



## CASE STUDY

### SaaS...One Solution Reached From Different Paths.

Hospitals have common goals for managing patient information. They want to put the records in the hands of users as quickly and efficiently as possible. Most agree that electronic data is the optimum solution.

Here's the dilemma:

1. Hospitals have different starting points and electronic data can be achieved in a variety of ways.
2. Record archives often reside in a combination of formats in an attempt through the years to control the file room.

One emerging option that solves these issues is the Software as a Service (SaaS). Simply put, a third party stores the customer's data in a central repository and the customer accesses their information 24/7 via a secure web login. The SaaS system provides many benefits including built-in IT support, remote access option, reduced internal demands on IT staffing and server capacity, and off-site security that the overwhelmed IT structure cannot offer.

#### Valley View Regional Hospital

Valley View Regional Hospital in Ada, Oklahoma, was using EDCO Group Inc. for backfile conversion. These electronic images were imported onto the network and accessed using EDCO's Express Image Enterprise software. Meanwhile the IT department was working on an Electronic Medical Record (EMR) initiative. They partnered with the HIM department to find a turn-key solution that freed up server space and back-up time.

"I gave the challenge to EDCO and they introduced us to their SaaS services," said Linda Vires, HIM Director. "We moved the entire collection of electronic records to EDCO.

When paper charts are sent for conversion to electronic data, they are uploaded directly to the SaaS system."

Vires considers the SaaS process to be faster and easy to use, compared to their previous system and they can deploy throughout the hospital.

#### Finding Better Solutions

*By working on a problem together, IT and HIM management found that Software as a Service (SaaS) was the answer to freeing up valuable time and server space. The simplicity of use allowed electronic records to be deployed throughout the hospital and back-up security was built in. This became an easy stepping stone towards the EMR.*

#### Duncan Regional

Half way through a project to convert a backfile of medical records into electronic images in house, Duncan Regional Hospital in Duncan, Oklahoma, became frustrated. Electronic conversion was a daunting task given that their records included paper, CDs and film. Three months into the project, no end was in sight.

IT also realized the looming problem of server space and back-up requirements. Importing quality digital image files was causing Duncan to run out of storage capacity. Additionally, they found that backing up images to tapes took days.

"A reality check told us we didn't have the expertise, equipment, or manpower to finish the

project,” said Rodney Freeman, IT Supervisor. “We also couldn’t get the data from the archived CDs and microfilm into a compatible format for our server. We turned to EDCO for ideas since they had been converting our paper to microfilm for years. As soon as they suggested the SaaS service, I recognized the value and presented it to administration.”

The first step was to convert CDs and film archives for the SaaS system. Then the charts remaining on the shelves were digitized. What had taken Duncan months to accomplish, EDCO finished in less than a week and all the records resided in one location.

The next test was the response from the ultimate users. After setting everything up, Freeman attended training for the software and found it quick to learn. Users were delighted with the fast response when retrieving records.

Another benefit was the underground location with comprehensive power grid systems. Residing off-site meant no worries with tornadoes and severe storms which are prevalent in the Midwest. The SaaS process also does all the work with redundancy and automated back up. Records are available 24/7 to anyone with authorized access.

Freeman believes the industry is moving toward more and more SaaS options. In fact, they have already gone to SaaS for insurance, community benefits and educational programs. As an IT manager, he has to prioritize the workload and this is a relatively simple way to accomplish that goal.

“We should have started with EDCO’s conversion and SaaS services and saved a lot of headaches,” said Freeman. “It’s easier to manage data and one less thing to worry about.”

With the SaaS running smoothly, Freeman has been able to focus on other initiatives such as converting paper charts to electronic images for the BlueChip system soon after they are created. EDCO provides an on-site team to scan documents into the local network daily while also transmitting encrypted data to the SaaS system as back-up process. Another goal is implementing a Computerized Physician Order Entry (CPOE) product which gets them closer to going paperless and is a key component to increasing patient safety.

### Evaluating the SaaS

These two hospitals are among the many who find the SaaS service is a simple, turn-key solution that frees up server space and reduces the IT time it takes to manage documents in a local network. For some, this is adequate as a longer-term electronic record solution and for others it serves as an easy stepping stone along a more complicated path.

