort to educate my staff on any new functionality.

We use PowerScribe for about 30 percent of our transcriptions, and that has been really successful having TransTech playing the editing role.

TransTech has been very good for us. Our radiologists all use PowerScribe, so we are sending almost all of our work to TransTech to be edited if the doctor chooses to not

self-edit. This has been very successful for us. We only send documents to be transcribed by them if PowerScribe is down or otherwise not working.

The formatting from TransTech is good, and we have no problems at all. The reports meet the doctor's expectations and look good. We are happy with TransTech's work.

We use Nuance PowerScribe for a large portion of our work, so TransTech is mostly doing editing. TransTech is very important to our workflow, as are the RIS, PACS, and PowerScribe systems. TransTech fulfills its part in that workflow by getting us our documents back quickly and with good quality.

I highly recommend TransTech. Their work is based on voice actuation, so everything is much simpler with TransTech. Their turnaround time and quality are excellent, and our relationship with them is very good. I am very pleased with TransTech. We are a smaller account for them, but they take very good care of us.

Relationship – Positive

TransTech has strong leadership. They stay in touch and want to know how things are going. TransTech also addresses our issues.

TransTech is a good company to work with. They are always helpful.

TransTech's executive team is very engaged. We have regular conference calls with them, and they are very willing to resolve issues.

Future Outlook – Positive

TransTech has gotten much better over the past year. In fact, we are thinking of expanding, and they are the company we are going with. They are now maintaining turnaround times. We have had a decrease in the number of complaints over their quality. They have really seemed to step it up.

We will not be making any changes for several years since we signed a multi-year contract with TransTech.

SPECIAL QUESTIONS COMMENTARY

If there was an increase or decrease in volume, what has been the main cause?

Our dictation decrease has mainly been due to PowerScribe. Radiologists can either self-edit or have TransTech edit for them. On the flip side, our volume is increasing because of more patients.

We have had PowerScribe in radiology for a bit. Initially, it drastically reduced our amount of transcription. Now, however, volume stays about the same. If there is work that the doctors don't do, or if PowerScribe is down or running slowly, then we send transcriptions to TransTech.

We have increased our volume as more departments are joining the dictation pool. Our aim is to have 70 percent of our clinicians using speech recognition, because we receive a \$1.00 discount per line if we achieve 70 percent. The 70 percent, however, does not specify if this is the volume of our practitioners on staff or if 70 percent of the volume of work is done by practitioners.

PowerScribe is now in such high use, that our volumes have gone down. TransTech only does our radiology, and since we have PowerScribe, we only send them 100,000 or so lines a year.

Ratings Comments: Onshore Services

The only challenge that TransTech has is the Dictaphone technology.

We have had very good results with TransTech.

We love TransTech because they work so well with the voice actuation.

Ratings Comments: Offshore Services

The offshore quality is not quite as good as onshore. Sometimes there are grammar issues.

If you are not using offshore services, what is your perception of offshore MT services?

We had offshore services in the past. The physicians could tell a difference in the quality.

I do not agree with offshore services. I think the language barrier affects quality.

I do not have a problem with offshore services as long as the turnaround time and quality are there.

We are not fond of offshore services. We had a former MTSO firm that was doing offshore services, and the quality was not very good.

I would fight against using offshore services. The language barrier is something I would never go for.

I have used both onshore and offshore. Offshore takes a lot more diligent work. You really have to monitor it closely and redo work. With onshore, you do not have to monitor it as closely.

Our previous vendor did offshore services, and it was a disaster for us. The network connections were unreliable.

When discussing offshore MT services, our HIPPA privacy officer says absolutely not.

I do not have a problem with offshore services as long as the quality is there.

I think offshore services have a place in the industry. However, when we tried an offshore company, we were not satisfied with the results.

I do not personally care if the transcription is done offshore or not if the reports are received in a timely manner. Our contract, however, stipulates that we use only onshore services.

We would not allow offshore transcription because quality is a concern.

Why did you select this MTSO and who else did you consider?

I found our current MTSO through the internet. The whole process was easy; the contracting and sales were smooth, and they seemed a good fit.

TransTech is an onshore vendor, and their services are reasonably priced. They also came well recommended.

I had a relationship with TransTech at a prior facility.

Our vendor was recommended by Nuance, who makes our speech recognition system.

■ WEBMEDX

PROVIDER COMMENTARY

People and Knowledge – Positive

The support from Webmedx has been very good. My local IT people can handle practically anything, but if something major comes along, I defer to Webmedx and they do a great job.

Webmedx has an excellent IT service representative who responds very quickly to our issues. Likewise, the management responds very quickly to any issues.

Our account manager has been very responsive. She doesn't drop the ball. When we call with something, she is on top of it. If it is going to take a while to get the issue resolved, she will keep in touch with us to keep us informed of what is happening.

Webmedx is very responsive. The people I have dealt with have been attentive. Webmedx also has very good quality transcription and good turnaround times. I have been very happy with my account manager as well.

The account manager from Webmedx is great. She helps with any concerns I have, but I don't have many. We are on the same wavelength. If we have an issue with an MT, we process that through the service department and our issue is taken care of quickly. We have seen a few more minor issues this year, but we knew there would be an influx of new MTs as Webmedx recently bought a transcription company. Our QA here runs very smoothly. I like their software since it is so easy to use.

We wanted to change a few things. Webmedx used to giving a certain type of report to us each quarter, but I really felt that I needed it monthly. Webmedx is very customer oriented. They just do their jobs.

When we sent our work to Webmedx, they hired all of our MTs. That does not happen too often anymore. Webmedx understands the advantages to hiring employees from the facility. They worked very closely and diligently with the HR department, which made my job so much easier.

If we run into a minor issue, our QA coordinator takes care of it. If the issue is more complicated, we do a song and dance and get it taken care of. Webmedx is a silent partner in our need to provide good patient care, and that is the way I want it.

Webmedx really works hard on their report quality. If they do not get it right, they work very hard to get it right. Their turnaround time is outstanding. Their account managers are great. I get such a great response from everyone in that company.

The Webmedx support is not always perfect, but they do not ignore us. They act quickly on every issue that comes up. Webmedx wants us to be happy, and they never dole out excuses.

The staff involved with our account is pretty good. They are not pushy, and they are there when we need them.

Webmedx is customer service driven. They respond quickly to system changes or needs.

Tools and Methodology – Positive

We still have minor turnaround time issues, but the vendor's work is so good that we can work with that problem as they continue to grow and make inroads with turnaround times.

Webmedx has done a very good job for us. We rarely have to send things back due to quality issues and rarely have issues with their turnaround times. If they miss a turnaround time, they actually will give us money back, but that rarely happens. They are a little more expensive than our last MTSO, but they also provide better services.

Webmedx always has great turnaround times. We don't have any issues there. I get nice reports from them.

Webmedx has very good tools. I am able to access a lot of the information but if I cannot, they are very good about getting things for me.

We are delighted that Webmedx has continued to enhance the excellent Web-based administrative tools they inherited from TransHealth. This tool allows us to pull up dictations by job number, physician, and work type, and we can view jobs that are waiting in the backlog. The physicians can quickly pull up specific dictations by job number. We can see when a server has gone down and proactively identify the issue. This wonderful tool allows us to be proactive instead of reactive, which we love.

The report turnaround time is excellent. The progress notes are ready in two hours, even though the turnaround time in the Webmedx contract states eight hours. H&P and discharge summaries are done almost immediately.

Webmedx is very responsive and has very good customer service. Their quality is average or above compared to other companies that have worked for us.

Webmedx is meeting or exceeding all of our expectations. The report turnaround time is excellent. Their ability to resolve problems is good; plus, the Web-based administrative tools are easy to use. We love having the ability to run daily and weekly reports. The invoices are straightforward, and we have direct access to the CEO at any time.

We love the people that work in the Webmedx customer service solution center. It only takes a quick call to get a dictation that is hung up in QA released. Webmedx always answers the phone when we call. We never get a voice mail service telling us to leave a message.

Webmedx has a big challenge. We are converting to a new EHR, and Webmedx is doing an awesome job getting the implementation plan done.

I think the turnaround time is good. I think the response when we call the Webmedx solution center is pretty quick.

Webmedx is a work in progress. It has been beneficial to work with them. They have really good customer service. They get right to us on any concerns that we have. Their transcription is pretty much standard. We set parameters on what is acceptable for blanks, and they match those expectations. There are very few quality errors. It is very rare to have a critical transcription error.

The Webmedx Web-based tools are fantastic. We can quickly check on the status of a report and push reports to a higher priority when necessary. With the help of the Webmedx solution center, we can get important reports done quickly.

Webmedx works hard to meet the turnaround time criteria in the contract, and they rarely slip. Sometimes there may be a lag over a weekend, but normally what appears on paper as a turnaround time issue ends up being a situation where we did not work issues in the external queue.

We use Webmedx as our overflow vendor. If I have work on a Friday that needs to be completed by Monday, I send Webmedx the data and they have it back to us on Monday morning. Our in-house transcription team also uses the Webmedx platform for their transcription. In addition, I have transcriptionists who work from home and use the platform via a dial-in connection.

Webmedx provides excellent quality and has been extremely responsive to our requests.

The turnaround time is the most positive aspect of the service. When we make an inquiry or need some help, Webmedx is quick to respond. They also come up with suggestions for improvement.

Tools and Methodology – Negative

The tools we receive from Webmedx are lacking. They are just now starting to get me tools that I can use.

When Webmedx has new transcriptionists on our account, we can tell. They could use a little better training out of the gate.

I think dealing with the demographic information on a report leaves something to be desired. The number of blanks on reports also leaves something to be desired.

I would like to see Webmedx do a lot more on their quality reviews. They could expand that. We have some wish lists for them to set the security on the system as to who has access to what. We would like that set up by transcription work type.

Transcription errors are an issue.

Project Results – Positive

We have been with Webmedx for three years. They have definitely lived up to our expectations. We would definitely buy from them again. I have recommended Webmedx. The executives do check in. They have a great support team and are very responsive.

The quality is good, and the turnaround time is adequate. The customer service is fast to respond.

Relationship – Positive

Webmedx has their executive leadership regularly touch base with us. They seem to be technology driven and know the industry well. Their problem resolution is really good. They are very good about working with us to change their game in accordance with what we want them to do.

Webmedx's customer service responds with quick action to any problem, which is important to our organization, though I would be the first to admit that they are not perfect. We understand that their top people must sometimes take time off for vacation or illness, but Webmedx always assigns a quality person to our account to take care of problems as needed.

It is a joy to work with Webmedx. They inherited a company, TransHealth, which had been built on a good foundation. They always treat customers as they would want to be treated by providing the best possible service. We wish our other vendors would follow that same philosophy.

We had Webmedx and an offshore vendor when I joined, and the quality was not good with either. When I talked to Webmedx and told them about the issues, they were totally surprised. Since giving them the feedback, there has been a 180-degree turnaround. The Webmedx CEO listened intently and corrected the issues. The medical director cannot remember a complaint regarding Webmedx services.

ROI and Cost – Positive

The contract from Webmedx is very concise. I can see exactly what is happening. I don't have 10 or 12 different line rates. I am not nickel-and-dimed to death for using their voice line; there is no extra charge for that.

We are saving money by using Webmedx. I like their approach. They have very good turnaround times. Everything they said that they would do, they have done. Webmedx seems to be very customer focused.

I think the pricing is competitive. Any time Webmedx can leverage technology to improve the cost, I will be fine with that.

We are delighted with Webmedx. Every promise made by the Webmedx sales representative during the initial sales presentation has been kept. He promised that their service would be better and cheaper than that of our old MT service. The report turnaround time is spot on and the quality is excellent; plus, we are saving over \$10,000 per month.

ROI and Cost – Negative

We have continuous quality issues with Webmedx. Their price is higher than what we have seen from other firms. Also, they do not have a radiology dictation platform. This had made the transcription process more cumbersome than it needs to be.

We do not like the way that Webmedx slams us with an annual cost of living increase each year without notice. We acknowledge that there is a clause in the contact that allows them to bump up their fees annually, but we would prefer to negotiate the amount of the increase. We expect the increase to be three percent this year.

Future Outlook – Positive

There were a few bugs in the beginning, as there always is when bringing in any new technology. The vendor has been great and very supportive. They have worked really well with us, and we are very happy with what we have. The entire staff dials in on the telephone and accesses the dictation system that way. It was a seamless transition for the staff to go up on Webmedx, and it seems to be working perfectly.

The Webmedx software platform is extremely easy for us to perform external QA work in. Webmedx is now the vendor of choice, and we will be moving more work out to them soon enough.

Future Outlook – Negative

The only weak link is in radiology. Our doctors there dictate slightly differently than the remainder of our medical staff. Our radiologists dictate from a PC station, and that system tends to get bogged down every now and then since it is tied in with the EMR and PACS. That has caused some frustration. Sometimes the PC stations just don't work right for the radiologists.

SPECIAL QUESTIONS COMMENTARY

If there was an increase or decrease in volume, what has been the main cause?

We have allied health professionals working with the physicians to improve dictation, and what would have been a two-page report in the past has become a six- or seven-page report today.

The physicians are doing more detailed reports. Last year, the dictations were really short. We implemented a clinical documentation improvement (CDI) program, and we are documenting more as a result. I think the volume will continue to grow. We are implementing an inpatient EMR product from Siemens, but it will take awhile before we are at a point where the physicians can start documenting electronically. I do anticipate that once they do, the volumes will start to decrease.

We have more hospitalists using Webmedx for progress notes. Plus, the radiology department's volume has increased over the past 12 months.

Our volumes fluctuate. They were going to go down, but they have gone up. We are planning on implementing electronic discharge. The physicians actually do the transcription, which is weird. I have never heard of a hospital doing that. If the physicians would transcribe their own discharge summaries, that would somewhat reduce the volume. The emergency room is being zeroed in on for electronic documentation, probably because of the initiatives from Washington. I am pushing for front-end speech recognition. Then they would have templates where they could just fill in the blank. The ER does not do a whole lot of dictation, but it would make a dent and perhaps would spread out from there. There is a lot of dictation, but it never went into Webmedx to begin with. Whether or not we become 100 percent electronic will not impact Webmedx. Right now, we have about a number of mom-and-pop companies working throughout the system along with Webmedx.

I don't know what has caused our volume to increase; 30,000 minutes only represents 10 percent of our actual volume. The rest is done by in-house transcription.

On the inpatient side there has not been a change. On the outpatient side, the change is attributable to the continued release of the electronic medical record and clinicians opting for direct entry. Also, we have Dragon NaturallySpeaking, with about 150 users, but this has not translated into a big change in terms of transcription.

Ratings Comments: Onshore Services

The report quality drops below our expectations every time a new transcriptionist is added to the pool.

Our challenges with the transcriptions are with constant blanks and problems with demographic information.

Webmedx was not doing well. We gave them feedback, and they improved drastically. Webmedx's CEO is very involved and responsive.

Webmedx really listens to their customers' wants and needs, and they are very responsive with customer service. They have a great technical support team.

Ratings Comments: Offshore Services

No comments.

If you are not using offshore services, what is your perception of offshore MT services?

We are not totally against using offshore services, but our perception is that the offshore transcriptionists do not have the same qualifications as onshore transcriptionists. We worry about the offshore transcriptionists' ability to meet the HIPAA and encryption standards, and we think it is important to do whatever we can to support jobs in this country.

I have used offshore services in the past. Our policy is to keep our work onshore. I feel we lose some interpretation when work is performed offshore. We have a patriotic point of view as well as a business point of view.

Offshore services are cheaper, but there are worries about privacy.

I am more open to the possibility of looking at offshore services, but I still have concerns about privacy.

There are language barriers with offshore services. I have not had any real experience with offshore services, so I don't really have an opinion.

I have talked to several HIM directors that use offshore transcription services. They seem to spend a lot of time dealing with quality issues.

I have a very strong opinion regarding offshore work. I feel that we should keep work onshore. Also, I have heard from colleagues that use offshore work that there are horrible errors.

We used to use offshore services, and the turnaround time was not good. The quality of offshore services was garbage, and language was a huge barrier. The sentences did not make sense. This did not go well with physicians at all.

I imagine using offshore services makes good business sense. At every other hospital I have worked at, the administration made the decision to not accept offshore transcription. I don't know if that is the case here. I can only base my experience through other people's experience, but I would say I am against offshore services.

Offshore MT services are not very good. We had MedQuist, who used offshore services, and their quality was poor.

All work is done onshore. We have a very strict policy forbidding the use of offshore transcription.

We are not permitted by our facility to use offshore services. I think there is a huge HIPAA liability. We can control it more domestically. Things become unclear when we deal with services outside of the United States.

We prefer to keep our work onshore. Webmedx does a great job with turnaround times and quality. I have no reason to go elsewhere.

Why did you select this MTSO and who else did you consider?

The transcriptionists had a choice between MedQuist and Webmedx, and they liked the Webmedx platform better.

We first learned about Webmedx from a contractor that worked in the medical records department. We brought in the sales representative for a presentation and called all of their references. Eventually, we made the decision to go with a local vendor based on cost. The Webmedx sales representative was persistent and kept in touch. When the local MT vendor did not work out, we made the decision to give Webmedx a chance.

We looked at a lot of vendors. I liked Webmedx's approach and turnaround time. That vendor looked at what we needed and told us what they could offer, and it was a good fit.

■ **REPORT SPECIFIC QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. Total annual transcription volume with this vendor:
 ____ Lines ____ Black characters ____ Minutes ____ Other
 - A. Is this fully outsourced, partially outsourced, or overflow work?
 - B. What is the rate?
 ____ Per line ____ per black character ____ Per report ____ Per minute ____ Other
2. Is the MTSO doing any back-end speech editing?
 - A. If yes, what percentage of the MTSO's work is editing?
 - B. If yes, what back-end speech editing software vendor/product does the MTSO use?
3. Has your dictation volume increased, decreased, or stayed the same compared to last year?
 - A. If there was an increase or decrease in volume, what has been the main cause?

4. Rate the performance of your MTSO in the following areas:

| Service 5=Strong, 4=Above Average, 3=Average, 2=Below Average, 1=Weak, 0=Don't use | Strength/Vendor Attribute |
|--|------------------------------|
| A. Report Turnaround time | |
| B. Report Quality | |
| C. Account Management (Account Rep, Customer service) | |
| D. Administrative Tools (Reports, tracking tools, online QA) | |

5. Is your transcription work done onshore, offshore, or both?
 - A. Please rate the MTSO's performance:

| Rate Performance (1=Poor, low to 9= Strong, high) | Comments on ratings Successes/challenges, etc. |
|--|---|
| i. Onshore services | |
| ii. Offshore services | |

- B. If not using offshore services, what is your perception of offshore MT services?
6. Did you outsource your MT prior to your current MTSO?
 - A. If yes, who were you using?
 - B. Why did you replace them?
7. If selected in the last two years, why did you select this MTSO and who else did you consider?

■ KLAS VENDOR PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

| Evaluation Ratings Scale: 1 (Low) through 9 (High) 9 = Extremely Satisfied: Flawless, could not be better. 5 = Acceptable/OK: Most issues resolved over time. 1 = Extremely Dissatisfied: Nothing ever goes right. | Answer Should Be: |
|---|-------------------|
| Have they lived up to expectations? | 1-9 |
| Are they committed to real problem resolution? | 1-9 |
| Have you received your money's worth? | 1-9 |
| Was this worth the effort? (i.e. improved your organization's productivity, achieved objectives) | 1-9 |
| Would you buy from them again (based on current performance)? | Yes/No |
| Are their executives excited to have you as a client? (i.e. are they a good partner, and involved/interested in your organization's requirements and needs?) | 1-9 |
| Do they avoid charging for every little thing; do not nickel and dime? | Yes/No |
| Have they kept ALL of their promises? | Yes/No |
| What is your general satisfaction with the contract process, terms, and administration? | 1-9 |
| Were services delivered as sold in the proposal/sales presentation/demonstration/contract? | 1-9 |
| Did service delivery meet the contracted time frame? | 1-9 |
| Were the services delivered within expected budget and/or vendor's quoted price? | Yes/No |
| Was the services staff trained and knowledgeable of the product, industry, and your needs? | 1-9 |
| What is their overall impact on your personal job performance? (i.e. makes you look better/worse) | 1-9 |
| Would you recommend them to a peer or close friend? | Yes/No |
| Without breaking confidence, what were the overall costs of the services provided | \$/year or '\$' |
| Overall satisfaction with professional services firm? | 1-9 |
| When was the project completed? (List completion date or "ongoing" if long term project) | Date or "ongoing" |
| Rank experience with this firm as compared with others you are familiar with (1=Best, 2=One of Best, 3=NOT one of Best) | 1, 2, or 3 |

■ FAQs REGARDING KLAS DATA

Summary

KLAS data and reports represent the combined opinions of actual people from provider organizations comparing how their vendors, products and/or services performed when measured against the participant's objectives and expectations. KLAS findings are a unique compilation of candid opinions and are real measurements representing those individuals interviewed. Findings are not meant to be conclusive data for an entire client base. KLAS provides the findings as valuable data points to be used with other data points in the reader's overall analysis. We encourage our clients, friends, and partners using KLAS research data to take into account the following statements as they include KLAS data in their other due diligence.

Why are we writing this?

Often, there are questions regarding the KLAS data that is published in industry reports or online databases. Where does the data come from? What does the data mean? How should the data be viewed? KLAS strives for transparency in all aspects of research. For this reason the following statements are given in response to common questions regarding KLAS data.

Why does KLAS make the research public?

First and foremost, the data must be public in order for it to benefit the healthcare provider community by providing access to client feedback. Second, data that is public will hold the vendors accountable for their performance as reported by their own customers. Third, public data provides an independent point of reality that allows healthcare professionals to separate marketing myth from reality.

■ PLANNING THE RESEARCH

Do vendors pay to be measured?

- No. KLAS partners with and answers only to the provider community. All KLAS performance research is directed and generated by healthcare professionals. KLAS' mandate is to collect data that benefits the providers. To fulfill that mandate, KLAS must maintain complete vendor neutrality and remain independent of any outside influence other than that of the provider community. Money plays no part in that decision. In fact, KLAS will research a vendor whether or not that vendor desires to be included in the KLAS database. KLAS measures many vendors who pay nothing to KLAS.
- However, vendors may pay for a subscription to see the data. KLAS also provides a limited amount of custom projects to vendors, where the data is typically, but not always, available to the public.
- Occasionally, a vendor will request that KLAS pursue research within a certain time frame or that KLAS dedicate more research time than presently allocated for pursuing a particular piece of information. In those circumstances, KLAS may consider receiving payment for expedited research, but payment for this expedited research in no way reflects in the scores for that particular product.
- To further illustrate this point, in April 2008 KLAS ran an analysis of scores by vendor comparing the average of those that subscribe to Platinum KLAS to those that do not. The comparison was broken into the three standard KLAS buckets: Software, Professional Services, and Medical Equipment. Each bucket had a slight variation to one side or the other. Two of the three showed that vendors that did not subscribe scored slightly higher than

those that did. In summary, buying KLAS data did not appear to influence the vendor score. KLAS maintains a rigorous anti-bias program that is geared to avoid scoring bias of any kind.

How does a vendor qualify for inclusion?

The minimum standard that qualifies a vendor/product for inclusion in KLAS data is for at least 15 unique provider organizations to be interviewed and validated by KLAS that utilize that vendor/product, except in cases where the initial qualification threshold is lowered to three and six organizations in cases with small numbers of clients as in Professional Services. So what is a unique provider organization?

What is a unique provider organization?

A unique provider organization is a single IDN (integrated healthcare delivery network), independent hospital, or free standing clinic. KLAS uses the American Hospital Association Guide, as well as other resources, to categorize provider organizations. For example, Kaiser Permanente is a very large hospital system. KLAS may speak with a dozen individuals throughout Kaiser about a particular software vendor/product, yet those interviews are counted as a single organization (representing Kaiser as a single organization). At least 15 unique provider organizations must rate a product before it is ranked.

■ OBTAINING THE RESEARCH

Where does the data come from?

KLAS speaks with hospital and clinic executives, administrators, physicians, nurses and other directors and managers with business responsibilities regarding the experiences they are having with their vendors and products. Routinely, KLAS speaks with approximately 5,000 hospitals and nearly 3,000 ambulatory organizations annually in order to gather direct client feedback on vendor performance.

How does KLAS obtain and verify data?

- Evaluations are received online, via fax, email, or directly from one-on-one interviews with professionals from provider organizations. Below are some examples of how KLAS receives evaluations:
 - Providers who have given feedback to KLAS are sent an evaluation update email each subsequent year.
 - Some providers who are aware of KLAS visit the KLASresearch.com website and fill out an online evaluation.
 - Vendors can invite clients to participate with KLAS, and those providers visit the KLASresearch.com website and fill out an online evaluation.
- Each research participant responds to a standard set of questions that require a numeric answer (one-to-nine scale) or a yes/no answer. These answers, once they are aggregated and averaged, determine a vendor's overall score and rank as reflected in KLAS reports and online databases.
- All completed evaluations are followed up with a confidential interview by a KLAS research analyst. Each phone call includes a candid conversation regarding the experience with the participant's vendor(s). Appropriate comments from that conversation are included anonymously in the research.
- KLAS confirms the role and responsibility of the participant and assesses any conflict of interest. If an evaluation cannot be confirmed or corroborated as valid, it is discarded. Where

the providers participate at the invitation of the vendor, KLAS more heavily scrutinizes the data for evidences of bias.

- The results are posted to the KLAS Database and subsequently made available for public use. Please note that:
 - KLAS reserves the right to quarantine any incomplete or suspect evaluation.
 - A dedicated KLAS researcher is assigned to resolve data issues from quarantined evaluations.
 - KLAS reserves the right to discard evaluations that cannot be confirmed.

What does KLAS do with client contact information?

- KLAS keeps all contacts and participating organizations strictly confidential, and any information shared is made anonymous so as to not allow any reader to identify the person or organization that gave the information.
- A list of participants is never shared with any outside organization.
- KLAS does not share or sell information about a participant's needs or future plans to any outside organization.
- Evaluations and commentary submitted are not linked to a participant or organization in any public use of the data (online query, published reports, articles, presentations, etc.).

What level of healthcare professional can submit data to KLAS?

- The data collected represents input from individuals who have direct product and/or service responsibility and/or evaluate and manage vendor decisions and relationships. Participants are at the manager/supervisor level or above and are frequently a CIO, Director, Chairman, Administrator, or other business manager at the organization.
- At times KLAS is referred to another person within the organization that may have a relevant perspective on a particular vendor or product or service. When an evaluation is submitted from someone below a manager/supervisor level, KLAS must receive approval from a manager (or other key decision maker) before the data is accepted.
- Evaluations that cannot be verified, do not meet submission requirements, or are for products or services not in productive use by the participant (unless they are rating applicable indicators such as selling and contracting) are discarded.

■ **UNDERSTANDING THE RESEARCH**

What are the statistics behind the KLAS research methodology?

Our provider partners have asked KLAS to compare the vendors/products once KLAS has measured at least 15 appropriate clients for a given vendor and to report early data with at least six measured clients. (The numbers are six and three respectively for certain cases with small numbers of clients in Professional Services areas). These standards were set in conjunction with our provider partners themselves. They wanted a standard minimum threshold set so that when they viewed KLAS data, they could be confident that they were comparing commercially viable products, not products that have very few installations and are actually unique to a particular organization. Every comparison represents the scores from the actual participants, allowing KLAS to stratify the vendors and products based upon the scores. KLAS utilizes commonly accepted statistical practices. It is important to recognize that the margin of error varies significantly due to the sample size, actual number of possible participants, time live with product, version of the product, size of the organization, role of participant, different participant objectives, previous experience with other vendors, etc. KLAS does not claim to publish scientific research. Rather, the data represents measurements and comments from real people drawn from their actual vendor

experiences. KLAS findings are intended to be a source of peer experiences to be added to other reader research and due diligence.

When comparing vendor scores, does a decimal point mean anything?

For the actual sample taken, the decimal point allows stratification of vendors/products. From an overall statistical analysis when two (or more) vendors receive very close scores, that means that their customers gave them similar ratings and, if a different group of customers were sampled, the position could be different. If the overall scores are within a decimal point of each other, this can be viewed as a dead heat or close race where one vendor may score somewhat better than another in particular areas, but one managed to edge out the other in overall scoring.

What factors can cause a vendor's score to change over time?

A positive or negative movement in scoring trends can be explained in many different ways, and each case is unique. A few examples include:

- A new software upgrade that resolves provider issues
- Buggy software releases
- Renewed focus on proactive account management
- Rapid growth without scaling to new support demands
- Implementation expectations exceeded
- Omissions in the contract

What does an asterisk denote?

KLAS has established standards to ensure that published data falls within an acceptable level of KLAS Confidence. A minimum number of unique organizations must be live on the product in question and validated before data on that product is published. Since KLAS was founded, our provider partners have worked with KLAS to help establish levels for early data and comparable data. An asterisk signifies to the reader that the information about the product was taken from less than fifteen provider organizations for software and equipment products and less than six organizations for professional services. An asterisk means that product will not be compared to other products due to the early data nature of the measurement, and readers should only consider the measurement as an early indicator of performance from a small sample of clients.

Sometimes the Top 20 scores do not match those seen online in Platinum KLAS or in individual reports, why is this? How should providers interpret a change in a vendor's (or product's) positional rating when that vendor appears in two reports published close together? (e.g. Top 20 and a Specialty Report)

- KLAS' research efforts are ongoing. The performance ratings are regularly refreshed as new data is gathered. A rating given for a vendor in a report can be viewed as a snapshot in time. If that same vendor is included in a subsequent report, then the position of that vendor's rating is subject to change depending on the most recent data provided by that vendor's clients, even if the reports are published within a short time of each other. It should be noted that scoring trends over long periods of time (i.e. on an annual basis) are likely of more value than scoring trends over short periods of time.
- Due to production requirements and in an effort to be fair and provide for "expiring" 12-month data scores, the Top 20 incorporates 13 months of data while Platinum KLAS and other reports include a rolling 12 months of performance data.
- As daily performance scores come in and others roll off the active 12-month window, the actual score in a report can be different from a Platinum KLAS score a few days later and a Top 20 score covering 13 months.

What are the variables that can influence the research?

Significant variables including organization/hospital type (rural, teaching, specialty, etc.), size of the organization, depth/breadth of software use, software version, role in the organization, provider objectives, and system infrastructure/network, impact participants' opinions and thus preclude an exact apples-to-apples vendor/product comparison or a finely tuned statistical analysis.

How should the reader (research consumer) use KLAS data?

KLAS research displays direct client feedback on healthcare technology vendors. In essence, the data provides an anecdotal view into the lives of those healthcare professionals who utilize the solutions in question. It is KLAS' hope that the data presented can aid a healthcare organization in their due diligence in evaluating prospective vendors. KLAS data is not meant as a replacement for such due diligence; rather, the research can be part of the organization's evaluation process. In this way KLAS data may also be compared to the following in some degree:

- Consumer reports
- Movie reviews
- Book reviews
- Online opinion polls

When using KLAS data, among other things, remember to factor in the following:

- The sample size
- Overall number of potential clients
- Early data designations (*)
- Types of adopting facilities
- Gap between highest- and lowest-scoring participants
- Possible variations in software versions in use
- Length of time clients have been live, if known
- General trend
- Comment trends and common threads