Policy Manager: FAQs MCN Healthcare

How many years has your company been in business?
MCN has been providing products and services to the healthcare industry since 1987. We are known in the industry as the leading provider of regulatory compliance tools including automated policy management system, policy templates and email notification of changing regulations

How many clients do you currently have?
There are over 25,000 organizations worldwide using MCN's regulatory compliance software products and staff education tools.

Can I create my own policies in your system?
Yes, the system is designed to make it easy to upload and publish your own policies. You may also utilize MCN's customizable templates to make policy development easy.

What are the hardware and software requirements?
There are no special hardware requirements, other than that, computers must be able to connect to the Internet. We recommend a computer with the most current versions of Internet Explorer, Firefox or Chrome browser. A free PDF reader is needed for end users to view policies. MCN can provide links to different free readers include Adobe if you do not have this available.

Is Java required?
No, Java is not required.

Is Active X required?
Active X is not required, unless the user wants to use the optional in-line editing feature. This in-line editing feature can be disabled site-wide with a configuration setting for customers that do not allow the use of Active X.

What platform is your system developed in?
Our system runs on a LAMP (Linux, Apache, MySQL, PHP) platform, which has become an industry standard for security, stability and scalability. This platform was also chosen because it allows all processing to be done server side. Hence, there are no downloads, plugins, Java components, or Active X controls required to use the system. The application framework and all application code were developed internally at MCN Healthcare.

What is the implementation process?
Policy Manager is hosted on MCN's servers on Rackspace's Tier 3 data center located in Illinois. MCN will provide all installations, upgrades, backups, and maintenance on the application. The initial installation and customization of your Policy Manager website takes approximately two weeks. Additional time is required to upload your manuals into the system and assist you in automating your system.

Does your application have conflicts with firewalls and security settings?

The Policy Manager application uses server-side processing and can run without any downloads, plugins, Java components, or Active X controls. Only the optional in-line editing feature requires Active X. The pages use standard HTML and JavaScript code, so firewall and security issues are highly unlikely.

What IT support is required for this application?

Product installation, maintenance, backups and upgrades are all performed for you by qualified staff at MCN Healthcare. The Policy Manager does not require anything to be installed on the user's computer, so that little IT support is required from the customer. Only the optional in-line editing feature requires Active X.

MCN Healthcare provides free toll-free phone and email support for the Policy Manager application, so that your IT staff is freed up to work on other things.

Users do need to have access to the Internet (at least via proxy) to use the system. Policies display in a popup window, so popups must be allowed on the website. Policies display using your chosen word processor or document editing application, so that you can continue to control the desktop productivity application environment.

What is the system availability?

Our servers have greater than 99.9% uptime and are located in one of the nation's top Tier 3 data centers, with direct connection to the Internet and many layers of physical and data security in place. Our hosted solution operates on a highly available, load balanced with fail over clustering and scalable network and hardware. MCN runs multiple redundant internet connections and multiple redundant systems with fully scalable virtualized hardware and software.

The host provides full redundant daily backups and 24/7 administrative support to maintain high availability. In addition, our own staff is immediately notified 24/7 in case of any system outages and will respond if there is an outage.

What kind of support do you provide?

The application provides customers with 24/7 access to the online support system, and trouble tickets may be submitted from any page within the application. Responses to technical issues are provided in a timely fashion during business hours.

We provide free customer phone support during normal business hours. Our technical support reps are well-trained, efficient, and courteous, and constantly receive positive comments from our customers.

Is user help available online?

Yes, there is a *Help* button available at the top of the Policy Manager pages that provides access to downloadable user guides and detailed, step-by-step video tutorials on the use of the system.

What browsers are supported?

Policy Manager and Library will work with most modern browsers, including Internet Explorer, Firefox and Chrome.

Are there special requirements for printers or for printing?
No, printing is done from the browser, so any printer will work.

Can users connect from home?
Yes, with an Internet connection (unless you would like this feature blocked).

Are passwords secure?
Yes, all passwords are encrypted and are not visible to any other user, including MCN staff. Passwords can also be required to meet certain minimum standards of complexity or "strength" in order to keep the system secure. MCN's password module implements all recommendations of the HIMSS Security Guidelines. If your organization is utilizing Active Directory or Single Sign-On integration, password will not be stored in the policy management system. The system will authenticate users against your AD.

If passwords need to be reset, do our employees have to contact your tech support?
No, there are two ways to reset passwords:
1) Employees can do it themselves by providing their email address;
2) Admins on the customer side can change the password for the employee.

Note: If your organization is utilizing Active Directory or Single Sign-On integration, passwords must be reset through those systems.

How scalable is your system? / How can you support large scale deployments?
Our application is rapidly scalable to be able to support 50,000 users accessing hundreds of thousands of documents in a single implementation. With longer implementation times, it can be scaled to support many times that load level. In the past, our systems have easily supported 50,000 users in a single installation with 100,000 data files.

What is your backup and maintenance schedule?
In the Policy Manager, your data is stored on mirrored hard drives to protect you from physical failure. Full daily backups are performed to a secure, fireproof location, and monthly backups are made to an offsite, secure, fireproof location. OS and other security patches are applied to the servers on a timely basis. In addition to backups performed by MCN, you have the ability to backup a local copy of your current policies and procedures at any time so that if your Internet is unavailable you will have access to all the policies. We also strongly believe that your data is your property, and should you (or we) ever decide to discontinue the service, we will give you a copy of your database and your document repository with all your draft documents.

Are upgrades included with our contract? Who performs them? How often?

Software upgrades for the Policy Manager are released many times throughout the year. Software upgrades include new features, enhanced functionality, and/or changes to enhance system performance. All upgrades are performed for you by MCN Healthcare staff and are provided to you free of charge as soon as they are available. You will be notified in advance of any major software releases. Minor updates may or may not require general notification.

How many policies and procedures can we load into the system?

The Policy Manager license is a subscription fee based on your organization's size and is not based on the number of documents in the system, and the database is able to support millions of records. Hence, you can load a virtually unlimited number of policies, procedures or other types of documents into the system. The system does not use or store personal health information.

How many users can be logged in simultaneously?

The Policy Manager does not limit the number of simultaneous users. You can have as many employees as you want editing documents and looking up policies and procedures at the same time.

Does your system integrate with Active Directory?

Yes, we have an Active Directory integration module that we can implement for you that allows your users to be authenticated to the system via your Active Directory. We will work with your IT department to implement this service.

Can your system download new employees from our HR Information System so that we don't have to add them manually?

Yes, the system has a mass import function that can import a list of employees in a text file. As long as your HRIS has the ability to export, it can interface with ellucid. Employee account terminations can also be maintained using the same method.

Do users have to log in with a username and password?

User authentication requirements are completely configurable in the ellucid system. You can require employees to log in with a username and secure password or enable anonymous read-only access from within your facility via IP authentication or guest access.

Does your system require us to load employee social security numbers?

No, the system does not store employee ID numbers or social security numbers, so there is no chance of compromising security on these items.

Do you regularly update your content to comply with additional, changing laws and regulations?

Yes, our content is updated continuously by our team of clinical, regulatory, and risk management experts.

How many different departments/job classifications does your application allow?

The system allows you to create an unlimited number of departments or job classifications.

Can I assign multiple departments/job classifications to the same employee?

Yes, the Policy Manager allows employees to be in multiple departments/job classifications.

How long do you keep archives of previous versions of policies?

Archived versions of policies are not removed from the software. Backups of software and databases are kept for a minimum of 10 years. If you require a longer retention time, we can retain backups of your software for a longer period of time if specified.

How is your system affected by HIPAA requirements?

The Policy Manager does not store any patient data; therefor HIPAA requirements are not applicable.

What types of usage data does your system track?

The Policy Manager keeps a complete audit trail and history on every document in the system, so that you can access any comments or changes made to any version of any policy. In addition, there are reports that can show you who has read or who has not read each policy. User management tools display the last login time of the users, and user logs list all of the policies viewed, with a date-time stamp. The competency module in ellucid allows policies to be assigned to users and will send out reminders if they have not been read.

Can you provide more information regarding your data center security?

The data center that we use employs the best practices in the industry for physical security, power availability, and network availability. All data cages are protected by biometric hand geometry readers (no keys) and configured with overhead cable distribution systems, dual AC and DC power distribution raceways, and anonymous cabinets that can be individually locked. Security is monitored 24/7 by onsite security guards and closed circuit TV. Concrete barriers, bullet-resistant walls, motion detection equipment, and physically separated shipping/receiving areas provide additional layers of security. The data center itself has greater than 99.99% uptime, which speaks volumes for the quality practices employed by the center.