



# Southeast Alabama Medical Center Transitions to Automated Workflow, Reducing Risk and Improving Compliance

Medical center drastically reduces contract turn-around time  
and increases process efficiencies



## At a glance

For years, Southeast Alabama Medical Center (SAMC) relied on a combination of spreadsheets, paper-based records, and SharePoint databases to manage compliance incidents, hotline calls, and audits. Yet the organization lacked a comprehensive, modern approach to compliance, carving out policies and contracts from the process and managing them in SharePoint. Contract execution, in particular, was often delayed or incomplete, increasing the legal and financial risks to the organization.

In 2017, a newly-appointed compliance officer at SAMC sought a single software application that could manage all of the compliance data,

reporting, and activities, without requiring a stand-alone contract management or policy solution to replace the organization's manual, paper-heavy approval process.

SAMC selected SAI Global's Compliance Risk solution to serve as both the catalyst for elevating its compliance initiatives, as well as assisting the company enterprise-wide with improving policy and contract management. By 2018, the company completed implementation of the application's Contract Management module, immediately realizing enhanced contract accuracy, process efficiencies, and executive communication.



SOUTHEAST ALABAMA  
MEDICAL CENTER





## Background

SAMC is a not-for-profit community health system dedicated to improving the health and quality of life of the residents of southeast Alabama, southwest Georgia, and the Florida Panhandle. It employs a staff of more than 2,700, supported by a medical staff of approximately 330 physicians representing virtually every medical specialty. A 420-bed regional referral center, SAMC has achieved a reputation of providing exceptional diagnostic, clinical, surgical, and patient care services.

## Challenge

Like many healthcare organizations with limited compliance resources, SAMC traditionally utilized spreadsheet files to track and report on compliance activities. But the approach had significant limitations on the organization's ability to meet its obligations and avoid operational risk.

Moreover, SAMC's compliance department focused solely on incident and regulatory issues, managing policies and contracts separately in SharePoint sites that lacked version control, automated approvals, and other features that were much needed.

Contracts, in particular, were managed through a disjointed and inefficient process. Each document was manually received, then copies were hand-delivered to every person (or their administrative staff) for required

signatures. Without an automated system for the workflow, there was no insight into the stage of any contract, commonly resulting in approval delays or assumptions that agreements were fully executed when they were not. As a result, "final" copies of the contracts were often difficult to track down.

The procedure also resulted in accounting challenges because of outdated vendor and supplier contracts that remained in the system for years, leading to inappropriate approvals based on invalid agreements.

SAMC sought a comprehensive solution provider to achieve a streamlined process that could keep contracts moving through the review and approval process efficiently, provide updates at each step in the process, and secure final signature quickly.

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—Deborah Reif, Corporate Compliance Officer  
at Southeast Alabama Medical Center



# Solution

SAMC stakeholders evaluated multiple software solution providers, focused on those with heavy healthcare experience. The organization selected SAI Global's Compliance Risk solution due to its ability to automate assessments, enable accountability, and provide an audit trail, thus elevating the effectiveness of the SAMC compliance program.

The organization also relies heavily on the solution's knowledge base that houses a centralized, actionable regulatory content library. "While part of the base product, the Compliance Workspace is much more functional than any regulatory repository I've ever used and will help me ensure we're compliant," said Deborah Reif, Compliance Officer at SAMC.

But the organization has realized the greatest advances in contract management. With the new solution, the approval process is completely automated. Now when a contract is received, it is entered into the web-based repository, automatically kicking off a workflow process that notifies each signatory via email that the document is ready for

review and approval. With a click, each party can sign off without even logging into the system. At the end of the workflow, the fully-executed copy is readily available for easy retrieval and review. Furthermore, access is completely mobile-friendly, to keep contracts flowing even when employees work remotely.

"The system is so streamlined now that we always know where any contract is in the process, and can typically have a final draft approved in less than 24 hours because of the solution's access and simplicity," added Reif. "And there's nothing but more simplification on the horizon."

With SAI Global's Compliance Risk solution's configurable dashboard, the organization has also enhanced its reporting to leadership.

"The graphical interface enables me to use images to highlight the contract review and approval cycles in a way that's measurable," explained Reif. "That level of at-a-glance detail and information has really improved our executive communication."

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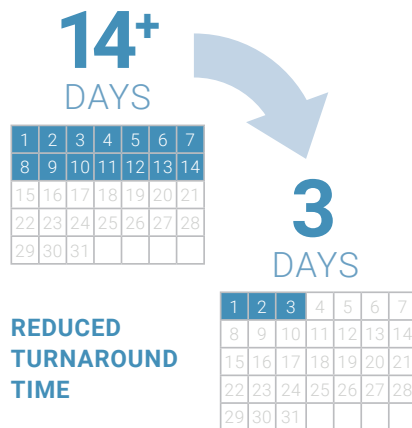
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# Results

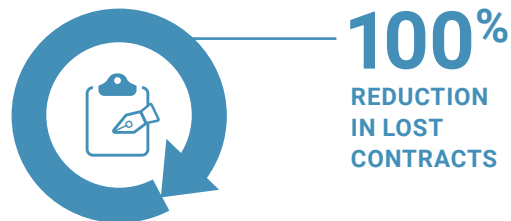
Since implementing the Contract Management module, SAMC has realized significant benefits to its processes that have yielded operational efficiencies and savings.

- With proper documentation to leverage, SAMC has reduced the turnaround time for vendor and supplier contract negotiations from 14-plus days to an average of just three for pre-approval collaboration.

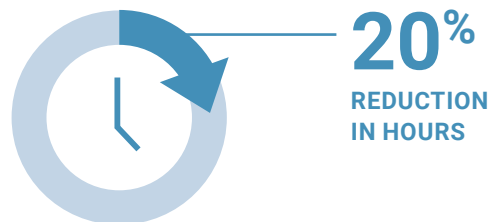


- By eliminating ineffective and expired agreements and adding a workflow step for procurement agreements to upload a PO, the organization has saved on inappropriate approvals.

- Administrative staff is no longer required to hand-deliver contracts to facilitate approvals, freeing up resources and resulting in a 100% reduction in lost contracts.



- SAMC has seen an approximate 20 percent reduction in hours by moving to an automated process.



And SAMC expects even more results as it continues to implement additional modules. "I think five years from now, we're going to be pushing any limit that SAI Global's Compliance Risk solution even has, because we know where we want to go, and we're confident the solution has the capacity and capability to get us there," said Reif.

Days to Approval	Counts
>14 days	4
3–7 days	27
1–3 days	29
<1 days	48
New contracts that went through entire workflow process	108
Pending Approvals	Days
Average	2.62
Median	1.00
Mode	0.00
Imported Agreements	450

[Contact us](#) to learn more, or to [request a demo](#) to see how SAI Global can help your organization **advance confidently**.

## About SAI Global

At SAI Global, we help organizations proactively manage risk to achieve business excellence, growth, sustainability and ultimately, create trust.

Our integrated risk management solutions are a combination of world-class tech platforms, services and advisory capabilities that operate across the entire lifecycle allowing businesses to focus on opportunities presented by uncertainty. Together, these tools and

knowledge enable customers to develop a holistic, integrated view of risk. In Australia, we are also a leading provider of settlement-related services; company, personal and property information.

SAI Global's head office is located in Chicago, Illinois. We employ more than 2,000 people across 28 countries and 51 locations across Europe, the Middle East, Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific.

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