

Adapting to an evolving healthcare environment



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With a new technology infrastructure, Mountain States Health Alliance is connecting with more people and entities—and having a larger regional impact.

Like most healthcare organizations, Mountain States Health Alliance is adapting to an evolving world.

- Hospital space is at a premium
- Information technology is increasingly vital to clinical and business operations
- More people are working and being cared for at home

“Times have changed, and we need to provide the best quality of service in every setting—even nontraditional settings,” says Bill McDaniel, corporate director of enterprise technology at Mountain States, which operates 14 hospitals and serves 29 counties in Tennessee, Virginia, Kentucky, and North Carolina. “We need to deliver reliable service, data security, and compliance even outside the hospital walls.”

Beyond retail, the Collaboration FlexSpace can be utilized for a variety of purposes. McBrearty says there has been interest in using it for crisis management to ensure a timely, coordinated, and well-educated response. CEOs have expressed a desire to utilize the Collaboration

FlexSpace to meet with their top lieutenants and monitor the health of business operations. And the oil and gas industry may soon use the rooms to oversee remote, offshore rigs and tap into real-time data feeds to fine-tune drilling activities.

“The beauty of the Collaboration FlexSpace is its adaptability,” says McBrearty. “Any number of data sources can be pulled in, and the data can be analyzed and manipulated in countless ways. Even the room layout and the tools used within the room can be easily modified to suit a particular need or function.”

Affiliated physician offices, rural providers, home healthcare givers, remote workers, and even insurers must be connected to and enabled by Mountain States’ IT resources. And with a brand new infrastructure based on the Intel® Xeon® processor-based Cisco Unified Computing System™ (Cisco UCS®), Cisco Nexus® Series switches, and Cisco FabricPath software, these connections are seamless.

“The new infrastructure provides separation between our data center and campus networks, so we don’t run into any spanning tree issues,” says Jason Choquette, senior network engineer for Mountain States. “It allows us to make changes and scale our systems without fear of ripple effects. And we have better visibility of what is happening on our network, from traffic patterns to application performance.”

- The specter of downtime has been eliminated
- Backups are faster
- Software updates are easier
- Data security is tighter

That means less time is spent on systems administration and more time is being dedicated to business growth, new capabilities, and service requests.

“We’re more proactive now,” says McCoy Davidson, manager of data center and device technology at Mountain States. “We are exploring new apps and services, new clinician mobility platforms, and new telemedicine and telehealth programs. We can connect with more people and more entities in rural areas, and have a bigger impact across the entire region.”

Speak to a big data expert

Thinking about a data center refresh? Considering cloud? Our experts can provide options for implementing innovative technologies for optimal performance and management.

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