

Sisters of Mercy Health System

Regional Hospital System Monitors Health of its IT Infrastructure with eG Enterprise Management Software



Overview

Headquartered in Chesterfield, Mo., The Sisters of Mercy Health System (Mercy) was established in 1986 to serve as the parent corporation of a variety of health care facilities and services.

Mercy consists of 18 acute care hospitals, two heart hospitals, outpatient care facilities, physician practices, skilled nursing and long-term residential care facilities, clinics, a managed care organization and other health-related services. Mercy is the 9th largest Catholic healthcare system in the U.S., based on net patient service revenue.

Mercy operates facilities and services in a seven-state area encompassing Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma and Texas. Health System services are provided by approximately 28,000 co-workers and 4,450 physicians.

Philosophy

Rooted in the mission of Jesus and the healing ministry of the Church, and faithful to Catherine McAuley's service tradition marked by justice, excellence, stewardship and respect for the dignity of each person, the Sisters of Mercy Health System implements and advocates for innovative health and social services to improve the health and quality of life of communities served, with particular concern for people who are economically poor.

Using eG Enterprise, Mercy has improved the overall reliability of its IT operations. The proactive nature of eG Enterprise has helped Mercy catch and fix problems before they affect users. This is another example of how eG Innovations is helping customers worldwide solve their most critical IT challenges.

The Challenge: Keeping Vital Signs Strong for Critical IT Resources

An IT infrastructure is a lot like the human body. Both are highly complex systems that can exhibit problems with little or no warning. Finding and correcting the root cause of problems quickly in both environments can be matter of life and death.

That's why, at the Sisters of Mercy Health System (Mercy), "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" applies just as much to its IT operations as it does to patient care.

"We recently implemented an initiative called Customer Service 2.0, where we strive to be more proactive and address issues with better quality and consistency," says Mike Grabian, manager of terminal services Mercy's IT division. "One way we are doing this is by monitoring our infrastructure to become aware of problems before they happen."

Monitoring the operations of many servers in multiple locations is a daunting task when it comes to pinpointing the root cause and taking the necessary steps to resolving issues as quickly as possible. Mercy currently has more than 500 Citrix servers, 25,000+ desktops running at 18 hospitals, outpatient facilities and physicians offices in a seven-state area in the Midwest.

"Our primary goal in improving IT operations is to learn about issues before our customers do," Grabian says. "This means that in monitoring our infrastructure we have to be more proactive, respond more quickly to resolve issues and perform more detailed monitoring on each server and among servers."

Grabian says Mercy outgrew the previous monitoring solution. "We wanted to monitor all event logs, disabled servers, service hangs and hardware- and software-related incidents without several employees monitoring the system 24 x 7," he says. "We were relying on our customers to call in with the issues."

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eG Enterprise: Just What the Doctor Ordered

“We chose eG Innovations because they provide a total monitoring solution,” Grabian says. “Many of the monitoring tools we considered are not specific to any one technology. eG Innovations can monitor specific services, such as Citrix, as well as our entire server infrastructure as a whole. eG Enterprise is very simple to install and operate. We used just two full-time staff to complete the implementation and found that, if needed, eG engineers were very proficient and are willing to help.”

Mercy uses eG Enterprise as a proactive monitoring tool for resource availability in general and server availability in particular. There is a single point of control for centralized management of all sites. Centralized support for the Citrix infrastructure is at Mercy’s Creve Coeur, Missouri location, with five engineers and its Level III support team viewing the eG monitor throughout the day. Whoever is on call for that week receives the eG alerts after hours.

“The primary service is to deliver applications seamlessly to customers,” Grabian says. “Key applications linked to patient care and operations cannot be down at all if we are to meet our Customer 2.0 service objectives and provide excellent customer care. Thanks to eG Enterprise, we can find and tweak issues before they become serious and affect our customers. We now know of service interruptions in advance, and therefore can take immediate action to provide the communications needed to our support staff.”

Grabian says the benefits of using eG Enterprise have been significant. His team has been able to capture and track specific event IDs in order to monitor against future

errors. “So instead of taking 30 minutes to two hours of downtime to figure out where an issue lies on more than 500 of our Citrix servers, it now takes just minutes before eG Enterprise alerts us of the issue and which server is the culprit,” he says. “This is precisely the kind of proactive, fast-response solution our Customer Service 2.0 initiative requires.”

Grabian recalls a specific example in which eG alerted his team. “The Citrix web servers suddenly just hung. The eG alert said that the XML service stopped responding and indicated which servers were malfunctioning. Without this knowledge, we would have needed more time while we checked every web server to troubleshoot the issue manually.”

eG Innovations: A Proven IT Management Solution for the Healthcare Industry

For a growing number of hospitals and other healthcare service providers, eG’s service management software is the critical link between IT services and business needs. eG Enterprise contributes to improve patient care by proactively managing the IT infrastructure that medical and operational staffs depend on, and detecting problems before they affect normal operations.

By providing true end-to-end service management in complex, distributed IT environments, eG Enterprise maximizes application performance and enhances end-user quality of experience. This enables organizations like the Sisters of Mercy Health System to see that IT resources receive the same high level of care as patients do.



About eG Innovations

eG Innovations, Inc. (www.eginnovations.com) is a global provider of performance monitoring and triage solutions for both virtual and physical IT infrastructures. The company’s patented technologies provide proactive monitoring of every layer of every tier in the infrastructure, thereby enabling rapid diagnosis and recovery in enterprise and service provider networks.

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By ensuring high availability and optimum performance of mission-critical business services, eG Innovations’ solutions help enhance customers’ competitive positioning, lower operational costs and optimize the performance of their infrastructures. The company has customers in 14 countries, including organizations of all sizes in government, banking/finance, telecom, healthcare, manufacturing and service industries.