

AHS Information Services



“VMware Site Recovery Manager makes managing and testing our recovery plans as easy as pushing a button. The fact that we can run tests as often as we want gives us a high degree of confidence in the recoverability of our systems.”

— Kenneth Newball
Senior Disaster Recovery Administrator,
AHS Information Services

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Challenge

Streamline IT infrastructure and strengthen disaster recovery capabilities

Solution

VMware Infrastructure 3 and VMware vCenter Site Recovery Manager create an IT environment that is more manageable, available, and recoverable.

VMware at Work

- VMware Infrastructure 3.5 featuring
 - VMware ESX®
 - VMware vCenter™ Server
 - VMware vMotion™
 - VMware Distributed Resource Scheduler (DRS)
 - VMware High Availability (HA)
- VMware vCenter Site Recovery Manager

Deployment environment

- Hardware: HP DL380G5 and HP DL380G6, Using IBM SVC (San Volume Controller) and IBM N Series as the Storage System
- Guest operating systems: Windows 2008 Standard, Enterprise, 32-bit and 64-bit, Windows 2003 Standard, Enterprise, 32-bit and 64-bit, Windows 2000 Server, Windows NT 4.0, Red Hat Linux
- Virtualized production applications: Cerner healthcare application, Nextgen (Electronic Medical Records), Microsoft Exchange 2007, SSI billing, McKesson Horizon (Homecare Services), Citrix PS 4.5, CA Service Desk, Microsoft SharePoint 2007, among others

Healing is the primary goal of the Adventist Health System (AHS), a non-profit health care organization run by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. As the largest not-for-profit Protestant healthcare provider in the United States, the system supports 37 hospitals and cares for roughly four million patients annually.

AHS Information Services (AHS-IS) is the information services division of Adventist Health System. AHS-IS maintains clinical and business systems dedicated to providing a secure, effective, integrated patient care delivery system that continually improves outcomes, reduces costs, increases efficiency and enhances patients' experiences. Located in Lake Mary, FL, AHS-IS provides technology systems and services for 26 of Adventist Health System's 37 hospitals, supporting caregivers at those facilities in extending the healing ministry of Christ to patients. AHS-IS serves hospitals in nine states, employs more than 500 people, and was recognized by IDG's Computerworld as one of the Best Places to Work in IT in 2009.

To help ensure it can provide excellent care, AHS-IS has an initiative called “Mission Zero” which aims to provide the highest levels of service and minimum downtime for critical healthcare systems like Cerner's charting and electronic medical record applications.

“Our recovery time objective for our main clinical application is four hours. Due to all the manual recovery steps that needed to be done, it used to take eight hours, and we wanted to improve that,” says Kenneth Newball, AHS-IS senior disaster recovery administrator. “Virtualizing our IT infrastructure with VMware solutions helped lay the foundation for us to do so.”

Using VMware Infrastructure 3, AHS-IS was able to consolidate its existing IT assets and simplify management and administration. Adding VMware vCenter Site Recovery Manager allowed the organization to streamline its operations even further by automating disaster recovery planning and testing.

“Before VMware, we were rebuilding servers from scratch, loading applications, and, in some cases, recovering from tape,” says Newball. “With VMware Site Recovery Manager, all the manual recovery steps are taken care of automatically, which helps remove the possibility of human error. As a result, we can recover our main clinical application quicker—which helps us get back to caring for patients sooner.”

Results

- Reduce recovery time by 75 percent. “When we first started out, our recovery time for our Cerner application was 48 hours,” says Newball. “Then we got it down to eight hours. Now, with Site Recovery Manager, we've got it down to barely an hour, for virtual servers.”
- Reduce cost of disaster recovery testing. “Usually, we have to fly a team of seven people to our disaster recovery site to do disaster recovery tests,” says Newball. “With Site Recovery Manager, we do it all remotely—we don't have to fly anybody anywhere. And that translates into cost savings.”
- AHS-IS has reduced hardware purchases by 84.5 percent, hardware maintenance by 93.1 percent and power consumption by 90 percent. “We took hardware that was freed up by converting our datacenter servers from physical-to-virtual and repurposed it in our disaster recovery site rather than purchasing a brand new set of servers,” says Newball. “That was a huge cost savings.”



CUSTOMER SNAPSHOT