



Bridging the digital divide one patient at a time

Free-flowing data over a secure network powers an office-anywhere approach, improving access and transforming the patient experience.

“Cisco has created a platform that enables us to evolve with changing technology.”

- Tom Gordon, CIO, Virtua Health

Healthcare is going digital. Instant access can mean the difference between life and death. A secure network brings the pieces of the digital puzzle together.

Challenges

- Improve workflow and access for clinicians, physicians, and patients
- Reduce operating costs associated with maintaining disparate, outdated systems

Be well. Get well. Stay well.

This is the mission that guides Virtua, one of the largest healthcare systems in New Jersey. Virtua's network includes hospitals, surgery centers, physician practices, fitness facilities, and more. Home healthcare and a wide range of outpatient services round out the continuum of care.

“The days of providing traditional inpatient services in a silo are gone,” says Chas Thawley, assistant vice president of technology at Virtua. “We partner with our patients on preventative strategies so that we see them when they are well and provide the best care for them when they are ill.”

More secure, easy access to patient information and the ability to communicate with the right person at the right time is central to this model of healthcare delivery. Virtua's legacy telephony systems couldn't support the kind of instantaneous access that Virtua was striving for. The systems were also time consuming and costly to maintain.

Case Study | Virtua Health

Size: 8,900 Employees

Location: Marlton, New Jersey

Industry: Healthcare





With a secure and scalable network already in place to support its evolving digital strategy—including enhanced telemedicine initiatives and a full-service Access Center—Virtua needed a communication platform to improve workflow, enhance patient services, and set the stage for new revenue streams.

Cisco® collaboration tools enhance services and workflow over a network powered and protected by Cisco technology.

Solutions

- Deployed Cisco collaboration solutions for faster access to physicians, clinicians, patients, and data
- Optimized security with a Cisco Next-Generation Intrusion Prevention System (NGIPS)



Making the most of a robust network

Virtua was already a long-time Cisco customer, with Cisco networking and data center solutions at the heart of its IT infrastructure.

“Cisco security and collaboration solutions align with our objectives and integrate easily into our existing infrastructure,” says Thawley. “They come with all the features and functions expected in a modern healthcare environment.”

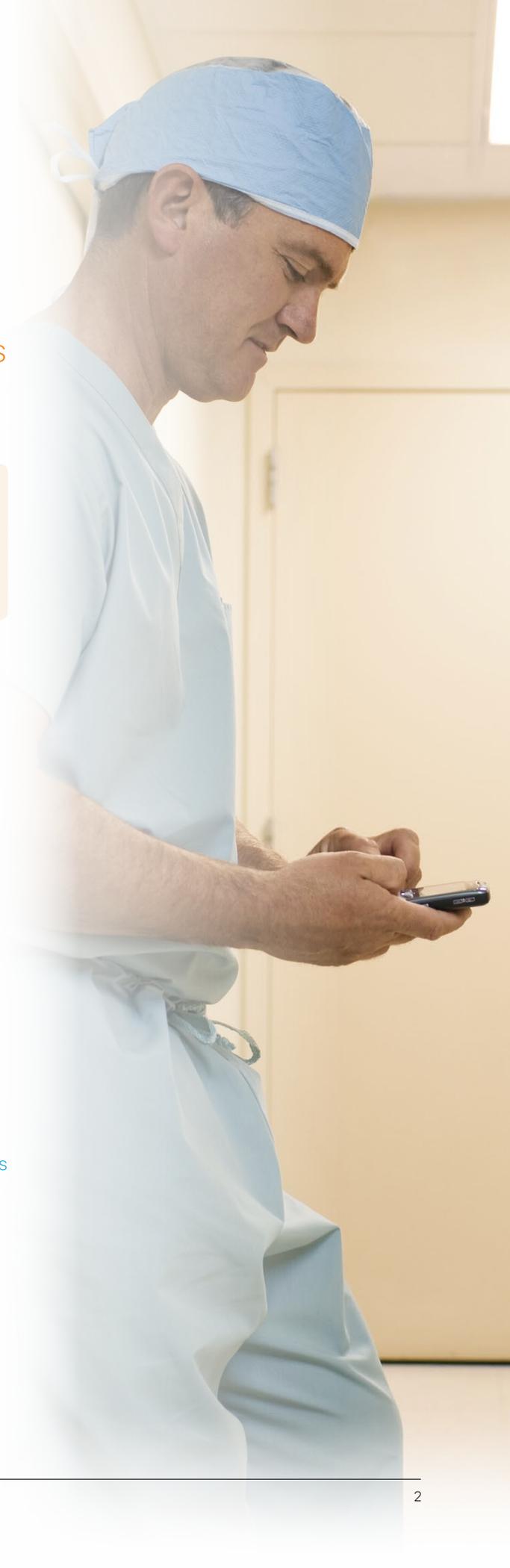
Fortifying the network

With the Cisco NGIPS, Virtua can screen all Internet activity traversing its network.

“By placing sensors in critical areas, we now have better insight into the type of data crossing the network,” says Thawley. “We can analyze data in near real-time and react immediately to keep our data secure.”

Added convenience with automation

Navigating the healthcare ecosystem can be challenging for patients. Using the Cisco Unified Communications platform, Virtua has automated its call process to reduce the likelihood of human error. For example, rather than having patients wonder when a specialist will call, an automatic pop-up window appears on the screen to prompt access-center staff to make the call on the date and time specified by a patient.





Instant connections for faster results

Using Cisco WebEx® and Jabber® solutions, Virtua staff can easily check their colleagues' availability and include them in an on-demand video call or instant messaging session—from their laptops, mobile phones, or tablets. Reducing communication delays results in better patient care and faster resolution of internal issues.

“In 2005, we implemented a phone system so that we could make phone calls,” says Thomas Gordon, chief information officer (CIO) of Virtua. “The system is doing what it was meant to do, but the way we communicate has changed. Cisco provides multiple options for people to collaborate and share information.”

As a result, Virtua has chosen Cisco as its telephony vendor. “There is tremendous upside to selecting Cisco’s telephony solutions, especially as we continue to grow,” says Gordon. “As a software-based system, it will require much less infrastructure and hardware, and it allows us to offer the latest technology faster.”

Results

- Accelerated access for staff and patients
- Reduced operating and capital expenditures
- Future-proof and secure network to support growth

Opening up a world of possibilities

Virtua is in the process of migrating to the EpicCare electronic medical records (EMR) platform. “Cisco’s tight integration with Epic at the patient-portal level will enable us to deliver patient care as conveniently as possible, all under one roof,” says Gordon.

Virtua is also considering several new initiatives, including physician-on-demand and remote access services, and bedside discharges, using Cisco technology. The world of wearable devices opens up even more opportunities to connect people, data, processes, and things.

“We built our infrastructure on Cisco’s robust, secure, and flexible network several years ago,” says Thawley. “It’s allowing us to do so much more than we thought possible at the time.”





Products & Services

Collaboration

- Cisco Unified Communications Manager
- Cisco WebEx solution
- Cisco Jabber solution
- Cisco IP Phones

Security

- Cisco Next-Generation Intrusion Prevention System
- Cisco ASA 5500-X Series Next-Generation Firewalls
- Cisco Sourcefire® 3D Sensor
- Cisco AnyConnect® Secure Mobility Client

Data Center

- Cisco Nexus® 7000 and 5000 Series Switches

Routing and Switching

- Cisco Catalyst® 4500 Series Switches
- Cisco Catalyst 6500 Series Switches
- Cisco Aggregation Services Router
- Cisco Integrated Services Router

Optical Networking

- Cisco ONS 15454 Series Multiservice Provisioning Platforms

Network Management

- Cisco Prime™ Collaboration

Applications

- EpicCare EMR



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