

KLAS Spotlight

Colburn Hill Group

USING ROBOTIC PROCESS AUTOMATION
TO IMPROVE REVENUE CYCLE HEALTH

SPOTLIGHT



Separating fact from fiction in emerging technologies



Why This Spotlight? (KLAS explains)

Robotic process automation (RPA) is not a new concept, but its adoption in healthcare is starting to heat up. Healthcare organizations are looking at these solutions to automate and execute billing and claims processing. In this spotlight, KLAS looks at Colburn Hill Group and the early outcomes and performance reported by healthcare customers.

What Does Colburn Hill Group Do? (A customer explains)

"We are working with the vendor to run a script to hit all of our claims every day. The script should be able to find out whether a claim is on file. We will also be able to see whether a claim is missing documentation, was denied, is missing authorization, or needs some other piece of information. If it finds claims needing further action, they are sent to our team to fix the issues. We are starting with a few payers, but the objective is to hit every claim." —VP of revenue cycle

Bottom Line

Clients are highly satisfied with Colburn Hill's performance and revenue cycle expertise. Colburn Hill delivers expected outcomes, and several clients look forward to expanding the relationship. Respondents shared few suggestions for improvement.

Key Competitors

Olive, healthcare organizations' internal revenue cycle teams

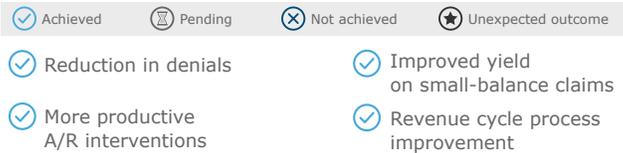
Number of Customers Interviewed by KLAS

6 individuals from 6 unique organizations (out of 10 representative organizations provided by Colburn Hill)

Makeup of Interviewed Customers

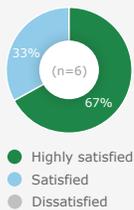
Hospitals and health systems

Outcomes Expected by Clients

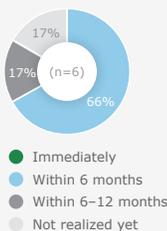


Colburn Hill Group Customer Experience: An Initial Look

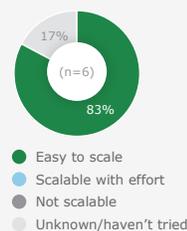
Overall Customer Satisfaction



Time to See Outcomes



Scalability



Colburn Hill Group Performance in Key Areas (1-9 scale)



Strengths

- Nimble and responsive support
- Customers see value in services provided
- Revenue cycle expertise



"The vendor keeps all of their promises. They are extremely nimble and have been able to do exactly what they have told us they could do. That hasn't been our experience with most of our vendors. Colburn Hill Group certainly worked with us, and we have a dedicated revenue cycle IT team that is brilliant. Between that team and another vendor team, the vendor's people have been able to tackle any questions that have come up." —Billing director

Challenges

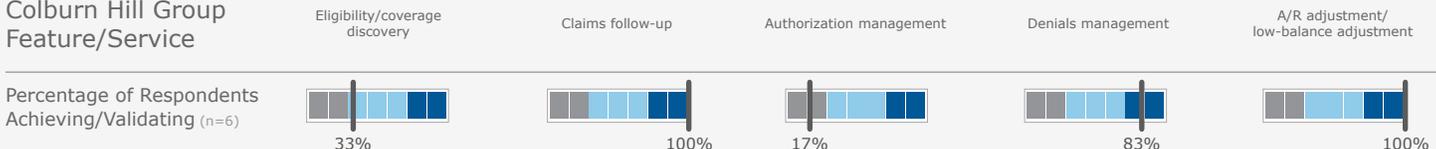
- Handling future growth



"Colburn Hill Group has doubled their number of clients over the last couple of years. I wouldn't say that the vendor needs to improve, but they need to be ready for growth. They are out there, so they know what the current issues are. Colburn Hill can improve by continuing to stay ahead; that way, they can deal with anything that comes their way. . . . The question isn't so much about how they can improve as it is about how they can manage things and grow at the same time. But they seem to have things under control." —IT manager

Customer-Validated Features & Services

Colburn Hill Group Feature/Service



SPOTLIGHT

Colburn Hill Group: Company Profile at a Glance

Founders: Peter Angerhofer, Jeff Means, Tyler Kurasek

Funding: No external funding

Number of Customers: 10 live, 1 under contract

Year Founded: 2014

Estimated Annual Revenue: \$6M

Revenue Model: Monthly subscription providing access to analytics suite and automation capabilities

Headquarters: Manchester, NH

Number of Employees: 60

Colburn Hill Group: Healthcare Executive Interview

Peter Angerhofer,
Principal and
Operational Consultant



What is your background?

I started in health policy on Capitol Hill and then went back to school for an MBA, joining APM/CSC in healthcare consulting. At APM, and subsequently at Deloitte and then Accretive Health (R1 RCM), I've focused exclusively on revenue cycle for more than 20 years. I've worked as a performance improvement consultant, in management roles, and in end-to-end outsourced roles at a variety of hospitals, from local community hospitals to large academic medical centers. I believe the best and hardest part of performance improvement is acting as an educator—guiding clients to make the right decisions rather than forcing answers onto them.

Why was Colburn Hill Group started?

Jeff Means, Tyler Kurasek, and I saw a need for targeted, innovative solutions. There were capabilities and technologies that had not been adequately deployed within healthcare and that matched fundamental problems providers struggled to solve on their own. We didn't want to just build a better version of solutions that were already in the market; we wanted to burrow into niches where no one else had deployed a solution. We didn't want to make incremental changes, but rather find ways to create value for providers that they didn't know was possible.

What is Colburn Hill Group's greatest differentiator?

We mix operational experience with technology development capabilities in a unique way. There are lots of companies that are really good at building technology but may not have operational experience. And there are lots of people with knowledge of how revenue cycle operates but without the technology capabilities to translate that knowledge into a functioning product. I believe our clear differentiator is that we are operators who both understand what providers need on a day-to-day basis and have the technology capacity to build products that reflect those needs and deliver real, quantifiable, in-the-door results.

KLAS' Points to Ponder



Mike Davis

HCIT market research and analysis expert with 40+ years of experience

The Positives: Colburn Hill Group combines an RPA-enabled bot workflow solution with experienced consulting services to drive RCM improvements. Provider organizations can improve efficiencies for denials management, eligibility & authorization, clean claims, cash reconciliation, and low-balance accounts through bot-enabled workflow analytics. The solution can improve staffing efficiencies and eliminate tedious manual processes, and it may allow external RCM support services to be brought back in-house.

Organizations should consider the following:

The Solution's Long-Term Viability in Healthcare

RCM (from authorization to claims remittance) is a complicated environment made more involved by individual payers. This drives a need for large staffs that are knowledgeable about RCM processes. Finding these experts is getting harder, and longer training cycles are required for new staff. Using AI through bots that automate scripting processes for various RCM workflows is becoming a key requirement for more efficient and effective RCM. These solutions should also enable improved capitated contract management amid the transition to fee-for-value.

Impacts and Tradeoffs of the Underlying Technology

Colburn Hill Group uses AWS for the PaaS component of their architecture and Azure for business intelligence services. Applications are programmed in Ruby, and ETL services are developed with Python. The RDBMS is MySQL. Mobile access is via a browser, but the system is designed for PC use. Security is provided via AWS and Azure ISO/27001, 27017, 27018, and 9001 certifications. Patient confidentiality is supplied via HIPAA business associate agreements. Data is encrypted at rest using AES-256. Data streams are conducted via flat file transactions that may or may not be conducted by bots. The architecture is stable and scalable, and it has components that meet emerging digital standards. Data in transit is encrypted using SSL/SFTP.

Early IT Involvement

The use of RPA solutions requires data transactions between RCM, coding, and patient access systems. IT departments need to be involved during assessment and contracting phases to ensure that required data can be accessed and shared as needed by the RPA solution. The implementation design required for the RPA data transactions will be more complex in environments with multiple RCM and/or patient access applications. Early IT involvement will save your organization time and money.

Bot Scalability

Some RPA solutions require the development of bots for each individual workflow process. Colburn Hill Group has created bots that can accomplish several workflow processes, not just one each. The ability to minimize how many bots are used can significantly impact RPA pricing. However, more bots that can cover multiple processes may also be more complicated to script, which can require more staff training. Analyzing bot designs and capabilities will help provider organizations better align RPA solutions with future RCM needs.

REPORT INFORMATION

Reader Responsibility

KLAS data and reports are a compilation of research gathered from websites, healthcare industry reports, interviews with healthcare organization executives and managers, and interviews with vendor and consultant organizations. Data gathered from these sources includes strong opinions (which should not be interpreted as actual facts) reflecting the emotion of exceptional success and, at times, failure. The information is intended solely as a catalyst for a more meaningful and effective investigation on your organization's part and is not intended, nor should it be used, to replace your organization's due diligence.

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

We encourage our clients, friends, and partners using KLAS research data to take into account these variables as they include KLAS data with their own due diligence. For frequently asked questions about KLAS methodology, please refer to the KLAS FAQs.

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Note

The findings presented are not meant to be conclusive data for an entire client base. Performance scores may change significantly when additional healthcare organizations are interviewed, especially when the existing sample size is smaller, as in an emerging market with a small number of live clients.



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Our Mission

Improving the world's healthcare through collaboration, insights, and transparency.

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