

# Customer Snapshot



## Alegent Health improves turnaround time and ensures positive patient ID by implementing the VANTAGE workflow solution

Alegent Health, like many anatomical pathology labs, has experienced an increase in the volume and complexity of cases over the last five years. Several factors made it more difficult for the lab to efficiently process orders and predict turnaround times with accuracy while maintaining the desired emphasis on positive patient ID. In 2003, the lab's productivity numbers were just above the 50th percentile mark when compared to a national benchmarking survey.

Although the lab realized many improvements from initial Lean efforts, the team realized that to reach the next level of efficiency, they needed a technology solution. This led them to implement the Ventana VANTAGE workflow solution.

*“VANTAGE is the most comprehensive, most in-depth system out there in my opinion.”*

*- Jan Mahoney, Lab Coordinator*



Located in Omaha, NE

- 9 hospitals
- 42 primary care clinics
- 1200 physicians

### Histology Volume

- 130,000 slides/year
- 38,000 cases/year

### AP Staff

- Lab coordinator
- 6 histotechnologists
- 4 lab assistants
- 3 cytotechnologists
- Pathology assistants

### Ventana Patient Focused Solution

- 1 VANTAGE workflow solution
- 1 BenchMark ULTRA stainer
- 1 BenchMark XT IHC/ISH stainer
- 2 BenchMark IHC/ISH stainers
- 2 NexES Special Stains systems
- 2 Ventana VIAS image analysis systems

## Why VANTAGE?

Alegent Health reviewed several solutions before selecting VANTAGE. Jan Mahoney, Lab Coordinator, recognized early on that she needed more than just a barcode tracking system. A barcode can still be placed on the wrong sample, and it does not ensure a Lean efficient workflow. Jan wanted a solution with the capability to:

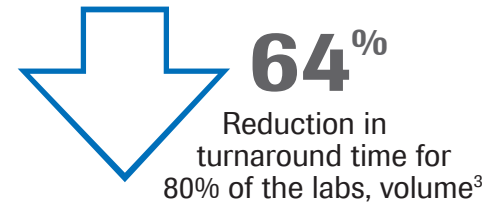
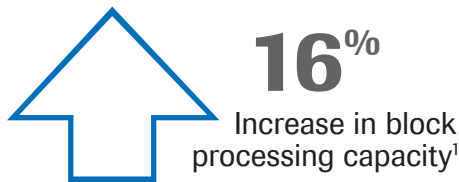
- Help cases move through the lab faster
- Error proof the workflow for the best in patient identification
- Provide real-time visibility into lab performance
- Integrate instrumentation into the workflow

The laboratory leadership team decided that the Ventana VANTAGE system best met those criteria. VANTAGE effectively improved both turnaround time and positive patient ID.



*“It (VANTAGE) has saved us a tremendous amount of time. At the desk, here, I can’t imagine not having it (VANTAGE) now.”*

*-Julie Cymbalista, Histotech*



## Improved capacity and turnaround time

Ventana workflow consultants helped Alegent Health identify opportunities to improve the lab’s workflow. The implementation of the VANTAGE workflow solution addressed many of these opportunities and reduced Alegent Health’s non-value added process steps by 32%. With VANTAGE, the lab was equipped to:

- Replace paper processes with faster, electronic versions
- Standardize work at grossing, embedding, and microtomy
- Refocus the staff’s time to critical histology tasks

After removing these time-consuming tasks from the process, Jan saw a 16% increase in the quantity of blocks the lab could process per day. She also enjoyed a 64% reduction in throughput time for 80% of the lab’s volume, without adding staff or instrumentation. These improvements moved Jan’s lab into the 22nd percentile for productivity.

*“I like VANTAGE because slides are scanned throughout the process, so I feel more comfortable that the right tissue is on the right slide.”*

*- Dr. Patrick Bogard, MD, Pathologist*

## Complete chain of custody and improved quality

Studies have shown that slide labeling alone accounts for 67% of specimen misidentification<sup>4</sup>. **Since implementing VANTAGE, Alegent Health has reduced slide labeling errors by 99.9%<sup>5</sup>.**

Alegent Health uses VANTAGE to:

- Print barcoded slide labels, eliminating errors from handwriting
- Eliminate relabeling, as one label works on all Ventana instruments
- Ensure that two patient identifiers are on every slide
- Record and analyze quality issues, making compliance and correction easier

## Summary

The VANTAGE workflow system delivered improved workflow and enhanced functionality, enabling Alegent Health to improve employee morale, increase slide throughput, and optimize positive patient ID. Alegent Health is now seen as the top AP laboratory in Omaha with fast, reliable turnaround times and higher client satisfaction levels.



1 - Data provided by Jan Mahoney 01-01-09  
2 - Ventana workflow assessment 05-20-08  
3 - “Leading Lean” workshop WS071, NSH Birmingham, AL, 10-06-09, Presented by Jan Mahoney

4 - Am J Clin Pathol 2007; 128:423-429  
5 - Data provided by Jan Mahoney 06-08-2010