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Creative Solutions in Healthcare Looks to Cradlepoint to Overcome Network Interruptions

Long-Term Care Facilities Leverage 4G Failover for Business Continuity

SUMMARY

With its skilled nursing facilities located in remote areas of a state known for its unpredictable and sometimes violent weather, Texas-based Creative Solutions in Healthcare (CSNH) was suffering more than its share of network interruptions. According to CIO & CISO Shawn Wiora, the company was losing network connectivity multiple times each week. This downtime not only disrupted business continuity, but was bad for morale among both the company's IT workers and its care-delivery staff. Creative Solutions in Healthcare wanted a network connectivity solution capable of delivering highly secure, uninterrupted, and centrally managed service.

PRODUCT:

FAILOVER BRIDGE ROUTER, ENTERPRISE CLOUD MANAGER

APPLICATION:

WWAN ENABLES FAILOVER, HIPAA-COMPLIANT SECURITY, AND CENTRALIZED CLOUD MANAGEMENT FOR EXTENDED-CARE FACILITIES

MARKET:

HEALTHCARE, LONG-TERM CARE

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Creative Solutions in Healthcare is the largest independent owner and operator of skilled nursing facilities, assisted living, and independent living facilities in the state of Texas. With a goal to locate its facilities close to the families of its residents, CSNH facilities are primarily located in rural areas. Each location offers a number of unique, innovative programs in food, nutrition, and rehabilitation. All of its programs are based on a carefully followed scientific methodology, and are delivered by empathetic caregivers who believe passionately in treating residents with love and respect.

BUSINESS NEEDS

For companies such as CSNH that deliver healthcare services, maintaining secure network connectivity is one of the IT department's most important jobs. When a member of the company's staff needs to check a resident's medicine dosing, rehabilitative progress, medical history, or dietary needs, network downtime can be very frustrating to the resident and caregiver alike. Since CSNH deals with personal medical information, its network also needs to be highly secured and HIPAA compliant. With its facilities spread across the state, CSNH must be able to centrally configure, monitor, and manage the network and all the devices on it.

SOLUTION

CSNH connects its network via DSL and cable, hard-wired solutions that are subject to high winds, heavy rains, lightning, and flooding — weather conditions that are normal across Texas. After much research, CIO & CISO Shawn Wiora and his team decided the best way to protect

> **"WE CURRENTLY HAVE 35 CRADLEPOINT DEPLOYMENTS AT OUR LOCATIONS. OUR PLAN IS TO DEPLOY 75 TO 100 MORE WITHIN THE NEXT FEW YEARS."**
>
> — SHAWN WIORA, CIO & CISO

their network from weather-related service interruptions was to implement a wireless failover solution. Cradlepoint wireless routers have solved CSNH's network downtime problem. They also utilize Cradlepoint Enterprise Cloud Manager, which enables Wiora and his team to centrally manage its far-flung network and implement Cradlepoint's powerful security applications.

> *"Cradlepoint has changed the game for the IT department at Creative Solutions in Healthcare," said Wiora. "Now when the Internet goes down, Cradlepoint saves the day. The IT team feels better about Cradlepoint than any other technology we've implemented – and that says a lot."*

BENEFITS

CONTINUOUS NETWORK CONNECTIVITY

With a Cradlepoint device in each location to serve as a failover solution, CSNH now experiences 99.99% network uptime. Each location's cable or DSL connection is connected directly to the Cradlepoint. When the device senses a loss in network connectivity via hard wire, it instantly switches to an internal cellular modem, resulting in virtually uninterrupted connectivity.

"*In the past, when one of our facilities went down, our COO's shoulders would droop and she'd get this sad look on her face,*" Wiora recalls. "*One day, not long after we installed the Cradlepoint solutions, one of our locations lost its cable connection. I told my executives, 'hey, the cable is out again at Twin Wells.' Then I said, 'but guess what, we're not down!' 'Why is that?' the CEO asked. The COO waved her hands in the air and said, 'because we have Cradlepoint! Woohoo!' I'm telling you, working with Cradlepoint has been the most positive thing my team has ever done.*"

INTERNAL CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Cradlepoint's ability to deliver 99.99% uptime is good for business and morale. Core to CSNH's business model is providing empathetic, loving care not only to its residents but also to its staff. Wiora sees uninterrupted network access as central to this goal.

"*The Cradlepoint solutions have helped us achieve a much higher level of caregiver satisfaction with their overall IT experience. If a member of our staff is caring for a resident and needs to go down the hall and check on a certain doctor's order, we want that caregiver to be able to get the information they need. If the network is down, he or she can't provide that service. Cradlepoint helps us make sure our staff has the best IT experience possible.*"

HIPAA COMPLIANCE

With its upgrade to Cradlepoint, CSNH is able to protect its customers' electronic protected health information (ePHI) and maintain HIPAA compliance. Part of its overall security plan and strategy is to prevent unauthorized access. With distributed locations increasingly targeted for intrusions, Cradlepoint Enterprise Cloud Manager enables Wiora and his team to monitor traffic to identify business and non-business Internet usage. When central IT finds that a location is generating traffic to potentially non-secure websites, it's able to notify location management to address the problem.

"*Our infrastructure is more secured now because of how Cradlepoint has enabled us to configure, monitor, and manage the network. We've made tremendous progress in achieving a much higher level of awareness of the network. If someone were to try to attack our facilities, we'd know it immediately and have solutions in place to thwart the attack.*"

EASY DEPLOYMENT

Like most distributed enterprises, CSNH is not able to hire skilled IT personnel for every one of its facilities. Instead, it relies on Cradlepoint Enterprise Cloud Manager to prepare the network devices that are installed at each location. Once configured, the devices are quick and easy for untrained facilities staff to install; they just need to plug them in.

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