NYC HRA Document Upload

A Diona Solutions Case Study

DIONA

Executive Summary

The New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA) manages one of the largest Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs in the United States, serving more than 1.7 million people and handling more than 40,000 new applications each month. With NYC HRA Document Upload, an app delivered using the Diona Mobile Uploads solution, HRA is leading the way in providing New Yorkers with self-service through their mobile phones.

Applicants to SNAP can photograph and submit supporting documents at their convenience, saving unnecessary trips to agency offices and delays in receiving help. While clients save time and effort, the agency benefits from a more efficient process with higher documentation match rates for applications. User adoption for NYC HRA Document Upload has exceededexpectations with thousands of New Yorkers downloading the app and submitting more than 2.5 million document images through phones since the program's introduction in November 2015. HRA believes that NYC HRA Document Upload will make the difference in how quickly some eligible New Yorkers successfully receive nutrition assistance in 2016.

"Working with Diona's mobility solutions has opened up a new, cost-effective, and powerful way for us to engage with the people we serve while improving the operational performance of important programs such as SNAP."

Lauren Aaronson
Deputy Commissioner for Business Process Innovation,
NYC Human Resources Administration

The Challenge

HRA provides assistance to approximately 1.7 million Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients. Handling more than 40,000 new SNAP applicants and their related documentation each month was becoming a choke point. The application process was heavily paper-based and included mailing, scanning, faxing, and hand delivering documents. This was inefficient and painful for clients and inefficient and error prone for HRA. Thousands of applications by New Yorkers for food assistance were being rejected due to missing or late documentation. The administration needed a high volume and low touch way to receive supporting documents from SNAP applicants more quickly and efficiently while reducing cases where eligible applicants were rejected because they couldn't make their way through the process in time.

Solution

HRA contacted Diona to determine whether Diona's software for citizen self service could help. Diona offered its Diona Uploads solution and worked with HRA to configure the solution to suit HRA processes and integrate with HRA back-end systems, processes, and data standards. Diona Uploads provided HRA the starting point of a designed solution that could quickly and easily be configured to the agency's needs including supporting eight languages out of the box. Diona's configuration manager made adaptations to the agency's exact requirements fast and straightforward.

How It Works

Clients use NYC HRA Document Upload on their phone to take photos of any required documents such as drivers' licenses, pay stubs or child care statements and submit them securely to the agency for processing. To simplify the process for clients, the solution supports anonymous submissions where no user ID or account creation are required. To help the agency ensure that anonymous submissions are genuine, the solution includes an integrated Captcha dialogue. Through a simple form clients include basic information with their submission which helps expedite processing and reduce errors. Agency staff take the images and related data and apply them to the client's case based on basic details provided by the client. Clients receive assistance more quickly and mountains of paper delivery, scanning, collating, and filing are avoided.

Design Configure Test Deliver

HRA and Diona worked together to configure Diona Uploads to suit the business process, language, data, and security requirements of HRA. Diona implemented the changes quickly without re-coding and delivered the tailored solution for evaluation by HRA. Usability trials with real-world customers in the field revealed opportunities to simplify and clarify steps in the upload process. These improvements were configured into the solution quickly without requiring recoding or redeployment of the software and the revised solution was then tested in the field. This process of rapid testing combined with rapid configuration and testing allowed HRA to quickly and confidently dial into an effective and easy user experience.

Following an iterative and agile design and implementation phase and a successful pilot, NYC HRA Document Upload went live in November 2015. New Yorkers were offered NYC HRA Document Upload for their Android or iOS mobile phones, and apps were made available through both Google Play and the Apple App Store.

Results

The first big story of NYC HRA Document Upload has been the adoption rate.

Many agencies wonder whether the people they serve will use apps. New York City's experience indicates that the answer is a resounding "Yes!"

More than 500,000 New Yorkers have downloaded and installed NYC HRA Document Upload on their phone, and the program is seeing about 6,000 new downloads per month and growing.

As of April 2018 approximately 14,000 document images per week are being uploaded to HRA by New Yorkers and more than 2.5 million document images have been delivered successfully. These numbers are expected to rise dramatically as more citizens become aware of the solution. HRA staff have been surprised by the adoption rate of the service, the quality of the uploaded images, and the high success rate in matching the images to their related cases. NYC HRA Document Upload is saving the agency between 4 and 15 minutes of workforce time per case when compared with the agency's other channels for accepting supporting documents for SNAP applications. 85% of documents submitted are associated with the correct case record without any human intervention. NYC HRA Document Upload helps HRA provide SNAP to people who in the past might have been rejected for missing documentation.

Details   Reviews   Related

Gisel V. Feb 26, 2016

★★★★★

I'm very satisfied with this app it made everything more simple and easy for me since I have a baby and it's easier to just upload from home . Thank you very much!! It was quick and easy!

Number of Manual Process Steps

Process step	NYC HRA Document Upload	Paper Walked In	Paper by Post	Fax
Client travel to office	—	🕐	—	—
Lobby visit	—	🕐	—	—
Manage mail	—	—	🕐	—
Manually match document to case	—	🕐	🕐	🕐
Scan document	—	🕐	🕐	—
Send confirmation to client	🕐	🕐	🕐	🕐
File paper copy	—	🕐	🕐	—
Destroy paper copy	—	🕐	🕐	—
Total manual steps	1	7	6	2

Comparison of Cost Elements

	Client upload cost	Client fax cost	Client mailing cost	Client travel cost	Lobby staff	Mail staff	Fax supplies	Scanning equipment	Paper filing	Photo-copying	Paper disposal
NYC HRA Document Upload	●	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Paper Walked In	—	—	—	●	●	—	—	●	●	●	●
Paper by Post	—	—	●	—	—	●	—	●	●	●	●
Paper by Fax	—	●	—	—	—	—	●	●	●	●	●

Return on Investment

HRA Document Upload proves that introducing a mobile-based solution provides return on investment that is both cost effective and transformational to the agency's capacity, customer satisfaction, and success. New York City HRA simultaneously saw earlier initial submission dates for SNAP supporting documentation and a reduction of work hours necessary to support the process. Initial estimates show that HRA has saved hundreds of hours in processing time while raising the overall success rate of their SNAP process. As the use of NYC HRA Document Upload continues to grow, the return on investment promises to grow in parallel.

On one level NYC HRA Document Upload is a process waste removal machine. Specific savings will vary from agency to agency based on their cost structures, but two patterns are universal: agencies can dramatically reduce the numbers of manual steps in their process, and agencies can dramatically reduce related cost elements.

Would you like a worksheet and consultation with Diona to estimate your agency's opportunity to simplify your processes and reduce costs? Please contact us at info@diona.com

About NYC HRA

The New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA) is dedicated to fighting poverty and income in-equality by providing New Yorkers in need with essential benefits such as Food Assistance and Emergency Rental Assistance.

As the largest local social services agency in the country, HRA helps over three million New Yorkers through the administration of more than 12 major public assistance programs, with more than 14,000 employees and an operating budget of $9.7 billion.

HRA is a thought leader and innovator in the use of technology to support its mission. They helped pioneer citizen self-service through

the web and recognized that mobile services offered an opportunity for even more effective self-service.

About Diona

Diona provides innovative systems of engagement solutions to government Health and Human Services, Social Care, and Social Security agencies and NGOs around the world. Diona's family of social program engagement solutions, turn mobile devices—such as smartphones and tablets—into tools to achieve better business and social outcomes by helping agencies serve people more effectively, while improving how their employees work and collaborate. Diona solutions extend organizational systems of record and deliver real-time data directly into the field for clients and workers. Diona solutions are secure, robust, scalable, and reliable and feature flexible cloud-based or on-premise deployment options. With deep domain expertise and a user-centered design philosophy, Diona delivers digital solutions that help government agencies and NGOs solve real-world problems for their clients and employees.

Diona

Website
www.diona.com

Phone
512-692-6817

Email
info@diona.com

NYC HRA

Website
www.nyc.gov/hra

Phone
718-557-1399