

Sage Intergrity EHR | Success Story

Canyon Park Medical Group

Increasing Server Uptime for Sage Intergrity EHR Using the Stratus® ftServer® System

● CHALLENGE

As part of their migration from Sage Medical Manager to the Sage Intergrity Suite for practice management and Electronic Health Records (EHR), Canyon Park Medical Group sought to improve the reliability and availability of their server.

● SOLUTION

Implementation of the Stratus ftServer system.

● RESULTS

System access has been outstanding. During a recent hardware component failure, the ftServer system's duplicate component continued to operate as normal. The system automatically reported the problem and ordered its own replacement part for next-day delivery. Users experienced no downtime and were unaware of the problem.

SPECIALTY

Family Practice

LOCATION

Oklahoma

NUMBER OF LOCATIONS

One

NUMBER OF USERS

28

SOLUTIONS USED

Sage Intergrity

Sage Intergrity EHR

Stratus ftServer systems running Microsoft® Windows®

Reliable Hardware - The Key to a Successful Software Transition

The transition of physician practices to Electronic Health Records (EHR) is demanding greater stability and reliability from the information technology that is used to support on-demand access to information 24/7. Compromises in data integrity or information access can jeopardize quality of care and patient safety. As a result, practices are placing an increased emphasis on their hardware purchasing decisions, seeking the most dependable platforms to run their clinical and administrative applications.

Physician practices are rapidly joining the ranks of other industries – finance, government, manufacturing, telecommunications and more – that are relying on Stratus® fault-tolerant servers for their mission-critical data and applications. Stratus servers employ redundant components that operate in lockstep - processing in precise synchronization as if they were a single entity. If a problem occurs, the duplicate component automatically continues processing. These Continuous Processing® features prevent unplanned downtime. In addition, Stratus Active Upgrade™ software is designed to address planned downtime by allowing users to upgrade systems and add enhancements without taking the solutions offline.

Evaluating the Options

For Canyon Park Medical Group, a five-physician practice and two-mid-level providers, the decision to evaluate fault-tolerant servers was part of a broader strategy to transition away from paper-based patient records. The practice was using Sage Medical Manager running on a traditional server for patient scheduling and billing. Although the server was reliable enough for these routine tasks, Canyon Park realized that it needed a more dependable server to run the clinical applications that require on-demand access to information. While the occasional server downtime that the practice experienced with its scheduling and billing system was a minor inconvenience, similar server outages could cripple clinical applications and potentially cause patient safety issues.

Selecting an Integrated Software and Hardware Solution

Based on its satisfaction with Sage Medical Manager, Canyon Park once again turned to Sage in 2006 for its server and EHR needs. The practice purchased Sage Intergrity EHR and upgraded to the Sage Intergrity practice management system running Microsoft® Windows® OS to take advantage of the integration between the applications. During the system selection process, Sage put Canyon Park in touch with Stratus Technologies, Maynard, Mass., a Sage partner specializing in continuous-availability solutions that deliver five nines (99.999%) or greater uptime. Along with the Intergrity solutions, Canyon Park purchased the ftServer® system from Stratus to run the applications. The server and applications went live August 2006.

Besides the five-nines uptime, Canyon Park selected the ftServer system because of its unique features and decreased server maintenance. "The fact that Stratus servers are used by the banking industry – where continuous availability is a necessity – really impressed us," said Tonya Keith, clinic manager for Canyon Park.



"The great thing about our Stratus server is that it continuously monitors itself and automatically notifies support personnel and keeps running when there is a problem or some type of failure."

Reducing Downtime with Proactive Monitoring and Diagnostics

"We've only had one component failure since using the Stratus server, and we didn't even know it because the system kept running. We didn't find out about the problem until the system sent us an alert," Keith said. "The amazing thing is that a new component was overnighted to us and installed the next day – all without us having any downtime."

In addition to lockstep technology, Stratus servers incorporate failsafe system software that automatically captures, analyzes and reports issues to Stratus proactively so problems can be addressed before they recur. In addition, the system's ActiveService™ architecture constantly monitors the server's operation and enables Stratus service engineers to remotely diagnose, troubleshoot and resolve problems online as if they were onsite. "Stratus knows if there is a problem before I do because they remotely monitor the system and call me whenever there is a problem," Keith said.

Moving from Sage Medical Manager to Sage Intergy

Part of the whole system implementation involved Canyon Park's upgrade from Sage Medical Manager to Sage Intergy. "We were satisfied with Sage Medical Manager, but Sage Intergy offered us some features that we didn't have, plus we wanted to benefit from the system's integration with the EHR," Keith said. "With Sage Intergy, we're better able to pull out patient demographics and data for analysis, which makes our jobs a lot easier. In fact, our users simply wouldn't let anyone take Sage Intergy away from them. It's that valuable."

Accessing Patient Charts with Sage Intergy EHR

The capabilities of the Stratus ftServer system enable Canyon Park to keep the practice running efficiently by maintaining the availability of its Sage Intergy clinical and practice management solutions. Currently, the practice has 28 staff members, plus its clinicians, using Sage Intergy on a daily basis. "The biggest benefit of Sage Intergy EHR is that we are no longer searching for lost charts and that multiple people can access the chart simultaneously," Keith said. "This enables people to get their work done faster because they can access the chart immediately to order a prescription, add clinical documentation, use for coding, or any other task – all without having to wait for the chart to become available."

Another benefit that Canyon Park appreciates about using Sage Intergy EHR, as opposed to its previous paper-based records, is the solution's ability to quickly look up information on multiple patients. For example, in the event of a new concern about a drug's

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– Tonya Keith
Clinic Manager, Canyon Park Medical Group

side effects, staff members can quickly determine which patients are using the drug and contact them. Also, Canyon Park clinicians can securely access Sage Intergy EHR from their homes, which is a substantial time saver when on-call physicians receive an after-hours call for a patient emergency or an after-hours prescription request.

Analyzing the Results

Canyon Park also uses Sage Practice Analytics which provides consolidated reporting for the Sage Intergy and Sage Intergy EHR solutions. Sage Practice Analytics provides concurrent access to patient information, financial reporting and clinical data so practices can analyze their business. For example, a recent analysis showed that Canyon Park recorded its highest revenues ever in 2007, yet the practice saw 3,000 patients less than its previous record year in 2005. "We're now in the process of determining the factors that helped us achieve those results," Keith said. "Perhaps it was the collections module within Sage Intergy, higher rates or improved billing processes. I suspect, however, that part of it can be attributed to the increased efficiency that our practice has gained by using the Sage Intergy solutions."

While the stability and reliability of the Sage and Stratus solutions have enabled Canyon Park to address its clinical and business challenges, Keith emphasizes that much of the success is the result of the strong relationships that both companies have maintained with the practice. "With most companies, once you buy something from them you never hear from them again. That's not the case with Sage and Stratus. Our Sage account manager has been in touch with us nearly every month since we purchased our original Sage Medical Manager system back in 2000. And our Stratus account manager is always in touch with us. Most importantly, both companies stand behind their products. When we call them questions, someone always gets back to us with answers, and that's unusual in this day and age."