Transforming social service delivery

With cloud client-computing, Capital Area Human Services transformed service delivery via better employee mobility, productivity and collaboration, while saving 35 percent on TCO

Business needs

For staff at the Capital Area Human Services agency — doctors, nurses, social workers, admins and others — technology had become an obstacle to productivity and collaboration, undermining their mission to provide health and social services to the people of Baton Rouge.

Solutions at a glance

• Cloud Client-Computing
• Deployment Services
• Networking
• Servers
• Storage
• Support Services

Business results

• Facilitates mobility, productivity and collaboration
• Enhances service delivery
• Improves security and HIPAA compliance
• Makes IT staff more productive

Saves 30% on storage costs

Lowers five-year TCO by 35%
“On-the-go” best describes most of the 300 employees of Capital Area Human Services (CAHS) in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Doctors, nurses and social workers see some 20,000 clients across its nine clinics — plus schools, prisons and client homes — delivering nearly 80 healthcare and social services.

When IT Director Bruce Salisbury arrived two years ago, the three IT staff manning the CAHS help desk had their hands full. “The challenges were huge,” he says. “They spent lots of drive time to help case workers with problems. But that kept them from helping others or working on more strategic projects.”

Transforming work with cloud client-computing

With experience in virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI), Salisbury aimed to transform the CAHS workforce by deploying a centralized VDI model. He turned to Dell EMC and its client cloud-computing solution, including the Wyse clients and Dell EMC networking, storage and servers.

Salisbury engaged Dell EMC Services to implement the solution and backs it with Dell EMC ProSupport Mission Critical service. “We saved months of time by having Dell EMC Deployment Services stand it up for us, showing us how to configure it all and making the process quite painless,” he says. “And ProSupport is always fast to respond, in the rare times we’ve needed them, especially since the Dell EMC PowerEdge servers are so reliable.”

Cost-effective user productivity booster

In looking for a VDI solution, Salisbury evaluated Citrix, but found Dell EMC to be the most cost-effective solution. “We’ll save 35 percent on a five-year TCO with the Dell EMC VDI solution,” he says. “By installing VMware vSAN ReadyNodes, we were able to utilize HCI. The PowerEdge rack servers were ready to go out of the box for hosting our storage requirements. We saved 30 percent compared to a standalone SAN.”

The centrally managed VDI with just one master workstation to update saves IT staff time and effort, while delivering more performance to end users than their standalone PCs could previously. Security and HIPAA compliance are also improved. But the main beneficiaries are the users and, ultimately, the clients.

“All of our applications have seen a benefit in performance after upgrading to the latest generation of PowerEdge servers,” Salisbury says. “All of our users can now log in and access applications in seconds, rather than minutes. We also can support BYOD so much better than before, and our help-desk calls have fallen by 75 percent.”

Salisbury reports that the Dell EMC VDI solution has completely transformed how they work. “Most important,” he adds, “VDI users can now log in from anywhere with the ability to collaborate and be productive right away, thanks to the VDI, enabled by the PowerEdge servers and Wyse clients.”

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IT Director, Capital Area Human Services
Dell EMC PowerEdge servers handle application workloads

CAHS is using Dell EMC PowerEdge R740 rack servers, to host all application workloads. Those include SQL databases with the scheduling system, nurse aid registry, patient document image repository and SharePoint. In addition, the servers run the enterprise content management system, web and domain services and security appliances.

Salisbury chose this model for its small footprint. “We were able to order the servers to our specs, so we could use 10GbE connectivity with our existing Dell EMC Networking S4048-ON switches,” he says, noting that OpenManage and iDRAC are used to manage the servers through a single pane. “iDRAC also notifies us of any hardware issues, which helps us address them proactively,” he adds.

“Now we can run our entire organization from a single rack of Dell EMC PowerEdge rack servers for VDI and the R740s for app workloads, and all of it virtualized with VMware,” he says.

Salisbury reports that all CAHS apps have more performance after upgrading to the Dell EMC PowerEdge servers. “And by consolidating storage within our PowerEdge servers,” he says, “we’re saving money on power, cooling and management, too.”

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