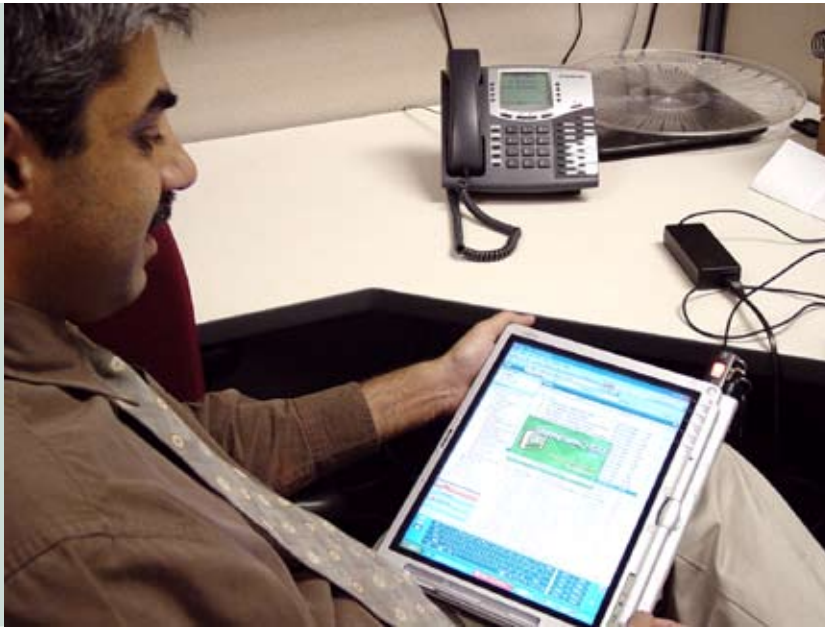


LifePath Hospice and Palliative Care



LifePath Hospice Depends on Fujitsu to Help Deliver 24 x 7 Palliative Care

Challenge:

Provide access to up-to-the-minute patient information to staff in the field to help them deliver more timely and accurate patient care. With a growing dependence on its computer systems to assist in the delivery of patient care, LifePath Hospice needed to build a reliable platform and disaster recovery solution that would deliver 24 x 7 system access and fail-over in the event of a disaster.

Solution:

Fujitsu LifeBook® T4215 Tablet PCs provide healthcare providers with up-to-the-minute patient information and access to critical healthcare applications that run on the 35 Fujitsu PRIMERGY® servers deployed to power the organization's datacenter and provide full disaster recovery.

Benefits:

Fujitsu LifeBook T4215 Tablet PCs provide the power and speed required to run LifePath Hospice's data-intensive healthcare management software, so staff have reliable and fast access to critical patient information for more timely, consistent, and accurate patient management. The PRIMERGY servers have delivered the reliability, performance, and 99.999 percent system availability required to ensure 24x7 access to medical records.

“Using Fujitsu Tablet PCs and SunCoast Solutions, our staff can access up-to-the-minute patient information, admit new patients, and track patients’ progress quickly and easily.”

- **Larry Witt, Chief Information Officer at LifePath Hospice and Palliative Care**



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Fujitsu Helps Enhance Patient Care

Leveraging SunCoast Solutions healthcare management software for the digital documentation of patient information, LifePath Hospice has deployed 80 Fujitsu LifeBook T4215 Tablet PCs to doctors, nurse practitioners, and admissions staff to help them deliver more timely and accurate patient care. “Using Fujitsu Tablet PCs and SunCoast Solutions, our staff can access up-to-the-minute patient information, admit new patients, and track patients’ progress quickly and easily,” explains Larry Witt, chief information officer at LifePath Hospice and Palliative Care. “Because team members share access to the latest patient information, we are able to deliver greater continuity of care and dramatically improve overall patient management.” LifePath Hospice will deploy an additional 400 LifeBook T-series Tablet PCs to the rest of the organization over the next year, providing all staff with up-to-the-minute access to critical patient information.

LifePath Hospice has also deployed two Fujitsu fi-5900C sheet-fed scanners in the medical records department to scan paper forms used by hospice staff into electronic records. “We had a large backlog of forms that needed to be scanned into electronic medical records,” explains Witt. “Using the Fujitsu fi-5900C scanners, the best and fastest on the market, we were able to get caught up quickly—and stay that way.”

To more effectively address the organization’s increasing demands on its computer systems, LifePath Hospice decided to upgrade its server platform to ensure better reliability, performance, and system availability. At its primary production center in Tampa Bay, LifePath Hospice deployed 23 Fujitsu PRIMERGY RX200 servers and four PRIMERGY RX300 servers running Microsoft® Windows Server® 2003 to host applications including SunCoast Solutions healthcare management software, a pharmacy application, the Human Resources Management System, financial software, and smaller applications including its Electronic Medical Records (EMR) software, donor database, and volunteer management software. A PRIMERGY RX600 server runs VMware virtual infrastructure software to virtualize the entire data center as an extra layer of fail-over should the systems be shut down.

LifePath Hospice allocated the other half of its 38 PRIMERGY servers to its disaster recovery site located in the Forsythe Hospice House in Auburndale, Florida. Leveraging its SAN, LifePath Hospice provides connectivity to the

PRIMERGY RX200 and RX300 servers located at the disaster recovery site to replicate data on a nightly basis. “Now, we can resume operations within hours should our primary data center go down,” explains Witt.

Ready for Disaster

Headquartered in a severe hurricane evacuation zone, LifePath Hospice was worried about system availability. “Because we have become increasingly dependent on our computer systems to aid in the delivery of patient care, we needed a better backup system should a hurricane hit,” says Witt. “With 18 sites across four counties, our staff needs up-to-the-minute access to critical patient information around the clock to ensure continual care for those in need.” The need for a more thorough disaster recovery plan was first felt in 2004 when LifePath Hospice was hit by two hurricanes, both requiring patient evacuation and reducing operations to paper. “We did not lose our data center in either case, but the experience proved that we desperately needed a disaster recovery plan that would provide fail-over to a secondary site in the event of catastrophe.”

LifePath Hospice uses the PRIMERGY RX600 server located at its production site in a virtualized scenario to provide an extra layer of redundancy should an application go down. “If only part of our system goes down, we can fail-over to the virtualized server located onsite for immediate recovery,” explains Witt. In the event that the entire production center goes down, LifePath Hospice fails-over to the disaster recovery center located offsite. In this case, mission-critical applications are backed up on dedicated servers at the disaster recovery site while secondary applications, such as billing and human resources systems, are virtualized on PRIMERGY RX300 servers. “Server virtualization enables us to ensure redundancy while using our resources as efficiently as possible,” says Witt. By virtualizing secondary applications on existing PRIMERGY servers, LifePath Hospice saves the cost of having to duplicate its production center server-for-server at the disaster recovery site, while maintaining the same high level of redundancy.

Improving Healthcare with Technology

LifePath Hospice has been impressed with the processing power of the Fujitsu LifeBook T4215 Tablet PCs, particularly in terms of how well they run SunCoast Solutions, an extremely data-intensive application. Because cellular networks are not always reliable across the 1,600 square miles LifePath Hospice serves, the healthcare provider installed a Progress Relational Database Management System (PRDMS) on each Tablet PC so caregivers have reliable access to patient information. With its previous notebooks, the sheer size of the database presented serious performance limitations. “Our staff has noticed far better performance running the PRDMS on the Fujitsu T4215 Tablet PCs over our previous notebooks,” notes Witt. “In addition, it used to take hours to sync up our old notebooks with our main system at the end of each day; with the LifeBook T4215 Tablet PCs, it only takes a few minutes.” Now, with 50 percent faster access to data and less time required for administrative tasks, healthcare providers can focus on meeting patients’ needs.

Deployment of the LifeBook T4215 Tablet PCs has been very smooth. LifePath Hospice conducted its own training in-house and was able to get the systems up and running in no time. Ease of use was a key requirement for LifePath Hospice, since most users have little technical experience. To Witt’s satisfaction, user feedback has been extremely positive. “Everyone loves the Fujitsu equipment,” claims Witt. Used heavily by caregivers in the field, the LifeBook Tablet PCs had to meet stringent requirements for durability and longevity—and Fujitsu delivered. “Our employees are highly mobile users, but we have not had any breakage to date,” adds Witt.

By providing fast, easy, and reliable access to critical patient information, the Fujitsu LifePath T4215 Tablet PCs help LifePath Hospice achieve its number one goal: to provide 24 x 7 care to people at the end of their lives. “With access to the most up-to-date information and progress reports, our caregivers are well equipped to make the most informed and effective decisions to help ease our patients’ lives,” says Witt. “In the end, we all benefit.”



Fujitsu Computer Systems Corporation

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System Availability and Scalability are Key

LifePath Hospice has been very impressed with the quality, speed, and reliability of Fujitsu's next-generation server technology. "Performance on the PRIMERGY servers is night and day compared to our previous systems," states Witt. LifePath Hospice has also achieved 99.999 percent system availability since deploying the PRIMERGY servers. "In our line of work, where access to the right data at the right time is absolutely critical to our patients' well-being, system availability is essential—and Fujitsu delivers."

"Our network administrator can easily monitor the servers and catch potential issues early to ensure maximum performance and reliability," says Witt. "With the new PRIMERGY servers, we've noticed a remarkable improvement in system reliability."

LifePath Hospice is constantly adding new services to meet the community's growing palliative care needs. As such, the healthcare provider needed a technology platform that could scale easily to handle its evolving requirements. "We can easily and cost-effectively expand the PRIMERGY servers to meet future needs—this is especially important because we must continue to deliver critical services to our patients on a pretty tight budget," notes Witt.

Simple Management for Maximum Performance

The PRIMERGY servers were also easy to install, requiring minimal effort from the IT team. With guidance from Fujitsu, LifePath Hospice was able to get the servers up and running quickly and easily using ServerStart software and is able to ensure fail-safe operations with Fujitsu's ServerView software for simple system management and control. "Our network administrator can easily monitor the servers and catch potential issues early to ensure maximum performance and reliability," says Witt. "With the new PRIMERGY servers, we've noticed a remarkable improvement in system reliability."

Supporting Families in Crisis

In its quest to provide the highest level of healthcare possible for patients dealing with end-of-life issues, LifePath Hospice has embraced Fujitsu technology as a critical element of its overall patient care plan. "Technology helps us to deliver timely and effective care to make our patients' lives a little easier," concludes Witt. "With Fujitsu at the heart of our infrastructure, we are better equipped to help our patients with life limiting illnesses and end-of-life issues live as fully and as comfortably as possible."