

# Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina

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## CASE STUDY

### Secure, Mobile, Integrated SaaS Password Management

**Challenge:** Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina (Blue Cross NC) needed a modern password management solution that would allow them to both improve end user experience and significantly reduce password-related support calls.

**Solution:** After assessing its system needs and exploring its password management options, Blue Cross NC decided to upgrade to a SaaS implementation of Hitachi ID Bravura Pass.

**Outcome:** With the addition of Hitachi ID Bravura Pass, Blue Cross NC has been able to significantly improve end user experience and cut password related calls to the support desk by almost 40%.

Since 1933, Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina (Blue Cross NC) has had one mission: Make healthcare better for all of North Carolina. This insurance leader employs almost 5,000 North Carolinians and serves more than 3.81 million members. Today, technology plays a significant role in tackling its communities' greatest health challenges. From customer support to patient payment portals to sales to mobile account access, tech touches every part of the health insurance journey. So when Blue Cross NC end users (including sales reps, insurance agents, account managers, and more) were facing a technology challenge of their own — password management problems — it needed to be addressed quickly.

Password management frustrations are a frequent pain point for organizations and in Blue Cross NC's case, healthcare compliance (including HIPAA) and security requirements made its challenges even more unique. With

calls to the help desk to reset passwords growing exponentially, Blue Cross NC knew it was time to explore new password management options and set out to find a new SaaS solution.

### The Challenge

When Blue Cross NC began its search for a new password management tool, it had been more than a decade since it deployed its last password sync tool (a previous, on-premise version of Hitachi ID's password management solution, managed by another managed service provider). At the time, Blue Cross NC was beginning to build its own IT team and improving password management was an early priority. End user frustrations with frequent lockouts and the inability to reset their own passwords were just some of the problems they were looking to solve. Others included:

- No self-service options for password sync and reset
- Integrations with non single sign on (SSO) applications that are cumbersome to change and sync



## Company Name

### INDUSTRY

Healthcare

### REGION

North America

### PRODUCTS

Hitachi ID Bravura Pass

- A legacy environment
- Mobile access restrictions

Cutting down password calls to the support desk would allow its team to focus more on the business and less on operations. Mobile capabilities, self-service solutions, and strong integration capabilities were also necessary to reduce service desk call volumes due to passwords. Blue Cross NC also wanted more agility to improve scalability and ensure upgrades were completed in a timely fashion. This last piece was essential to avoid falling into the trap of being behind — something the team had struggled with previously.

The right approach to meet these requirements quickly became clear. Blue Cross NC's Director Enterprise Tools, End User Computing & Support, Mitchell Weiner explains, "We wanted to be more nimble, more secure, with more redundancy and knew a SaaS implementation was the best way to achieve that."

Because of their existing relationship with a legacy solution from Hitachi ID, Bravura Pass was on the shortlist and quickly rose to the top as its position as a leader in security, SaaS, mobile, and integrations. Blue Cross NC's Senior IT Design Engineer Phillip Boyd recalls, "From a security perspective, Hitachi ID environments outperformed what we could do internally, particularly at the time, with built-in redundancy."

## The Solution

With the official selection of Hitachi ID Bravura Pass, and some service level agreement updates taken care of, Blue Cross NC and Hitachi ID embarked on the deployment process — and not a moment too soon. As deployment began, Blue Cross NC was also updating its security policies to require more complex passwords to protect the environment, driving up the number of calls to the service desk (and further illustrating the importance of this new SaaS implementation).

With the introduction of a SaaS solution Blue Cross NC could more easily keep their technology current (with upgrades included), ensure the application is always on and available, and provide immediate and proactive support response to any issues. Plus with the infrastructure and application both managed by Hitachi ID they could streamline and strengthen processes.

To ensure success, the rollout of this new security solution was broken down into two phases: user acceptance testing (UAT) and production. During the first phase, the IT team worked closely with a select group of end users to test the implementation and iron out any wrinkles before rolling out to the larger user base. That included working with users to ensure they could:

- Log into applications

- Set up security
- Change passwords
- Use their mobile device to change/ unlock accounts

After a month and a half of working with this select team, Hitachi ID and Blue Cross NC were ready to get to work on the full implementation of PasswordPlus (BlueCross NC's internal branding of the Hitachi ID Pass solution). Production included a few weeks of development and final tweaks, working hand in hand with the Hitachi ID team, before the big push to end users.

Another critical piece of this deployment was education, an effort that was led by the BlueCross NC marketing and communications team. They aimed to not only ensure end users had the tools they needed to use this new tool effectively, they wanted people to be excited about it. Efforts included:

- Unveiling event with prizes
- Educational resources: slideshows, articles, Yammer posts, Microsoft Teams chat communications, emails
- Updated the service desk message to include a self service option
- Follow-up calls from the service desk to get users registered with PasswordPlus

The IT team also offered open office hours to let end users drop in with questions and see an overview of capabilities and functionality. Although the deployment was slowed some due to its end of year timing and some SLA details that needed to be updated, the SaaS implementation was deemed an overall success by IT leaders and the end users themselves (roughly 3,200 enrolled and 700+ on mobile).

## The Outcome

The positive impact of the SaaS implementation of Hitachi ID Bravura Pass was seen very quickly, according to Weiner. "We began to see improvements almost

immediately and the results have been incredible. PasswordPlus registration has increased at almost the same ratio as calls to the service desk have dropped."

Hitachi ID Bravura Pass was officially launched in February of 2021 with 10,000 end user licenses and by June, password-related calls to the service desk had dropped by 37%. Other key successes following the implementation include:

- Hands-off management with no server patching or application issues; tickets are promptly addressed by Hitachi ID
- Self-service capability for end-users to reset passwords in one place on four disparate apps
- Email reminders to give end users an extra nudge on required password updates
- The smooth setup of mobile access

Critical to achieving these incredible results was a strong working relationship between Hitachi ID and Blue Cross NC. Boyd shares, "The Hitachi ID engineers were a true extension of our own team. Quick communication and flexibility was essential to success and they delivered on both time and time again. Their willingness to meet with our team to answer and address questions made all the difference."

## We are Hitachi ID

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