itSynergy® Resuscitates Anesthesiology Operation with New Business-Saving Solution

Overview

Country or Region: US, Southwest
Industry: Professional Services, Medical

Customer Profile
With over 200 members, Valley Anesthesiology Consultants (VAC) is one of the top 10 leading groups of professional anesthesiologists in the U.S.

Business Situation
VAC needed to avoid any future server crashes that could have a disastrous effect on its business.

Solution
itSynergy helped VAC recover lost data and solve the long term problem of business continuity

Benefits
- Business Continuation Assurance
- Around-the-Clock Network Monitoring
- Information Aggregation
- Market Nimbleness
- Line-of-Business Functionality, New Level of Professionalism
- Future-Ready

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Michael Cocanower, President, itSynergy

A main server crash for Valley Anesthesiology Consultants, Phoenix, Arizona, provided a much needed dose of reality for the company serving over 200 area anesthesiologists. The firm realized it needed a fail-safe disaster recovery solution in order to insure uninterrupted operations. itSynergy provided the initial data recovery in record time as well as a comprehensive business assurance solution that included an overhaul of the medical consultant's infrastructure, 24x7 support, data aggregation and communications across all offices, an infrastructure platform to rollout a new EMR solution, and the ability to more nimbly address on-going needs of the company.

Situation

Valley Anesthesiology Consultants (VAC) is a large Arizona-based group of over 200 specialty-trained, board certified anesthesiologists dedicated to providing comprehensive, quality anesthesia and pain management services in Phoenix and Maricopa County and other areas throughout Arizona.

Though in an industry proficient at handling life and death medical situations, VAC wasn't prepared for the massive "business embolism" in the form of a main server failure. The server managed key functions such as surgery schedules for anesthesiologists dispersed across a 40 mile area, financial files, emails and credentialing information for web account access. "Our first reaction was panic," said Dr. Elton Thayer, Chief Technology Officer for VAC. "It was like having a major stroke without any insurance."

"Two years ago we had technology that was the standard in the industry," noted Pat Durlam, Practice Administrator, VAC. "We found that we were exposed to data disasters. We needed a better way to prevent catastrophic events."

"The server failure cost us over $5,200 dollars in hard costs and a month's worth of overtime for five executives and staff personnel," said Durlam. "A high level of emotional angst was also a price paid by the entire organization."

Valley Anesthesiology Consultants' immediate needs were to recover as much data as possible and get up and running. The next priority was to prevent any future occurrence.

Needing an IT expert with a proven track record, VAC quickly sought recommendations from its network of medical professionals. The recommendation was clear: itSynergy came highly recommended and quickly found ways to resuscitate VAC's business as well as insure backup and disaster recovery remedies for the future.

Solution

itSynergy delivered solutions that recovered a large portion of the data, designed a virtually fail-safe backup and disaster recovery system, established robust network and computer standards to address on-going needs, and created a business-nimble IT environment that could quickly adapt to changing economic conditions.

After recovering a large portion of the data and replacing the server in a 48-hour window, itSynergy began to implement its recommended data insurance solution.

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Overall, the itSynergy solution included the following elements: itSynergize™ Managed Backup and itSynergize™ Management services.

itSynergize Managed Backup – The backup and disaster recovery option provided both server/data backups, and the ability to virtualize a backed up server in a matter of minutes. The service also provides automatic daily offsite replication of data to two geographically dispersed data centers. That means if both the server and backup unit are destroyed—fire or natural disaster—VAC has a replacement backup unit with virtualized servers shipped overnight to any specified location. The result is VAC can be fully operational in 24 hours.

itSynergize Management – itSynergy installed management agents on all servers in the environment including the main VAC office and the collocation facility. Not only does this solution provide VAC with 24/7/365 monitoring of all of the servers in its environment, but also provides antivirus and anti-spam software, update monitoring, patch management, routine maintenance, and the ability for itSynergy engineers to respond remotely in seconds when server problems occur.

Benefits

- **Business Continuation Assurance**

"After a major server crash, what value would you place on reliability and peace-of-mind?", said Durlam. "itSynergy restored both. Their comprehensive solution helps secure our operation against future disasters and provides on-going support and productivity enhancements as well."

- **Around-the-Clock Network Monitoring**

"At the time of the initial event, we had only one in-house IT administrator to support all of our technology. He was overwhelmed and lacked the complete skill set needed," said Thayer. "itSynergy filled the gap with around-the-clock experts and knowledge — deep specializations in key areas that are critical to a smooth operation."

- **Information Aggregation**

Another need VAC had was an IT infrastructure that enabled implementation of a new Electronic Medical Record (EMR) system called Bond for the pain services division. However the VAC infrastructure was highly decentralized with satellite offices that had "islands of information" not connected to one another. The comprehensive solution developed and deployed by itSynergy included a single infrastructure that connected the main office, several remote pain clinics and a co-location facility. The result was a single, tightly integrated network.

"itSynergy developed a Microsoft-based solution that included a Wide Area Network (WAN) that allowed reliable, secure communications between numerous remote offices in a centralized technology and management infrastructure", said Thayer."Information could now be aggregated and shared."

■ **Market Nimbleness**
According to Thayer, another benefit of the WAN and information sharing was the ability to close or move offices depending on patient loads and economic factors.

"Closing an office before itSynergy's solution would have been much more difficult as siloed-information would have to be physically transferred to another site and not easily integrated into other information resources. Now, easily transferred files move effortlessly between offices."

■ **Line-of-Business Functionality, New Level of Professionalism**
"Without the new WAN-based infrastructure, we simply could not have launched our EMR solution across all of VAC," said Durlam. "itSynergy's solution also helped us project a new level of technical savvy and business professionalism among our organization's constituents."

"itSynergy also created network standards and group policies that make managing changing IT needs consistent and predictable," said Thayer. "This eliminates ad hoc decisions that end up at odds with sound management practices."

■ **Future-Ready**
"Because of the foundational IT work already completed by itSynergy, our network infrastructure is future-ready for new technologies such as voice-over IP (VoIP)," said Thayer. "We anticipate the functionality, flexibility and cost savings will be significant. We'll continue to use itSynergy as our trusted advisor."

Software and Services
■ Products
  − Microsoft® Windows® Server
  − Microsoft® Exchange Server®
  − itSynergize™ Management
  − itSynergize™ Managed Backup