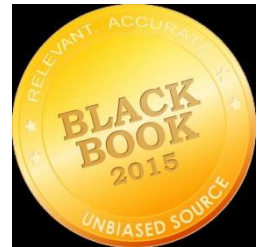


Healthcare research firm toughens standards, puts kibosh on hospital resellers rating EHR products, as more CIOs reap the profits of peddling vendor software

Black Book, recognized for crowdsource polling user perceptions on hundreds of healthcare managed services and technology products announce today that current and future Electronic Health Record survey results will be audited to remove ballots cast by provider organizations that serve as the resellers, VARs and/or channel partners for the vendor rated. Eliminating the conflict of interest is a manifestation of Black Book's continuing commitment to eliminate prejudice in the delivery of impartial vendor evaluations.



Black Book's survey inspection of the nearly 29,000 EHR user ballots collected from Q3 2014 to Q1 2015 uncovered 33 hospital resellers casting EHR satisfaction and loyalty responses for 740 physician practices and two dozen small affiliate inpatient facilities, prompting supplementary audits and an extended resurveying phase to purify what Black Book deemed intentional bias.

Black Book also found that 93 percent of physician practices and small hospitals that procured an EHR product directly from the CIO's office of a flagship hospital felt obligated to only implement that EHR from the hospital reseller, or face financial consequences including interrupted referral streams, segregation from clinician data sharing and accountable care organizations, and exclusion from hospital communications.

"It's not Black Book's issue that community physicians were pressured into implementing a particular EHR from their leader hospital," said Doug Brown, Partner of Black Book. "Our issue is that the hospital IT managers responsible for (re)selling and overseeing EHR system implementations for particular EHR suites were also grading the product satisfaction and service delivery for the physicians they actually sold to."

A post-survey sampling of 300 community physicians and inpatient facilities under 100 beds in January identified 48% of larger hospital channel partners were scoring the satisfaction of the product in place of, or in tandem with independent end users.

"That is no different than soliciting a salesman to rate his own merchandise which in turn leads to improved or influenced sales," said Brown. "We determined it was judicious to disallow hospital channel

partners from rating their physician clients' satisfaction and loyalty, in order that Black Book could get a more accurate measurement of true user experiences in 2015."

Black Book's internal review revealed that hospital managers selling EHR products directly to community physicians and other inpatient facilities also on average rated that EHR up to 48% higher in satisfaction and 73% higher in vendor loyalty than the actual physicians and staff using the product.

Black Book also has delayed the announcement of their annual top rankings of EHRs from the customary January to mid-March 2015, in order to complete the resurvey and audits of over 3,000 respondents.

96% of physician practices resurveyed stated they are unsure if the hospital reselling their EHR actually reap profits from the vendor from the sale or maintenance of the EHR.

59% of community and clinic physician practices who purchased their EHR from the hospital channel partner stated their EHR decision was strong-armed by the hospital, and 80% felt the pressure to concede to the EHR the hospital that was reselling, or being ultimately left out of community health information exchanges, referral networks, physician alerts and patient portals.

"Unlike all the other tech industries - from outsourcing to banking to energy - that Black Book has surveyed since 1999 globally, software resellers were typically evident and easy to exclude so that the salespeople were not rating their own wares," said Doug Brown, Managing Partner of Black Book Market Research.

"However, the US hospital and physician software market which Black Book fully entered in 2009 has not been so apparent. We've had mounting objections through 2014 from end users and competitive vendors alike pleading Black Book to restrict provider channel partners reselling for vendors from scoring their own product satisfaction ratings. Now that's been rectified."

Despite the two month delay in their research reporting, Black Book anticipates this year's exhaustive scrutiny process and ultimate methodology shift will fortify their reputation for elevated objectivity in satisfaction and vendor loyalty surveying.

About Black Book™

Black Book Rankings, a division of Black Book Market Research LLC, provides healthcare IT users, media, investors, analysts, quality minded vendors, and prospective software system buyers, pharmaceutical manufacturers, and other interested sectors of the clinical technology industry with comprehensive comparison data of the industry's top respected and competitively performing technology vendors. The largest user opinion poll of its kind in healthcare IT, Black Book™ collects over 450,000 viewpoints on information technology and outsourced services vendor performance annually. Black Book was founded in 2000, is internationally recognized for over 15 years of customer satisfaction polling, particularly in technology, services, outsourcing and offshoring industries.

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