



Success Story

Network Health

“Because the Citrix technology deployed by Covisia enables remote employees to perform their jobs efficiently, and because Citrix offers the performance, reliability and security we require from an IT perspective, the solution allowed us to avoid purchasing or renting additional office space.”

Randy Ventura, Manager of Technical Services, Network Health

THE CHALLENGE

Since 1997, Network Health has improved the health of its members by providing high-quality, comprehensive healthcare coverage. The organization’s medical professionals serve more than 150,000 people across Massachusetts and have helped Network Health become nationally-recognized for innovative programs. As the size of Network Health’s administrative and customer service staffs expanded rapidly, the organization reached the capacity of its building for providing employees with sufficient work-area spaces.

“We simply ran out of floor space,” said Randy Ventura, Manager of Technical Services for Network Health. “Many people were doubled-up in offices, and we moved others into conference rooms. We either needed to purchase or rent additional office space, or find a way that would allow employees to work from home.”

Instead of expanding into a new office space, Network Health explored technologies that would allow employees to work from home. Over the long-term, this approach would cost significantly less compared to more office space.

“But we also needed technology that would ensure employees could be productive working in a home environment,” Ventura said.

THE SOLUTION

While researching different solutions to allow employees to work from home, Ventura decided on Citrix virtualization technology for the performance, reliability and security it offers as well as its ability to integrate thin-client PCs with the Network Health internal network. “We also considered a virtual-private-network (VPN),” Ventura said. “But with a VPN, each connected user is an open network node, so it presents a security risk.”

Network Health then needed a solution provider to deploy the solution. “We quickly realized Covisia Solutions was the best choice after finding out that anyone in the Boston area that calls Citrix will most likely be referred to Covisia,” Ventura said. “Covisia has a strong reputation.”

Key Benefits of Covisia Solutions Deployment of Citrix Remote Access Solutions:

- Allowed staff size to grow without forcing the business to add more office space.
- Generated estimated savings of \$500K projected over a five-year period.
- Gave the business the ability to offer employees the option of working from home.
- Offered centralized application management capabilities for supporting remote users.
- Enabled possible eventual use of thin-client PCs by remote users in place of more expensive traditional PCs.

Network Health also considered another solution provider but chose Covisia for three primary reasons: "Their statement-of-work outlined exactly what they would do with well-defined deliverables and timelines," Ventura said. "They also presented solid customer referrals and offered the solution with the most value."

To handle the implementation, a dedicated Covisia systems engineer worked with Network Health to ensure sufficient knowledge-transfer for supporting the Citrix technology. The engineer analyzed the current environment and then designed a virtualization solution that included the deployment of a Citrix XenApp server and Access Gateway Enterprise for high-availability and business continuance. The solution also included Microsoft Office and CareEnhance Clinical Management Software from McKesson, which Network Health relies on to manage patient accounts.

In comparing Covisia to other technology providers, Ventura said Covisia hit their deadlines, milestones and requirements as promised. "Other solution providers try to do the same thing, but not all succeed," Ventura added. "Covisia delivers on time with exactly what they say they will do. Their systems engineer also did a great job training our IT administrators as well as our user community and help desk team."

THE BENEFITS

Network Health's remote employees can now perform their jobs efficiently from home because of the Citrix virtualization technology deployed by Covisia. This benefit, along with Citrix offering the performance, reliability and security that Network Health requires from an IT perspective, has allowed the company to avoid purchasing or renting additional office space.

The solution has also allowed Network Health to implement a work-from-home program so it can provide an alternative work-environment for employees. After the initial deployment, approximately 30 people began working from home, but Network Health expects that number will soon grow to 150.

In a survey of end users, an overwhelming majority complimented the Citrix solution for how well they can perform their jobs from home. From an IT perspective, the Citrix solution lets Network Health manage and support end-user applications from its central office rather than visiting end-users in person for support calls.

"Citrix is also superior from a security standpoint," Ventura added. "A VPN connection is like another node on the network whereas Citrix is simply a window into the system. With Citrix, it is much easier to lock-down and control what users can do."

The project has worked so well that Network Health is now looking to engage Covisia with more IT projects. "We feel comfortable going back to Covisia for other technology solutions because of how well they performed on this deployment," Ventura said. "We will have Covisia help us evaluate thin-client PCs, which we can deploy for remote users in place of regular PCs. Thin-client PCs are more secure since no data can be stored on the units—a big plus if a device is lost or stolen. They also use 90 percent less power, and they are easier and less costly to support."

IN SUMMARY

As Network Health began increasing its staff size, the healthcare organization began to run out of sufficient office space. Instead of purchasing or renting additional space, Network Health took advantage of a Citrix virtualization solution deployed by Covisia Solutions. The solution allows Network Health to let a substantial portion of its workforce perform their jobs from home just as efficiently as if they were in the office. Network Health can now also centrally manage its remote-user applications. Eventually, the company hopes to deploy thin-client PCs to reduce the overall cost of the remote-employee PCs.

About Covisia Solutions

Covisia Solutions is a full-service IT solutions provider focused on helping organizations align their IT operations with their business to improve information access and security, reduce complexity and cost, and manage technology to meet the needs of competitiveness, growth and change. Whether your need is improved information access or greater security, a network upgrade or strategic planning, Covisia Solutions can help your IT organization deliver for business.

