

Sage Intergrity EHR | Success Story

Cass Medical Center

Stratus® ftServer® System Expands Sage Intergrity EHR Access to Clinics

● CHALLENGE

Roll out of Intergrity EHR to seven facilities required a reliable and readily available server solution to provide continuous access to clinical data.

● SOLUTION

Implementation of the Stratus ftServer system.

● RESULTS

The new server allowed the quick deployment of Intergrity EHR to all clinics and has run without problems or failures since implementation.

SPECIALTY

Critical access hospital and clinics

LOCATION

Missouri

NUMBER OF LOCATIONS

Seven

NUMBER OF USERS

60

SOLUTIONS USED

Sage Intergrity

Sage Intergrity EHR

Stratus ftServer system running

Microsoft® Windows® OS

Fault-tolerant Servers - Eliminate System Downtime

Today's health care organizations rely on digital data more than ever to help manage the torrent of clinical, financial and operational information. Accelerating this reliance is the industry's adoption of new technology – electronic health records (EHR) that have the potential to improve patient care, as well as the latest generation of billing and financial systems that offer unprecedented automation and increased efficiencies. Taking advantage of the increased functionality in today's systems, however, requires servers that deliver continuous access to information without downtime or compromises in data integrity. While organizations routinely scrutinize the functionality of their solutions during the system-selection process, many fail to assess the needs of the hardware that is required to keep the applications running and information flowing 24/7.

Fault-tolerant servers practically eliminate system downtime, offering greater than 99.999% uptime for mission-critical information. These servers employ redundant components that enable continuous operation, even in the event of component failure. These systems are also equipped with features that prevent downtime, and allow users to upgrade systems, apply patches and perform routine maintenance procedures online without interruption.

Time to Upgrade to the Sage Intergrity Suite

For Cass Medical Center in Harrisonville, Missouri, its plans to implement the integrated Sage Intergrity practice management and Sage Intergrity EHR solutions in 2006 was an opportunity to upgrade its server to a fault-tolerant system that would meet the demands of its multi-clinic enterprise. Cass Medical Center is a 22-bed critical-access hospital that includes a three-bed intensive care unit, a 10-bed behavioral health unit and six clinics throughout Cass County. The organization has 16 clinicians. Prior to the purchase, Cass Medical was using Sage Medical Manager to handle its practice management and billing needs.

"We were happy with Sage Medical Manager, but it was time to upgrade and we wanted to implement an EHR solution throughout our clinics, so Sage (Software) was an obvious choice for our organization," said Patty Land, Director of Practice Management at Cass Medical. "Although we were not having problems with our previous server, we realized that we needed a more reliable server if we were to roll out Sage Intergrity EHR to all our clinics since they would be depending on continuous access to that server for their clinical needs."

Sage referred Cass Medical to Stratus Technologies, Maynard, Massachusetts, a Sage partner specializing in continuous-availability solutions that deliver five nines (99.999%) or greater uptime. Cass Medical selected the ftServer® from Stratus® and went live July 2006 with the server and Sage Intergrity for patient scheduling and billing.

Experience Proactive System Maintenance is Key

Cass Medical selected the ftServer because of its unique capabilities, and proven use throughout multiple industries. Lockstep technology within every ftServer system incorporates duplicated, fault-tolerant hardware components that process the same computing instructions at precisely the same time. In the event of a malfunction, the partner component acts as an “active spare” that continues normal operations and prevents system downtime and data loss. The system’s Active Upgrade™ technology minimizes the planned downtime that other servers impose to just seconds when upgrades and enhancements to operating systems, service packs, applications and system software are installed. Failsafe software within the ftServer automatically captures, analyzes and reports issues to Stratus proactively so problems can be addressed before they recur. In addition, the 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 on-site.

“Since we installed the Stratus server in June 2006, we haven’t had a single problem with it,” said Levi Souza, network administrator for Cass Medical. “So far, we haven’t had a single notification of a potential problem with the server because there haven’t been any problems. I don’t even have to think about the server because it simply works.”

Smooth Roll-out of Sage Intergy Suite Increases Efficiencies

The smooth roll-out of Sage Intergy running on the Stratus server allowed Cass Medical to quickly follow-up that deployment with the implementation of the Sage Intergy EHR electronic health records software in October 2006. The roll out of Sage Intergy EHR to the satellite clinics followed, with the final sites going live August 2007.

In its efforts to reduce paper usage, Cass Medical now scans all patient registration forms into Sage Intergy EHR at each appointment, and the medical center and its clinics are scanning in patient records from the past three years. Older records are scanned in on an as-needed basis prior to patient appointments.

Several features within the Sage Intergy system have helped increase clinician efficiency. An interface with its reference lab enables Cass Medical clinicians to view results and pending tests from within Sage Intergy EHR during patient visits. In addition, Cass Medical is using the system to send prescriptions electronically. “One of the features that our clinicians like most is the medication-related alerts in Sage Intergy EHR. These let clinicians know when prescriptions have lapsed or when a new prescription has the potential to interact with another medication that the

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patient is taking. It’s a great tool to enhance patient safety and it is much more efficient than manually looking up information,” Land said.

“Once the clinicians got accustomed to using the system, they found it to be extremely valuable and said that they wouldn’t want to ever go back to paper-based patient records,” Land said. “Sage Intergy EHR is a real time saver when creating clinical documentation and the lab interface was a major win with the physicians because it let them quickly access results.”

Integrated Reporting Leads to Decreased Claims Denials

On the billing side of the business, Cass Medical is using the reports within Sage Intergy to analyze claims denials. “With the reports, we were able to determine that denial rates increased to 9% from 4% over a two-month period,” Land said. “That information helped us pinpoint issues where we could offer our clinics additional education, and since then, denial rates have dropped back to 4%.”

Besides doing the billing for its own providers, Cass Medical also uses Sage Intergy to handle the billing for 24 specialists in the area, which has helped improve provider relationships throughout the community. “There was a bit of a learning curve for our billing staff when they first started using Sage Intergy, but now that they’re familiar with the system they really like it.”

Validation of Cass Medical’s efforts to improve its information systems strategy came from an unexpected source. “We recently completed a Joint Commission survey and the surveyor said that our system is state-of-the-art because our medication documentation was some of the best that they’ve ever seen,” Land said.