

# How Optum Partnered with Intangent to Implement Varicent and Cut Cost Per Plan Participant by 35%

## CASE STUDY

**-50%**

MANUAL  
PROCESSES

**17,000+**

END USERS  
IMPACTED

**-35%**

COST PER PLAN  
PARTICIPANT



"The Intangent team was very friendly and excited to work with us. They had a lot of compensation and incentive compensation knowledge. They helped us figure out what we needed from the system, and they understood what we were looking for."

**ABIGAIL JACKSON,**  
QVC Administration Manager, Optum



**Optum** is a subsidiary of UnitedHealth Group that works to make healthcare simpler and more effective.

## Highlights

### Challenges

- Managing incentive compensation for over 17,000 employees
- Administering highly complex and unique incentive-based compensation programs
- Finding a partner that could help them implement a new SPM solution

### Solution

- Partner with Intangent: an SPM deployment expert with 15 years experience
- Build a comprehensive project plan for implementation
- Set up automation and self-serve options to save time

### Results

- 17,000+ end users successfully onboarded
- 2+ days of work saved per plan (over 50% reduction)
- 35% average reduction in cost per plan participant

# Challenges

## Finding the right partner to help them configure and implement a new SPM solution

As the manager in charge of quarterly variable compensation (QVC) for Optum, Abigail Jackson has a lot on her plate: The small team of twelve oversees incentive compensation for over 17,000 employees working at partner organizations.

“At first we were calculating payments manually,” Abigail explains. “Then, we moved to an older, out of date system that could not handle the expansion of participants and the complex calculations we need to administer.”

Unfortunately, the sales performance management tool that the QVC team was using required a lot of manual input and had limited automation and reporting capabilities.

“My team was having to ingest and essentially manually load a lot of the data that our partners provided,” Abigail says. “We would have to do our own QA, because our old system didn’t give us a way to compare data month-over-month.”

Optum needed to switch to a sales performance management system with advanced automation, better reporting, and more a user-friendly interface as the incentive compensation programs they oversaw continued to grow.

“The tool we had wouldn’t have been able to handle the expansion we had planned,”  
Abigail says. “We needed a better system.”

But setting up an entirely new sales performance management system is a daunting task, especially for an enterprise with highly complex and unique, incentive-based compensation programs. Abigail and her team needed a partner to help them customize, design, and implement the perfect solution for their company.

Their tight timeline wouldn’t allow for in-house implementation, even if they could find the resources. And after their lukewarm experience with their previous tool, they really wanted a new system that could meet and surpass their expectations.

“Because we were replacing an underperforming tool we had only implemented a few years prior, we really needed to do a good job. We wanted an implementation partner with the experience and know-how that comes from working deep with the software across multiple instances.”

**“We wanted an implementation partner with the experience and know-how that comes from working deep with the software across multiple instances.”**

# Solution

## An expert Varicent partner with 15+ years of experience

Nancy, Abigail, and their team chose Varicent as their new sales and revenue performance solution.

Then, they chose Intangent for their expertise and experience with Varicent. Nancy had worked with the team in the past, with very positive results.

*“In comparison to my experience with other vendors, Intangent was far superior in terms of their expertise,” Nancy says. “And working with them was so easy.”*

For the first month of their partnership, Intangent worked closely with Optum’s QVC team to understand their system and what they needed from Varicent. They put together all of the necessary requirements, developed a solution design to meet their needs, and built a comprehensive project plan.

*“They were very friendly and excited to work with us,” Abigail says. “They had a lot of compensation and incentive compensation knowledge. They helped us figure out what we needed from the system, and they understood what we were looking for.”*

The Varicent implementation went very smoothly. Intangent helped the QVC team set up exceptions and automate incentive payments for partner organizations that weren’t in the Optum network.

“Now, people who aren’t in our system can log in with a username and password,” Abigail explains. “Previously, they depended on us to feed all of their data manually into the system. For some partners, we had to run their data manually, because it was so complex that our old system just couldn’t handle it.”

Intangent set up Varicent to automatically differentiate between different employee and partner populations.

“Varicent knows specifically what metrics and what awards apply to different parts of the population, even within the same plan,” Abigail explains. “In the past, some of our partners weren’t able to do that, and awards weren’t being paid correctly. It was a large feat for our partners to go through thousands of employees every month and make sure they were coded correctly. Intangent was able to work with us and create a whole new automated submission process for these specific plans.”

Varicent’s automation and self-serve options—expertly set up with Intangent’s help—are also game-changers for the QVC team.

“It was taking a lot of time and effort to load all of the data manually. Now, data owners are able to just go directly to Varicent and load their data, and it does all of that work for us,” Abigail adds. “The businesses don’t have to wait for us anymore. We can give them results the next day.”

And perhaps most importantly, working with Intangent to deploy Varicent has meant working with a partner that the QVC team can trust to handle sensitive data.

“The type of business that we run is unique for an incentive compensation program, and some of that information is proprietary,” Abigail explains. “It was a huge benefit to be able to trust the people we were working with so that we didn’t have to give them placeholder data. It’s a very trusting relationship.”

**“They had a lot of compensation and incentive compensation knowledge. They helped us figure out what we needed from the system, and they understood what we were looking for.”**

# Results

## 2+ days of work saved per plan and a 35% reduction in cost per plan participant

Today, with Varicent fully set up and helping the QVC team manage incentive-based payments, Optum has seen a 35% average reduction in cost per plan participant.

The team also saves a tremendous amount of time they used to spend on manual processes. On average, Abigail estimates that Varicent saves them 2 days of work per plan each month.

“The time savings alone allows my team to be able to do more plans and help more people,” Abigail explains. “Instead of wasting two days looking at one plan’s data, we can look at all of our plans in a day, thanks to the automation.”

Abigail and the QVC team can use that extra time to provide high-value support and perform more statistical analysis for leadership, instead of just trying to make sure that awards are being paid out correctly.

The changes have also given the QVC team higher visibility with their partners.

“We have been more empowered to speak with leaders of our organization,” Abigail says. “We work with directors and leaders to help them understand their plan. It’s given my team more access to higher leadership to show them what we can do for them and how we can benefit their system.”

With Intangent's help, the QVC team was able to add over 17,000 end users to the solution. They expect to increase that number by an additional 50% within the next three years.

Abigail, Nancy, and the QVC team are thrilled with Varicent's results. And they credit Intangent's expertise. As Abigail puts it:

"The team at Intangent is flexible and knowledgeable. They helped us expand our thinking. You don't have to lead them to where you want to go. They really guided us to what we could do and what the system could achieve."

**"The team at Intangent is flexible and knowledgeable. They helped us expand our thinking. You don't have to lead them to where you want to go. They really guided us to what we could do and what the system could achieve."**





# **Maximize your sales performance management potential.**

**Find out how Intangent can help you  
plan, implement, manage, and optimize  
leading SPM solutions today.**

**TALK TO AN SPM EXPERT**