



Restoring Network Health

Flint Hills Community Health Center counts on JMARK's experience and expertise to gain a more robust and reliable IT environment — all from more than 250 miles away.

Flint Hills Community Health Center offers medical, dental and behavioral healthcare services on a sliding fee scale to residents of Emporia, Kan., and its service area of Lyon, Chase, Greenwood and Osage counties. The Center also provides public health services through a contract with Lyon County. From its beginnings in 1923, the Lyon County Health Department has grown from providing home visits and immunizations to offering more comprehensive public and personal healthcare services. In 1997, the Health Department became a Federally Qualified Health Center, which has expanded services to everyone, including individuals with insurance, Medicare and Medicaid, as well as the uninsured. The Center is dedicated to providing professional services and resources with an emphasis on prevention.



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THE CHALLENGE

When Phillip Davis became CEO of Flint Hills Community Health Center in August 2011, he found that the Center was struggling with a number of IT challenges. The Center had multiple physical servers that were not working well and Wi-Fi connectivity that was spotty at best. Some virtualization had been implemented but it was not stable.

“Those were just some of the issues,” Davis said. “We have electronic health records, electronic dental records and imaging systems, and it’s critical that those stay up and running. Our IT issues needed to be addressed.”

The Center had an IT director and support staff who were responsible for the IT infrastructure and phone system.

Davis worked with the IT director to get the problems corrected and after six months was unable to come to a satisfactory resolution. That’s when he contacted Springfield, Mo.-based JMARK.

“I had previously had a good experience working with JMARK in a community health center in Ava, Mo. So I reached out to JMARK to see what they could do. They came in and talked with us and quoted a price that was very competitive. I took it to the board and they agreed to switch from having an in-house IT director and support staff to contracting IT services with JMARK.”



THE SOLUTION

JMARK began by stabilizing the environment and consolidating many of the physical servers through virtualization. The JMARK team then deployed Cisco wireless routers and additional software to create a dependable Wi-Fi network. Flint Hills Community Health Center had also purchased Microsoft Exchange 2010, so JMARK implemented the up-to-date email server platform.

Most importantly, JMARK provides 24/7 monitoring and support of the Center's IT infrastructure. JMARK's engineers and technicians are immediately aware of problems and work to resolve them to minimize downtime.

"Here's one example," Davis said. "On a Friday night at about 11 o'clock, JMARK called to say that our system was down. They had lost connection between us and them, so they knew something was going on. By Saturday, they had a head start on figuring out the cause of the problem. JMARK worked with its network of onsite engineers to get someone onsite quickly, and we were up and working Monday morning.

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"If they hadn't been monitoring our systems, we would definitely have had downtime. We would have found the problem Monday morning, and then would have had to figure out what was happening. The fix would have taken much longer."

JMARK performs proactive maintenance as part of the managed services solution, and keeps the Center's firewall, spam filtering and antivirus software up-to-date so sensitive healthcare information is protected. The JMARK team ensures that the Center's backups run properly and that data can be restored in case of a system failure or other disaster.

SOLUTION SUMMARY

Flint Hills Community Health Center

- Inefficient server resources and uneven Wi-Fi connectivity were creating network instability that put the organization at risk.
- JMARK stabilized the environment by implementing virtualization to consolidate physical servers and by deploying a reliable wireless network.
- Continual monitoring enables rapid problem identification and resolution, proactive management, and accountability.
- Proactive maintenance keeps the firewall, spam filtering and antivirus software up-to-date so sensitive healthcare information is protected.



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"They also provide us with good advice," said Davis. "They are helping us develop a plan for rotating our computers over time instead of trying to upgrade all of our equipment at once every four to five years. By rotating a fourth of them every year, we make sure that we get new technology, but it's not a huge lump sum payment.

"They are very cost-conscious — they will recommend solutions that are high quality but less expensive than the alternatives. They have our best interests in mind."

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THE RESULTS

Having been accustomed to in-house IT staff, employees at Flint Hills Community Health Center were understandably cautious in turning over IT management and support to a third-party provider — particularly one that is 250 miles away. However, distance has not been an issue, and the relationship with JMARK has provided the Center with a number of benefits over in-house staff.

“With in-house staff, you have just a few people, and they can only do so much. JMARK has an entire team of people for each area of expertise. That’s the biggest benefit that I’ve seen,” Davis said. “Also, if three or four of us had a problem at the same time, that one in-house person couldn’t be in three or four places. Now, four of us can call JMARK and open a ticket, and they can fix four computers at the same time, depending on what the need is. It’s been a good experience, and it’s actually a little cheaper than hiring a full-time IT director and part-time support staff when you consider salaries and benefits.”

The Center’s accountant, Efrain Ruvalcaba, serves as the onsite liaison for JMARK. He works with the JMARK team to



provide hands-on support for any issues that can’t be handled remotely.

“If the computer powers off or loses its Internet connection, they can’t remotely turn it on. I’m here to help with those sorts of things,” Ruvalcaba said. “They’ve instructed me on what to do, and I’ve actually learned quite a bit from them.”

JMARK provides immediate response to critical issues, such as problems with the Center’s electronic health record system. But even for low-priority issues, JMARK is highly responsive and has processes in place to ensure that everything is handled to the Center’s satisfaction.

“They follow up until the job is done,” said Ruvalcaba. “They don’t rely on the fact that they think they fixed it. They make sure by contacting me or Phillip. And the technician who is working the ticket has to forward it to someone else within JMARK to get approval to close it.”

“It’s a very positive, good relationship,” Davis said. “I would recommend JMARK to anyone who needs IT support.”

About JMARK

JMARK specializes in helping businesses eliminate technology pain while increasing efficiency and profitability. The JMARK team includes some of the best engineers and technicians in the industry, backed by disciplined processes and a state-of-the-art Network Operations Center (NOC). When you choose JMARK, you gain a technology partner who always keeps your best interests in mind by delivering your description of technology success.



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