



Colorado hospitals simplify fax management with OpenText RightFax

Memorial Health System reduces hardware, applies centralized management for growing enterprise using OpenText RightFax IP document exchange

Industry

Healthcare

Customer



Memorial Health System

Business Challenges

- Isolated single-function machines difficult to manage
- New hospitals offered only IP connectivity

Business Solution

OpenText RightFax integrated with Xerox multi-function devices, Cisco Unified Communications Manager for FoIP, Lotus Notes

Business Benefits

- Eliminated hundreds of fax machines
- Simplified fax delivery and management
- Leveraged IP infrastructure for consolidated faxing

Memorial Health System, in Colorado Springs, is a municipally owned Level II Trauma Center with three hospitals, Memorial Hospital Central, Memorial Hospital North and Memorial Hospital for Children. Along with other outlying clinics, Memorial provides a full range of diagnostic, treatment and recovery services in addition to wellness and preventative care. It has nearly 4,000 employees.

Challenge

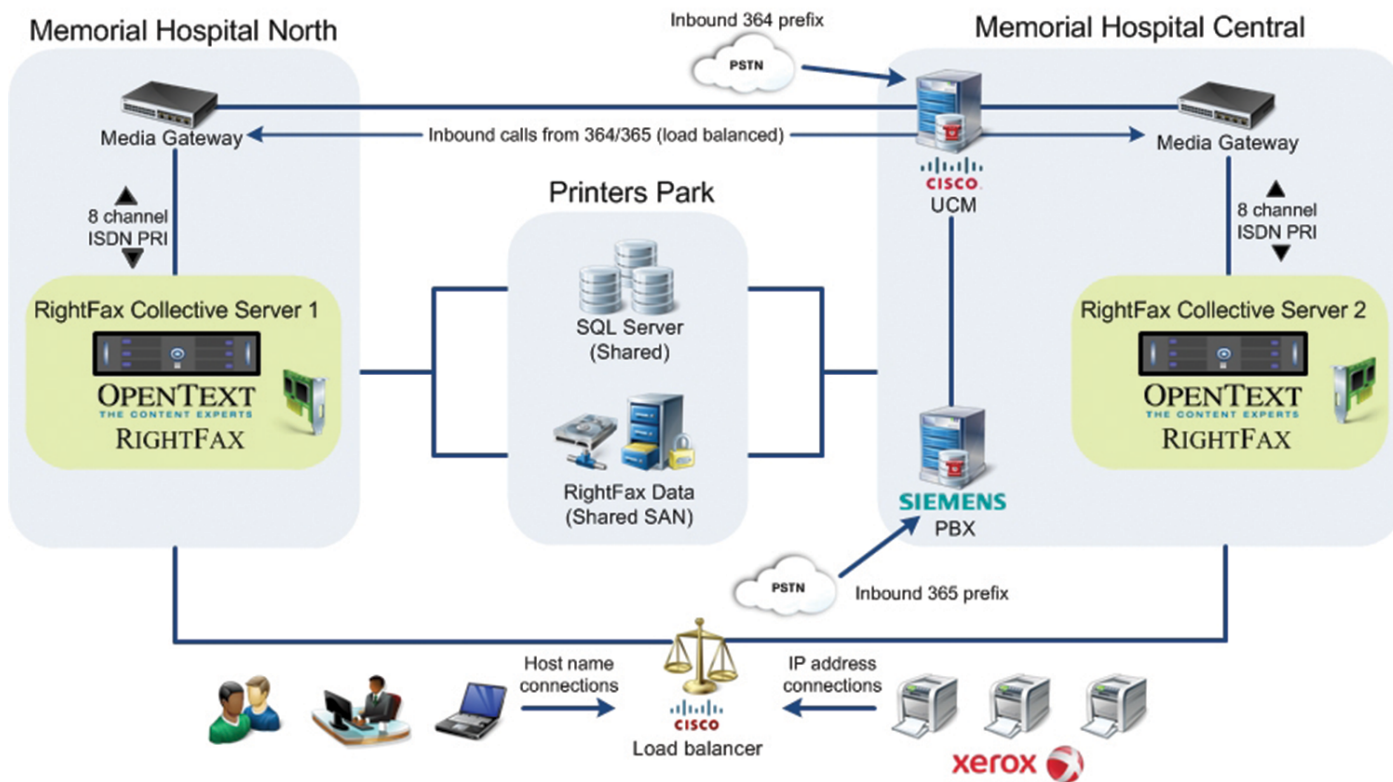
Medical results, patient transfers and prescriptions are just a few of the files faxed every day by Memorial Health System. "Documents cover a wide range for everything you would think of related to healthcare," said Scott Port, Application System Administrator at Memorial Health System. "Close to 90 percent of faxes are related to direct patient care, including communications with doctors and clinics as extended facilities." The faxes add up: Memorial sends and receives more than 15,000 faxes per week, as the oft-preferred method of communication for doctors.

To keep pace with the volume and urgency of faxed communication, Memorial employed printers, copiers and fax machines which were distributed across offices throughout the region. "There were close to 400 fax machines alone," Port said. "We had a farm of fax machines with separate phone lines and no networking between devices." Isolated machines led to delays and frustrations for employees and hindered efforts for up-to-date, enterprise-level communications.

- Productivity: Some medical staff members had to leave their work areas to walk to a fax machine; adding a few seconds to high-volume, highly regulated faxing could accumulate hours of non-productive time across the organization each week.
- Management: IT personnel had no way to centrally manage the hundreds of devices.
- Growth: In a relatively short period of time, Memorial expanded from a community hospital with around 1,000 employees to a municipal system--including two new facilities--with more than 4,000 professionals. "We needed to move forward in terms of expandable, efficient technology," Port said.
- IP integration: One of the new hospitals used VoIP configuration for telecommunications. "There was no copper wire running through the building. We needed faxing on the existing IP backbone," Port noted. The organization looked at document delivery options. "The decision was made at the corporate level that technology had caught up with our needs, and there was a better way to manage faxing," he said.



Memorial Hospital WAN: 16 Channel Configuration



Solution

Market-leading fax technology from OpenText and consulting from Satori Solutions, a top tier OpenText partner, enabled Memorial to establish an enterprise IP-based faxing infrastructure and position the organization for future growth.

In 2005, Memorial implemented OpenText RightFax Enterprise Server for electronic document delivery. The hospital immediately streamlined faxing procedures. It rapidly expanded use of the single server to additional users and business functions and integrated RightFax with multi-function devices throughout the hospital. Memorial eliminated hundreds of fax machines, as well as copiers and printers by replacing the appliances with Xerox multi-function devices, conveniently located in every department. "We no longer deal with three separate devices for every group," Port said. "We only maintain one device that is integrated with RightFax for sending and receiving documents."

Due to the critical nature of the system and the addition of a new hospital, Memorial acquired a second RightFax server in 2007. With Satori's design guidance and professional services, Memorial installed a geographically distributed RightFax shared services/collective connecting via ISDN PRI to its Cisco Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) system. "For IP-based faxing, we looked at a couple solutions and found RightFax and Satori Solutions had served us well," Port said. He places Satori Solutions at the top of his list of valued providers: "I only have a couple vendors I deal with that I place in that category of 'extraordinary,'" Port explained. "The team at Satori Solutions is extremely talented, knowledgeable and reliable."

Results

With RightFax, Memorial reduced hardware frustrations, realized time and cost-savings and future-proofed communications while maintaining a focus on its mission to provide the highest quality care. By streamlining fax and leveraging IP infrastructure, Memorial dramatically reduced operating costs related to faxing and shortened the time necessary to process documents while providing critical security controls necessary for HIPAA compliance.

Though Memorial has eliminated hundreds of fax machines and improved productivity, the resulting cost-savings are not the hospital's top priority. "In a business environment, return on investment is key," Port said. "Tracking ROI in a hospital is important too, but if a technology supports better care and helps keep patients alive, how could you ever measure or place an ROI on that?"

Productivity and "green" returns

The mechanics behind faxing are transparent to the majority of Memorial professionals. And that's just what the doctors ordered. "All they want to know is, 'Did I get my fax?' and 'Was I able to send my fax?'" Port noted. RightFax meets their needs to share patient information securely and quickly. "Now that everyone has their own multi-function devices close by, easier faxing improves efficiency and patient care," he said.

RightFax automated document exchange also meets the needs of a few Memorial "super users," according to Port. For employees in the Patient Placement and Outpatient Surgery groups, incoming faxes are automatically delivered to a network folder. Files may be





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- Scott Port
Application System Administrator at Memorial Health System

printed as needed and placed in patient charts for scanning and indexing into Memorial’s ECM solution. “Instead of printing all files, histories and physicals can be printed when patients present themselves for surgery,” Port said. The reduction in paper supports company-wide green initiatives.

Centralized management

“It would be a nightmare from a phone system standpoint if we still had hundreds of lines for faxing,” Port said. “RightFax brings faxing capabilities to a centralized location where we can track communication very quickly.” Memorial now relies on two RightFax servers with more than 320 fax numbers that are highly available and redundant in an environment that uses only 20 lines to support all traffic. “Memorial consolidated resources and uses them in manner that is efficient, intelligent and dynamic,” said Chris Schultz, president of Satori Solutions.

Expandability

“As Colorado Springs has grown, our health system has grown with it and moved forward in terms of technology,” Port said. “RightFax is a smart choice for integrating with existing and future technologies.”

FoIP consolidation

Further reductions in resource consumption will be realized as Memorial updates older facilities and expands IP telecommunications. Migrating to a FoIP environment eliminates physical servers and

fax boards, while adding flexibility and redundancy, according to Schultz. “Virtualized environments offer several benefits,” he explained. “They reduce power, cooling, and overall need for data center real estate.” Under the enterprise green initiative, Memorial is already reducing physical servers in its crowded main data center. FoIP fits well into this strategy.

As advice to organizations investigating FoIP, both Port and Schultz prescribed a combination of solid technology solutions and partners. “A lot of people think, it’s just a fax server,” Schultz said. “But when they start developing distributed systems and tying into VoIP, they need partners that know how to plan and talk through architectures and designs to meet customer needs.”

www.opentext.com

sales@opentext.com

800 499 6544

