OPERATIONAL INTELLIGENCE • RECORDS RETRIEVAL

The Layer Nobody Audits

A worked example of the reporting The Records Company can run on any book of business. Where records requests fail, on every side of the transaction, who caused it, and what it costs. One firm's complete operation, read end to end.

01 REQUEST INTAKE
Incomplete or inaccurate requests create risk.

02 SOURCE IDENTIFICATION
The right source isn't always the obvious one.

03 PLATFORM ROUTING
Breaks in process create silent failure.

04 QUALITY & DELIVERY
Issues surface late — when they cost more.

05 FINANCIAL IMPACT
Hidden failures cascade into real cost.

06 INSIGHT & CONTROL
Measure the full path. Fix what's hiding.

the Records company™

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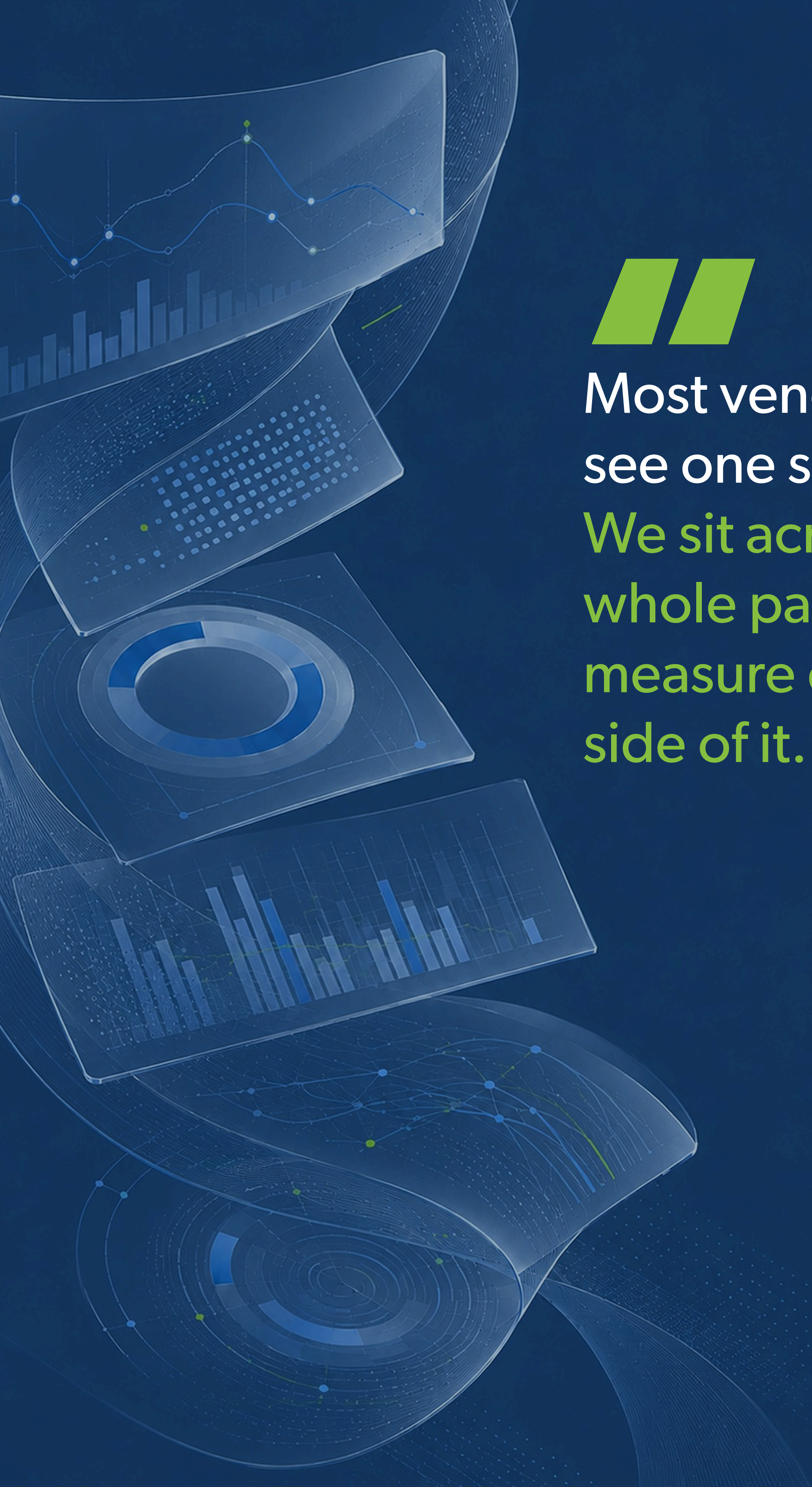


Most vendors see one slice.
We sit across the whole path and measure every side of it.

1. What this report is

This is a sample analytics case study, an example of the reporting The Records Company can deliver to a client. The Records Company is an operational intelligence company. We run records retrieval, and we measure the entire operation while we run it. This report is a sample of that measurement. We took one firm's complete retrieval operation, 27,111 requests and 270,150 processing notes over a seven-month engagement, and traced every outcome to its source. Nothing here is modeled or estimated. It is the operating record, read line by line.

We show this example for two reasons. It is the kind of reporting almost no one produces, because producing it means reading the whole record rather than running a single platform inside it. And it answers the question behind any panel decision: when a records request goes wrong, who actually caused it, and is the vendor you are considering able to tell you.

How we read a cause. We attribute a problem only where a note states the cause in plain language, so every figure here is a floor. A request the firm built with a wrong patient detail or facility is a firm-side issue, which we catch and fix. A provider that demands wet ink, sits on a request, or returns "no records" when records exist is a provider issue. A platform that loses, bounces, or gates a request is a copy-service issue. The authorization travels with every request we send. Where a platform reports it missing or wants a different signature format, we supply it and resubmit at no additional charge.

2. Three places a request fails, and we measure all three

A records request can fail on the way in or on the way through. On the way in, the information the firm supplied was wrong. On the way through, a provider or a copy-service platform mishandled a request that was correct. Most vendors see one slice. A self-serve portal never looks inside the firm's data. A platform never reports its own mistakes. We sit across the whole path and measure every side of it.

334
requests with a firm-side input issue we caught and corrected (1.2%)

787
requests where the provider was the cause (2.9%)

338
requests where a copy-service platform's process failed (1.2%)

321
false "no records" answers we proved wrong

Conservative floors, counted only where a note stated the cause. The sections that follow break each side down on its own terms

3. Inside the firm: the requester's input

Start with the firm's own side of the line, because no platform will ever report it. When a request comes in, we check it before it goes out. Most of the time it is clean. In this book, only 334 requests, about 1.2 percent, carried a real input issue that we caught and corrected before it cost time. That is a healthy intake, and it is worth knowing rather than guessing.

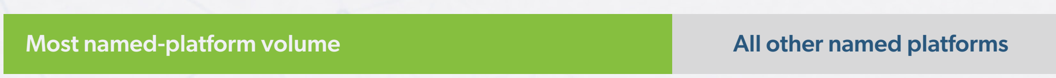
FIRM-SIDE INPUT ISSUE WE CAUGHT	REQUESTS
Wrong or mismatched patient detail	131
Wrong facility, entity, or routing target	81
Authorization or attestation detail gap	132

The pattern is plain. Almost all of it is a patient detail that did not match the provider's file, a facility or entity the request needed to be aimed at differently, or an authorization field that needed completing. Billing requests carry the issue slightly more often than records requests, which is the kind of thing a firm can act on once someone shows it to them. This is the inside view. A vendor that only runs a submission portal cannot produce this page, because it never looks back at the quality of what was submitted.

4. The platform layer this book runs on

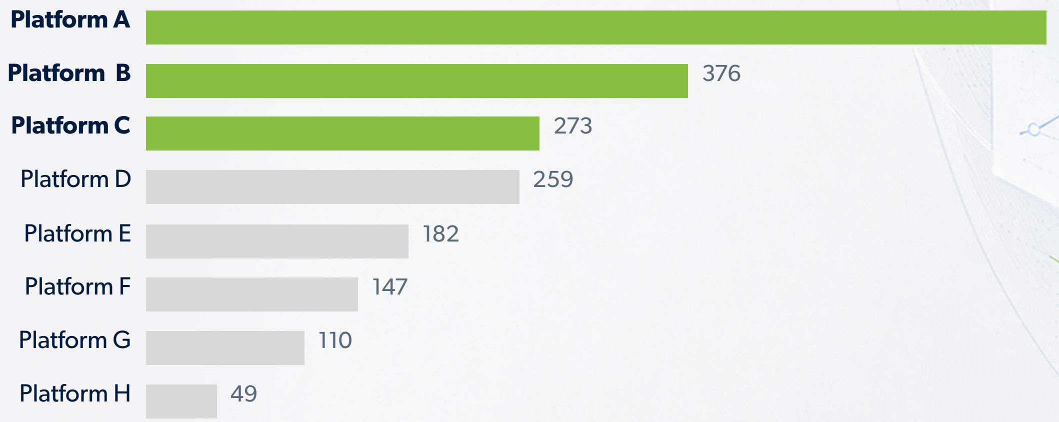
About one in four requests, 6,193 of 27,111, ran through a release-of-information copy service rather than going to the provider directly. On 1,865 of those the file named the platform. Line them up and one fact dominates.

> **A single corporate parent now controls most of the platform layer this book ran through.**



Share of the 1,865 requests where the platform was named in the file

Datavant absorbed Ciox in 2021 and now sits behind ChartSwap and Ontellus as well. A single corporate parent already controls most of the platform layer this book depends on, and Ontellus, the entity that bids to run retrieval directly, is part of that same family. Hold that thought.



Requests routed through each named platform. Consolidated family in green.

5. How the copy services fail

Set aside everything that traced to the firm's input or the provider. What remains is the platform's own process failing on its own terms, and the notes describe it the same way again and again. A bounce is the signature move. The platform refuses to route a request it should handle and sends the requester in a circle to find the right desk. It happened on 1,057 requests. None of these are about whether the records exist. They are about handling.

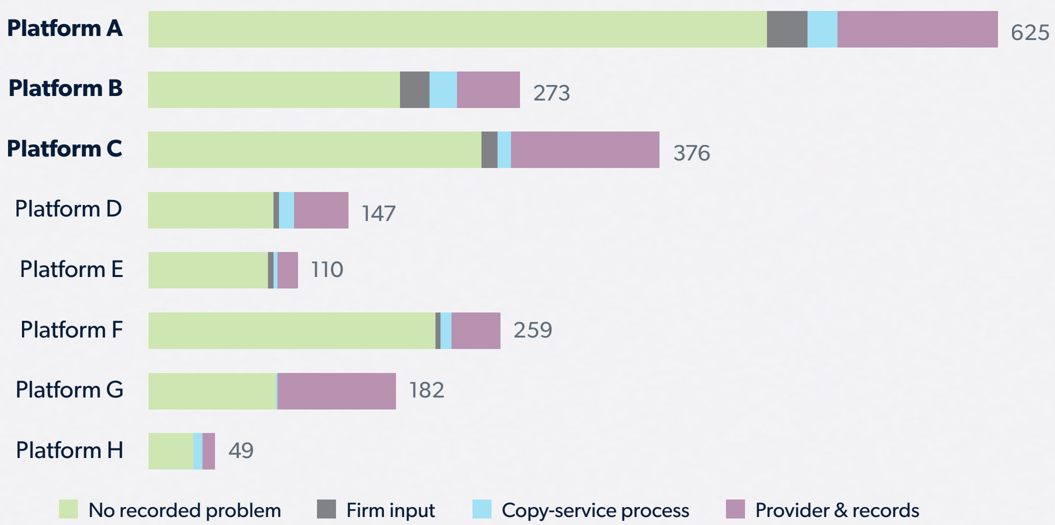
COPY-SERVICE PROCESS FAILURE	TIMES RECORDED
Lost our request on their own system	218
Bounced it back: "we do not handle this"	113
Demanded prepayment before any work	36
Cancelled it as unable to fulfill	3
Sent an incorrect redirect	1

> *"[Platform] rejected, due to them not handling this. They handle only hospital billing. Then we were told it is a clinic for physician billing and has to be submitted through the mail with a fifteen dollar check."*

> *"I think the redirect from [platform] is incorrect. It is referring to doctor's office visits, which is not what we are asking for."*

On raw trouble rate no platform here is clean, and two independents score worse than the consolidated-family platforms do, so we will not claim the family is the worst at everything. What we will say is that the family is no better for its scale. The most consolidated platforms turned over a problem on better than one in three requests routed to them. In this sample, consolidation did not appear to produce a reliability advantage.

Each bar = requests routed through that platform, by the primary cause of any problem

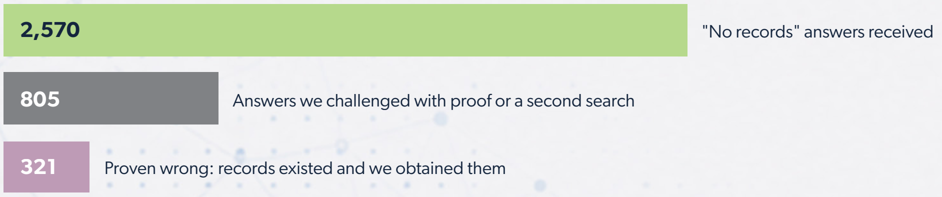


For each platform, routed requests by the primary cause of any problem: firm input, the platform's own process, or the provider and the records themselves.

6. The "no records" answers that were not true

This is the finding a client should care about most. A "no records" answer is not neutral. It closes a line of inquiry, lets a reserve assumption drop, and ends a search. When it is wrong, the cost lands on the client and no one knows it happened.

In this book we received 2,570 "no records" answers. We did not take them at face value. We challenged 805 of them with proof of treatment or a forced second search, and at least 321 came back with records that existed all along. Often the provider had not read the request, or the search was done carelessly. Sometimes the wrong records were sent the first time.



A conservative floor. We count an answer as overturned only where a note shows we pushed back and records were then delivered.

> *"Provider's copy service returned no records. As a courtesy we reviewed the medical records, confirmed radiology was performed, and escalated with the platform. Treatment found on page 8."*

More than seven in ten of the false “no records” we overturned traced to the most consolidated platform family. A vendor operating within the same ecosystem may not have the same visibility into these issues as an independent reviewer. We caught 321 of them. Left alone, every one would have been a dead claim file.

7. The providers: what they get wrong, and how they score

The third source is the provider, and the same method names their failures too. The largest by far is the wet-ink signature rule. Providers that refuse any electronic signature forced a re-sign on 635 requests in this book. That is not the firm’s error and it is not ours. It is a provider policy, and it is worth tracking because it is predictable and it is fixable with the right intake routing.

PROVIDER-SIDE ISSUE	REQUESTS
Wet-ink signature rule (no e-signature accepted)	635
Slow, system down, or staff out	126
Incomplete or missing pages	24
Wrong records sent	12

Provider performance also varies enormously, and a claims team can route and escalate on it once it is measured. We mapped 26,314 of the 27,111 requests to a specific facility. Two views below: where the volume sits, and where requests go to die.

HIGHEST-VOLUME PROVIDERS	REQUESTS	MEDIAN DAYS	NO RECORDS
Kaiser Permanente, Southern California	1,029	24	45
Kaiser Permanente, Northern California	644	10	36
Loma Linda University Medical Center	251	24	24
Riverside University Health System	228	33	20
Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center	221	32	16
Dignity Health California Hospital	159	25	12

SLOWEST PROVIDERS *(Minimum 25 Requests)*	REQUESTS	MEDIAN BUSINESS DAYS
First Health Medical Center	41	82
San Bernardino County Fire Dept.	31	75
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center	42	57
San Gorgonio Memorial Hospital	51	51
Cedars-Sinai Marina del Rey Hospital	31	51
West Los Angeles VA Medical Center	39	48

An 82-business-day median at one facility against a 10-day median at another is not anecdote. It is a routing and escalation decision a claim team can make on evidence, the moment someone reads the record.

8. What it costs, and what we absorb

A clean request in this book closed in a median of about 20 business days. A request a third party fumbled took a median of about 60. That is 40 added business days, roughly eight calendar weeks, on the same record while the claim behind it stayed open.

Here is the part that matters to a buyer. When a platform bounces a request, we resend it as part of the original fee. We do not bill the redirect back. In this one book we absorbed about 12,648 resubmissions across roughly 6,601 requests, one in four of everything we handled.

12,648

resubmissions we sent at no additional charge

1,057

requests a platform bounced or misrouted, each re-sent free

$198K to $379K

that rework, valued at our standard authorization rate

Absorption valued illustratively at our standard authorization rate, from one re-send per affected request at the low end to every recorded resubmission at the high end. A per-transaction vendor could have billed this back. We did not.

9. Why ownership decides who can measure this

Every number in this report depends on one thing: the party doing the measuring has no stake in what is being measured. In a panel decision that is not a detail. It is the whole question.

> **An independent vendor may be better positioned to evaluate copy-service performance across competing platforms. A platform-owned vendor would be evaluating performance within its own corporate ecosystem.**

This is structure, not accusation. Organizations naturally tend to focus reporting on areas most relevant to their own operations and objectives. The bounces, the lost requests, and above all the false "no records," more than seven in ten of which traced to the most consolidated platform family in this book, are exactly the findings a platform-owned vendor is least likely to surface and not well positioned to detect. The party best positioned to score this layer is the one that owns none of it, competes with none of it, and reads the whole record. That is us. We have no platform to protect and no provider to flatter, which is why we can score the firm, the provider, and the platform with the same hand.

We have no platform to protect and no provider to flatter.

10. What we propose

Operational intelligence, with the retrieval included

The Records Company runs the retrieval and reads the operation around it. This report shows the measurement no platform-owned vendor will give you: a standing, independent view of where your records work succeeds and fails, on every side of the transaction.

Firm-side quality.
The input issues we catch and fix before they cost claim time, reported back so the firm can reduce them at the source.

Copy-service scorecards. Volume, trouble rate, bounce rate, and false "no records" for every platform your panel touches, the most consolidated families included, refreshed each quarter.

Provider scorecards. Turnaround, wet-ink rules, and "no records" rates by facility, so claim teams route and escalate on evidence. We can run this for a single client's book as readily as for an entire panel. The data exists in every retrieval operation. Almost no one reads it. We do, and we have no platform to protect.

Method. Source data is the complete operating record of one firm's retrieval engagement: 27,111 requests and 270,150 processing notes over a seven-month engagement, weighted toward California. Provider identity is parsed from each request header. Cause is read from the plain text of processing notes and attributed only where a note states it, so all figures are conservative floors. Signature rejections are attributed to the provider, since they reflect a provider policy against electronic signatures rather than a firm or vendor error. A "no records" answer is counted as overturned only where a note shows we pushed back and records were then delivered. Cycle times are median business days from first note to final note, excluding weekends. Absorption is valued illustratively at our standard authorization rate. Patient identities and the firm's identity are withheld. Figures drawn from the engagement are real and unaltered.

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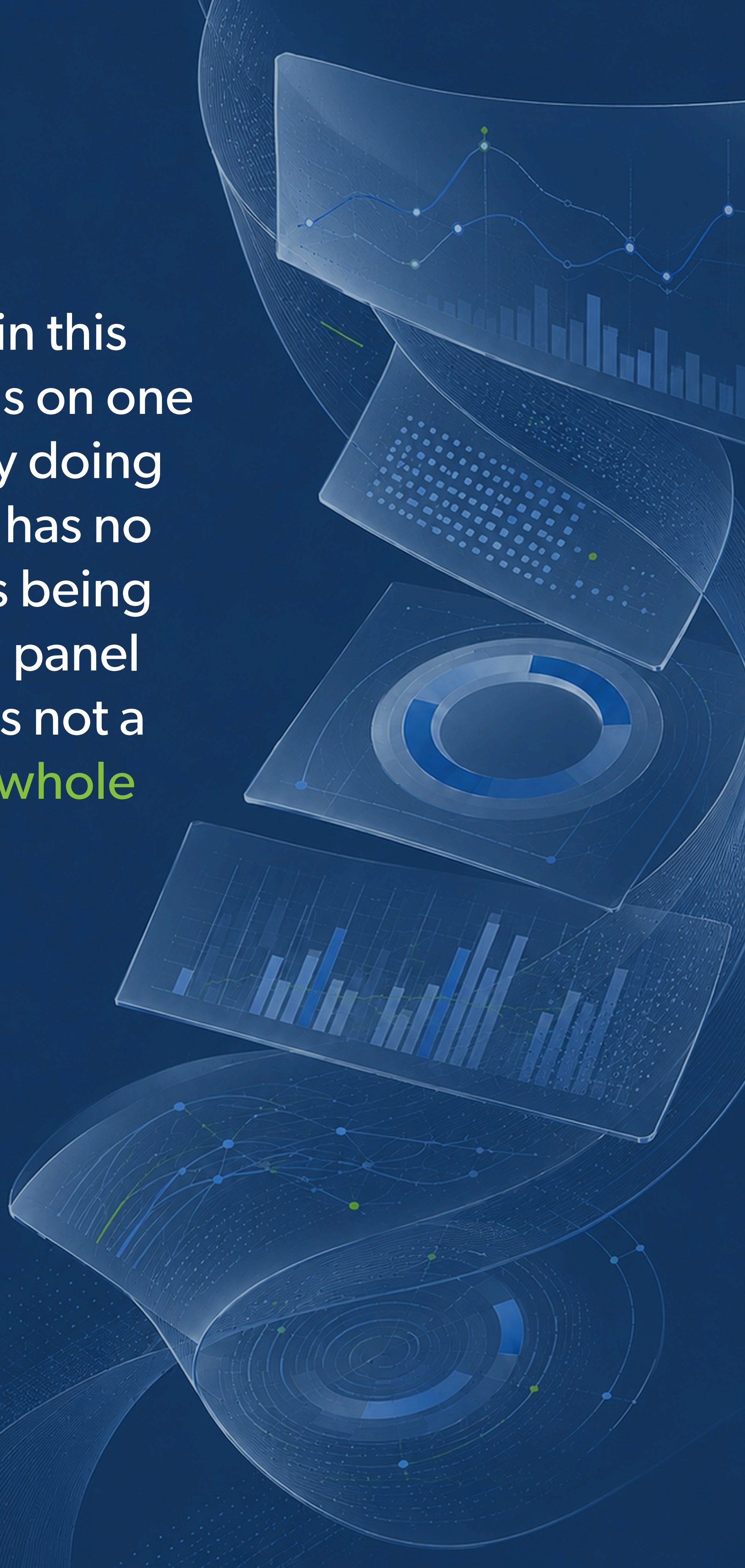

Measure the full path. Fix what's hiding.

Independent reporting that scores the firm, the provider, and the platform with the same hand.

Operational intelligence for records retrieval

1. **FIRM-SIDE QUALITY**
   Input issues caught before they cost claim time.

2. **COPY-SERVICE SCORECARDS**
   Trouble rate, bounce rate, and false no-records visibility.

3. **PROVIDER SCORECARDS**
   Turnaround, wet-ink rules, and no-records rates by facility.

No platform to protect.
No provider to flatter.

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