

AHIMA's Brand New BAG

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Health information where and when it's needed—it's a simple, visionary idea. But achieving this goal will take big changes in the way healthcare is managed and delivered. In fact, this is a “big audacious goal (BAG),” and one that AHIMA is now working to shepherd into reality over the next several years through the work of its staff, members, and industry partners that share a vision of using health information to save and improve lives.

As part of its new strategic plan, AHIMA launched the BAG of ensuring doctors, patients, payers, caregivers-everyone-can access health information when it is needed for care or business, and in a timely fashion. The term “Big Hairy Audacious Goal” was coined in the 1994 book *Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies*, and is a business statement that works to focus an organization on an easy to understand, long-term goal that is difficult to achieve but audacious and revolutionary. One famous BAG is the promise made by John F. Kennedy in May 1961 to land a man on the Moon and safely return him to Earth before the end of the decade. At first it seemed next to impossible, but hard work and dedication led to the BAG's completion in 1969.

Achieving AHIMA's BAG will require concerted focus from multiple stakeholders, advancements in health information exchange (HIE) technology and standards, and a shift in attitude from some health stakeholders regarding consumer engagement in their health record. But the seeds of this goal have been set with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' “meaningful use” EHR Incentive Program, the recent launch of dozens of HIEs, and the growing interest from consumers to use health information via computer apps to play a role in their healthcare. HIM has a large role to play in achieving this BAG, a message AHIMA staff have been spreading during state CSA meetings and when talking to influential government officials. AHIMA has encouraged all its members and the rest of the healthcare industry to work toward this BAG, and turn it from a snappy HIM elevator speech to a reality for all individuals.

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