St. Joseph Hospital

Network Stabilization / Y2K Remediation – Case Study

Quality

Service

Dedication

Integrity

Value

St. Joseph Hospital in Orange California has been serving the needs of the community since 1929. This hospital has grown to become a state of the art medical care facility, the flagship of the St. Joseph Health System. In the past five years the hospital has experienced several significant upgrades that were aimed at providing better healthcare to all those in need. The Hospital is owned by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange and their mission is carried out in part through the hospital.

In 1998, hospital management decided to implement a new information system; "Meditech" that had be integrated with other systems throughout the facility. This new system was expected to optimize the utilization of resources throughout the hospital and provide centralized management of information. The hospital's computer network was comprised of 30 NT servers, 43 Netware servers and as many as 15 V-LANs. There are roughly 2,000 users on this network, with as many as 400 printers scattered throughout the multi-building campus.

The Meditech implementation overtaxed the network, resulting in server instabilities and downtime. Users were disconnected from their servers on a regular basis. User authentication during login was too slow. Printers stopped printing, adversely impacting the delivery of care to patients. The instability posed a risk of data corruption.

In March of 1999, about 8 weeks prior to the Meditech "go live" date; our team was called in to stabilize the network. Our project manager and one consultant met with the IS department management and kicked off the discovery phase. Within a few days the root causes of the instability were identified. This network was never designed properly from the beginning; and had grown over the years without a standardized approach to architecture and design. The NDS tree contained too many containers and even more replicas. There were over 20 login scripts conflicting with each other. The user files and print queues were scattered throughout the network.

Our project manager assembled a team of engineers and began the process of stabilizing the network. The NDS tree was restructured and the replicas were reduced to the minimum recommended by Novell. The servers were reconfigured and some upgraded. The stabilization work was completed two weeks prior to the Meditech go live date. The network was stable and the Meditech rollout was completed successfully, with a stable network.

After "go live," the hospital CIO Mr. Don Livsey requested that our team move ahead with the network cleanup project and the Y2K remediation project. Our team developed new network architecture, reducing the number of servers, while providing additional fault tolerance. The user directories and the print queues were consolidated to dedicated servers. A new login script was developed for all 2,000 users. A new network backup system was instituted. Nineteen database applications were upgraded to new Y2K compliant versions, and the data was migrated and converted onto new compliant servers. Our team successfully completed the project, ahead of schedule, leaving behind a new stable network that is reliable and fault tolerant.

The success of our team is attributed to cohesive teamwork with the hospital IS staff, and a strong management approach, whereby careful planning in the beginning, paid off great dividends.

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