Case Study

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Universal Health Care Solutions Insurance Agency, Inc.

Ricoh IT Infrastructure Overhaul and Network Support Takes Insurance Agency from Vulnerable to Vital

"I was having a hard time finding a company that would bundle hardware, software and services. Most IT companies just do services and make us buy the equipment and software ourselves. Ricoh offered all three."

– Andrew Sam
Agent/Administrator
Universal Health Care Solutions
Insurance Agency
Long Beach, California

ABOUT THE CUSTOMER

Universal Health Care Solutions Insurance Agency (UHS), Long Beach, California, is all about minimizing risk for the businesses, employees and individuals covered by its policies. A broker for some of the most prominent and trusted names in insurance, UHS offers a wide range of coverage from personal lines for home, auto, and healthcare to business insurance for professional liability, worker's compensation and medical malpractice.

While relatively small in size with less than 15 employees, UHS's outdated and vulnerable IT network was big trouble. Emails might not reach employees or customers. Policy changes might not get backed up. The whole network could go down—leaving agents scrambling to get work done and claims handlers unable to process payments.

Frustrated with the lack of knowledge and responsiveness from its local on-call IT service provider, UHS began exploring other options. It needed more functionality, yet its current IT infrastructure couldn't support the way forward. It wanted assurance that its IT network would be stable and secure. Most of all, UHS wanted an IT partner that could provide the expertise and attention it deserved—at a cost it could afford.

CHALLENGE

- Aging server that would no longer be supported
- Local on-call IT provider with minimal knowledge and slow response
- UHS agent with limited resources in charge of network
- No scan-to-email capability
- No backup of information

SOLUTION

- Bundled IT hardware, software and services
- Complete IT infrastructure overhaul
- 24/7 Proactive Gold network monitoring
- New domain server
- Backup as a Service (BaaS)
- Ricoh MFP with scan-to-email
- New racks, cabling and equipment
- Workstation operating environment upgrade

RESULTS

- Uncluttered, up-to-date IT infrastructure
- Proactive, fast and seamless network support
- Improved workflow with scan-to-email capability
- UHS agent no longer burdened with IT and network issues
- Reliable information backup
- Ongoing partnership for IT technology

Case Study

CHALLENGE

Andrew Sam, a broker for UHS with knowledge of the company's IT capabilities, was the go-to person at UHS for all things IT. With an older network operating system that would no longer be supported by Microsoft®, Sam knew UHS would soon need a new server. But it's local partner for outsourced IT services lacked the expertise to advise the agency on an upgrade.

"IT issues came to me first, but I just know the basics," said Sam. "Some items, like networking, I don't know. We wanted a network with higher specs than what we would normally need because we wanted it to be faster and last longer."

The agency relied on cloud-based email technology from Microsoft® Office 365, which frequently had issues and local support was non-existent. This email technology also didn't support scan-to-email, which Sam knew would improve efficiency at the agency. Instead, documents were being scanned to UHS's FTP server and accessed from there, which was cumbersome for agents and other employees to navigate.

While UHS had a backup solution on-site, no one was monitoring it. Backups weren't automatic and no one person at the agency was in charge of ensuring its information was preserved and secure on a daily basis.

Realizing the gravity of the situation, Sam found himself spending far too much time researching new IT solutions—taking him away from his primary insurance agent duties. So much so, Sam routinely found himself two- to three-days behind on his normal workload. Something had to be done.

> Sam was so immersed in finding new IT solutions, he was routinely two- to three-days behind on his normal agent workload.

Sam talked to an adjacent business that had a Ricoh printer in-house. He learned the business was extremely satisfied with the printer and Sam asked for a contact at Ricoh. To his surprise, Sam learned that Ricoh was far more than a printing hardware provider. Managed IT Services was a key strength for Ricoh, serving small businesses just like UHS.

SOLUTION

Sam did his due diligence and explored IT capabilities offered by a variety of providers. But he wanted more than just service—he wanted a partner with expertise in hardware and software—that was also available 24/7 for on-site service and remote troubleshooting.

"I was having a hard time finding a company that would bundle hardware, software and services," said Sam. "Most would just do services and make us buy the equipment and software ourselves. Ricoh offered all three."

After meeting with Ricoh's team, UHS was fully convinced it had found its ideal IT partner. The agency quickly signed on with Ricoh for Managed IT Services and a widespread infrastructure overhaul began.

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Because UHS's existing infrastructure was unsupportable, Ricoh needed to start fresh. A new domain server was installed along with a new firewall with bandwidth management, WiFi capabilities and a Ricoh MFP to support scan-to-email. Ricoh installed new racks to hold the equipment, ran new cabling and centralized all the equipment in one area of the building for easy access and containment. Also, several workstations were upgraded from an outdated Windows® XP operating environment.

Key to the deal was the proactive network monitoring package administered by Ricoh. To keep UHS up and running, Ricoh provides provides 24/7 remote monitoring,

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remote remediation, anti-virus and anti-spyware updates, reporting and workstation and server patching and updates—all for one predictable monthly fixed cost.

"The relationship with Ricoh is working really well. They monitor our network and regularly make updates," said Sam. "When we have an issue, we just call them and they help get the issue resolved quickly."

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RESULTS

Now that it has an up-to-date IT infrastructure and network support package, UHS is finally able to focus on what is most important to the agency—serving existing customers and signing new ones. Its workflow is now streamlined with scan-to-email functionality on the Ricoh MFP—agents can easily scan a typical 50-page contract right to their email without having to think about it. And especially important to Sam, he doesn't have to juggle dual roles—IT person and insurance agent—simultaneously.

"It's a relief not having to worry about IT issues. I don't spend much time on it at all anymore," said Sam.

Thanks to Ricoh, Sam no longer has to juggle dual roles as both an IT person and insurance agent.

Seamless Backup, Peace of Mind

Information backup was non-existent at UHS before the agency started working with Ricoh. Now, UHS's data is backed up automatically and uploaded to an offsite, cloud-based server—giving the insurance agency peace of mind its information will be preserved and readily available.

Ongoing Innovation, True Partnership

The relationship between Ricoh and UHS continues. Going forward, Ricoh will bring UHS's Microsoft Exchange server in-house and re-host it. UHS is also planning an office expansion, which will require Ricoh to provide more cabling, structured wiring, ports, workstations and rack modifications.

In addition, UHS is evaluating its need to make its information accessible in an increasingly mobile world. It may enlist Ricoh to add a virtual private network (VPN) for the agency in the near future so employees can tap into their PCs remotely—anytime, anywhere, from any device.

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