

Thorogood case study

Healthcare

Unit Cost Summary Tool for The Cigna Group

The Cigna Group, a U.S.-based global healthcare and insurance company, engaged Thorogood to develop a custom web application called the Unit Cost Summary Tool. The tool was designed to process competitor-specific data to support Cigna's Competitive Intelligence (CI) team. Thorogood, a Data & AI consultancy, has been a supplier to Cigna since 2013 and has worked with the CI team since 2017 on this tool and its enhancements.

Market Context

Health insurers operate in a dynamic market where data-driven decision-making is critical. Insurers have access to large volumes of data, including market-level aggregated data on competitors' costs and discounts for healthcare provider services, which can be purchased from various sources. Transforming this data into actionable market intelligence is essential for achieving accurate pricing and competitive cost.

The Challenge for The Cigna Group

Cigna's CI team is responsible for delivering market insights to support strategic decision-making across the organization. This involves integrating competitive intelligence with marketplace analysis and presenting

it in a format that business units can readily use. A key challenge was efficiently attributing purchased market-level data and managing the data over multiple years. This process required a solution to streamline data handling and enhance the CI team's ability to provide insights for better pricing and improving Cigna's competitive cost.

The Solution

The Unit Cost Summary Tool is a custom web application developed by Thorogood to assist Cigna's CI team in processing and analyzing market data and storing the data over time. The tool performs the following functions:

- 1. Data Ingestion and Preparation:** It aggregates data from multiple external sources and organizes it for analysis.

- 2. Predictive Analysis:** Using logic predefined by the CI team, the tool processes the data to identify relevant patterns and insights.
- 3. Data Validation and Augmentation:** Regional teams review the processed data. The tool enables local expertise to make needed adjustments to ensure accuracy.
- 4. Output Delivery:** The tool generates consumable intelligence for matrix partners across Cigna's markets, supporting decisions related to affordability and growth.
- 5. Data Repository:** The tool retains historical information and enables access to information for specific periods or views over time.

Additionally, the tool flags erroneous data, enabling the CI team to address issues with data providers. The application is designed to adapt to changing data sources and formats, ensuring long-term usability.

Development Approach

Thorogood's prior work with Cigna, including earlier iterations of the Unit Cost Summary Tool, provided a foundation for this project. The development process involved a detailed specification and a rapid timeline. Thorogood employed a "leveraged team" model, engaging specialists with relevant expertise at appropriate stages of the project and in the right capacities. The application's interface was designed to align with the needs of the CI team and its matrix partners.

Outcomes

The Unit Cost Summary Tool was delivered in line with Cigna's requirements. Key outcomes include:

- **Increased Efficiency:** The tool reduced the time the CI team spent on data processing, allowing more focus on analysis and insight generation.
- **Improved Process:** Transitioning from a database management system to the web-based tool streamlined the CI team's workflow.
- **Adaptability:** The tool's flexible design supports ongoing updates to accommodate evolving data sources and business needs.
- **Repository:** The tool efficiently holds historic and current data enabling views of competitive information over time

"The Unit Cost Summary Tool has been valuable since the first day of deployment. It continues to be an important part of the intelligence gathering and analysis that enables our team and matrix partners to make informed decisions"

– CI Director, Cigna

Thorogood continues to collaborate with Cigna's CI team to maintain and enhance the tool as requirements evolve.



Find out more:

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