Challenge:
In 2007, the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) partnered with CompuSystems, Inc (CSI) to handle registration for its annual conference. HIMSS faced the challenge of having real-time membership status information available at the time of registration. HIMSS needed a solution to speed up the membership validation process, streamline and accurately process registration, and ensure members were correctly charged.

Solution:
CSI utilized web services – a software system designed to support machine-to-machine interaction over a network – to permit its registration system to seamlessly exchange data with the HIMSS association membership system in a highly-efficient manner. The integration of the two systems allowed them to communicate with real-time data.

Through integration of the two systems, it was no longer necessary for the society to compile membership updates and transfer to the registration provider in a batch on a scheduled basis, which had created delays in their members’ registration process. “While batch processing had its use in the past, association clients today are demanding a more sophisticated way in which they collect and use data. Integrating systems allows for instantaneous membership file updating and a more efficient registration process,” said Rob Sarkis, CIO and Vice President of Information Technology for CSI.

Real-time processes allow members to not only register for a conference via Internet or onsite, but also allow them to update and/or validate membership status, become a new member, and pay fees that are commensurate with membership status.

Results:
The integrated system allowed HIMSS to look up and auto-populate member contact information at the time of registration, and implement member subcategories, such as Chapter Members. In turn, customers had the opportunity to renew membership, if necessary, and register for the annual show instantaneously. There was no need for members to re-key information once they were validated and fees were accurately computed at the point of registration. HIMSS will use the same integrated solution for its European conference in November 2008. Its last European conference in 2007 saw an attendance of about 2,000 people.

The web-based integration key functions:
1) Enhances customers’ experience by:
   i) allowing immediate availability of membership validation
   ii) permitting members to receive registration discount without delay, thus improving customer satisfaction
2) Delivers data to event organizers in real time; no need to wait for the batch processing of previous approaches
3) Renders significant cost savings in processing and credit issuance

“Our expectations were handled well. CSI earned high marks on a process that greatly impacted the outcome of our conference. HIMSS will definitely use this solution in the future.”
— Vish Kalambur, HIMSS Senior Director of Software Applications