Memorial Hermann Health System

Houston-Based Hospital System Centralizes Security Platform

The Memorial Hermann Health System needed to centralize its security across all locations to one Software House CoCURE 9000 platform for consistent database management and fluid security procedures.

CASE SUMMARY

Location:
Houston, Texas

System Installed:
Software House
C•CURE System

Access Control, Video, Location-Based Tracking and Intrusion. UNIFIED.

Introduction

Memorial Hermann is a network of 12 hospitals located in and around Houston, with 5,500 affiliated physicians and 20,000 employees. The hospital system, which is the largest not-for-profit healthcare system in Southeast Texas, has served its community for more than 105 years. Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center is one of the nation's busiest Level 1 trauma centers and the primary teaching hospital for The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) Medical School.

In 2014, for the fifth consecutive year, four Memorial Hermann hospitals were named in Healthgrades America's 50 Best Hospitals. The distinction, which was achieved based on an evaluation of clinical performance over seven years, places Memorial Hermann Northwest Hospital, Memorial Hermann Southeast Hospital, Memorial Hermann Southwest Hospital, and Memorial Hermann The Woodlands Hospital in the top 1 percent of hospitals nationwide.

Covering more than 20 million square feet, Memorial Hermann tends to 5 million visitors annually. The campuses encompass 1,762 doors, 1,600 cameras, and 30,000 cardholders. Because of its size, Memorial Hermann staff must work hard to collaborate with all locations, departments, and employees to provide seamless operations and top-tier safety and security for its patients, visitors and staff.

Challenges

When Joseph Bellino, system security executive for Memorial Hermann Health System was interviewing for his job, he realized that the security systems and procedures were in need of significant attention and remediation. "It wasn't until my first days on the job before I was able to recognize just how daunting this task would be," he recalled.

The organization's security infrastructure included dozens of offline cameras, inconsistencies in database management, unused hardware components collecting dust, and a security culture as disparate as the independently operating access control systems.

It was important to Bellino and his team that they received buy-in from all the various organization's business units involved on any security upgrades they made. It also was a budgetary necessity that they utilized existing network infrastructure for fault tolerance and resiliency, and maintained 24/7 operational effectiveness through any upgrade and conversion process.

Each site (except one) was operating a local version of Software House CoCURE 800/8000, and that's where Bellino resolved to start. He felt that the best solution was to centralize the security systems. In order to accomplish this, he needed an integrator that understood his needs and could deliver on expectations, as well as form a long-term partnership with the organization.

To complicate matters, as a non-profit organization, Memorial Hermann had budget and spending limitations. This meant that whatever plan the team came up with for a security revamp would have to prove to C-level executives the value and return-on-investment that would be recognized.

Solution

When Bellino contacted Tyco Security Products for the best solution to centralize the hospitals' systems, the company introduced him to integrator Scott Welborn from Tech Systems, Inc. Memorial Hermann particularly liked the integrator's "For Our Customers' Ultimate Satisfaction (FOCUS®)" program, which would fill in the gaps of the hospital system's security operations by allowing Tech Systems to manage ongoing security procedures.

"The Tech Systems proposal was priced right and the value of the FOCUS program created even more value than the items that were part of the bid, including incomparable service, preventative maintenance, superior technological knowledge, and proven project management methodology," Bellino explained.

Together, after in-depth discussion and collaboration, the team determined that Memorial Hermann should migrate to the Software House CoCURE 9000 platform, with all sites centrally managed at the headquarter's location. The platform needed to integrate the hospital system's Hugs infant-protection product, six different video surveillance technologies, and five audio/intercom products.

During the process, it was discovered that four of the 12 hospital locations were not on the Memorial Hermann corporate WAN. This presented a major challenge to get the IT department on board with expanding the corporate network to accommodate converging the security system. Memorial Hermann IT and Tech Systems worked closely for the ongoing conversion process and necessary maintenance.

The entire plan resolved the various issues of disparity and operational inconsistency, and offered a long-term savings on licensing fees. The individual systems created a lack of standardization for data input and management. With CoCURE 9000 in place, along with new policies for database input standardization, Memorial Hermann staff now has centralized management across multiple locations.

With the upgrade, the hospital rebuilt its command centers to include new computers, hardware, and a video wall to capitalize on the capabilities of the newly integrated solution. The software's flexibility and level of customization allowed the organization to integrate its infant protection system (Hugs) with CoCURE 9000, and also made cleaning up its 30,000-plus badge holder database as seamless as possible. This included deleting unnecessary entries and editing the partitioning of each badge holder.

It was a priority for Memorial Hermann that the security platform upgrade not interrupt any day-to-day security operations. During a previous attempt to upgrade the system, Memorial Hermann encountered a tremendous amount of issues resulting in an offline system and unlocked doors.

The team developed a migration path by which each location would be converted, one component at a time. To accomplish this, Tech Systems used a failsafe mockup of the new system and operated it for a full week prior to deactivating the old system. Once the testing period was complete, the original CoCURE 800/8000 machines ran alongside the CoCURE 9000 platform, as scripts extracted the data and then imported the data into the new platform. Then, to ensure seamless operations, the team tested each system, one component at a time.

The Future

With its new security platform in place, along with revamped standard operating procedures, Memorial Hermann has been able to streamline its security processes and eliminate inefficiencies with its access control systems across all locations, particularly for managing credentials and continuous updates.

C•CURE 9000, along with Memorial Hermann's partnership with its integrator, has been so successful for the organization, that one large, unexpected project went off without a hitch. Memorial Hermann recently re-branded the organization, which meant re-badging all of its 30,000 badge-holders. This process could have easily become a logistical nightmare with so many partitions, schedules, and the vast number of badges that needed to be re-printed. But the integration between Memorial Hermann's iTRUST HR database and CoCURE 9000 helped the project along, and continues to automate the database updates for new efficiencies and improved the integrity of the organization's data.

"The more you know about the technology and the success of others the more you can apply that knowledge to your job," Bellino said. "Be open-minded to new ideas and solutions, and depend on healthy relationships with your providers. When you are able to do that, your department and the organization you work for will be much better off."

Evolution

Towards the end of 2013, Bellino transitioned to another hospital and senior security director Geoffrey Povinelli since took the reins at Memorial Hermann.

Over time, company reorganization, acquisitions, organic growth and personnel changes impact the requirements of the security systems in place. When asked about the state of the system upon his entrance he said, "The access control system was in excellent shape across the board. The upgrades to the new CoCURE 9000 platform were not entirely finished at a few locations, however, the rate of progression and quality of performance were quite impressive. We intend to make significant upgrades to the video surveillance system and implement and integrate other security technologies in the near future. These solutions will generate additional efficiencies and improved levels of situational awareness while enhancing incident management and reporting."

The Customer – Memorial Hermann Health System

An integrated health system, Memorial Hermann is known for world-class clinical expertise, patient-centered care, leading edge technology, and innovation. The system, with its exceptional medical staff and more than 20,000 employees, serves to advance health in Southeast Texas and the Greater Houston community. Memorial Hermann's 12 hospitals include three hospitals in the Texas Medical Center, including the Texas Trauma Institute – a level I trauma center which houses the Life Flight® air ambulance – a hospital for children and a rehabilitation hospital, eight suburban hospitals, and a second rehabilitation hospital in Katy. The system also operates three Heart & Vascular Institutes, the Mischer Neuroscience Institute, three Ironman Sports Medicine Institute locations, cancer centers, imaging and surgery centers, sports medicine and rehabilitation centers, outpatient laboratories, a chemical dependency treatment center,

a home health agency, a retirement community and a nursing home. As an Accountable Care Organization, the system also offers employers health solutions and health benefit plans through its wholly owned Memorial Hermann Health Insurance Company.

The Solutions Provider – Tyco Security Products

Tyco Security Products is a unified group of the most comprehensive world-leading premium access control, video, location-based tracking, and intrusion solutions in the security industry. Tyco Security Products conducts business in over 177 countries around the world, in multiple languages, and employs over 2,800 employees globally, including research and development, marketing, manufacturing, sales, service, and logistics teams in the Americas, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia Pacific. Our products, built by developers from all product disciplines, consistently allow customers to see more, do more, and save more across multiple industries and segments including healthcare, government, transportation, finance, retail, commercial, and residential. Worldwide, Tyco Security Products helps protect 42% of Fortune 500 companies, transportation systems on five continents, 37% of the world's top 100 retailers, over two million commercial enterprises, thousands of students in more than 900 educational facilities, and over five million private residences.

The Integrator – Tech Systems Inc.

Tech Systems, Inc., headquartered in Duluth, Ga., is a provider of integrated security solutions for a diverse range of national and international clients. Since 1987, the company has specialized in the design, integration,

and ongoing support services of electronic security products and business solutions for compliance, liability prevention, process applications, and asset protection. Tech Systems' goal is to set the standard for performance and reliability in the markets they serve through a combination of leading expertise and a commitment to customer service above and beyond what is offered by anyone else in the security industry. Tech Systems' dedication to providing fanatical customer service is embodied in its FOCUS® Support Services program. Clients receive the absolute highest level of system reliability and expertise in every area of service, resulting in value-added solutions that minimize risk and exposure to loss, liability, and labor costs.