



Bozeman Deaconess HOSPITAL

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Bozeman Deaconess Hospital maximizes limited IT resources with WebEx.



INDUSTRY Healthcare

WEBEX APPLICATIONS WebEx Support Center

SUMMARY

The IT staff at Bozeman Deaconess Hospital needed a solution that not only offered consistent access to a wide range of mission-critical systems, but also managed the hospital's equipment assets more effectively. WebEx Support Center with System Management helps keep the hospital's software and hardware up-to-date. It also enables support staff to maintain remote access to computers across the network, from sterile OR environments to remote clinics.

ABOUT BOZEMAN DEACONESS

- **Line of Business**
Healthcare
- **Headquarters**
Bozeman, Montana
- **Number of Employees**
1000
- **Target Market**
Patients
- **WebEx Customer Since 2006**

Founded in 1911, Bozeman Deaconess Hospital is the second-largest employer in the college town of Bozeman, Montana. As the only major medical facility in Bozeman, the hospital offers both in-patient and outpatient services for a community whose population has grown an estimated 30 percent since 2000.

The Challenge

Bozeman Deaconess Hospital relies on just three IT staff to provide 24-hour help desk support to more than 1000 employees. “The three of us—one desktop support person and two network administrators—are responsible for any computer that's owned by the hospital,” says Mark Solyst, Network Administrator at Bozeman Deaconess. For Solyst, that means supporting more than 700 computers located not only across the hospital campus, but also in remote clinics and in a nearby retirement community. “We had been using a remote support solution,” Solyst recalls. “But as the hospital expanded to more clinics, it became more and more difficult to provide support over the WAN (wide area network). Firewalls often blocked our way into remote computers.” Solyst and his team were looking for a solution that would not only offer easy, consistent access to a wide range of mission-critical systems over a large area, but also help the IT staff manage the hospital's assets more effectively.

The Solution

Solyst tested a number of remote support solutions—including Symantec pcAnywhere, Microsoft Remote Desktop, and Proxy by Funk Software—but all came up short. “I wanted a program that would tie asset management and remote support together,” he explains. “I was familiar with WebEx because a lot of vendors use it to demonstrate their products. And because WebEx is used by so many companies I trust, I trusted it too.”

Solyst and his team now use the System Management component of WebEx Support Center to ensure that all hardware and software remains up-to-date across the hospital's network. “Before WebEx, I didn't even know the exact number of machines I had out there,” he says. “Now it's a completely different story.” When Solyst installs a new computer, WebEx System Management helps ensure that all necessary programs and files have been downloaded. For older devices, WebEx keeps track of software expiration and notifies Solyst's team about necessary updates and upgrades. “System Management was really the differentiating factor between WebEx and other solutions,” he says. “Improved asset management makes WebEx invaluable for us.”

Solyst and his team use both WebEx Remote Support and Remote Access to manage every computer in the hospital,

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from reception areas to operating rooms. “We can use Remote Support if someone’s at their computer, or Remote Access if they’re not,” Solyst notes. “Either way, I don’t have to worry about connectivity issues like I did in the past.”

That combination of flexibility and ease of use enables Solyst’s three-member support staff to maintain a 24-hour watch on the hospital’s network. The IT team at Bozeman rotates a pager during non-working hours so that someone can always be on hand to keep all systems running. If an issue arises while Solyst is on call, he can use Support Center from his home computer to dial into the hospital’s network and perform the necessary diagnostics. The same flexible dynamic applies to the increasing number of hospital consultants and staff who work from home or from remote offices. “We’re seeing a major trend of more and more administrators and other staff working offsite,” notes Solyst. “With WebEx, it’s much easier for my team to adjust to that trend.”

The Benefits

With the dependable remote support capabilities of WebEx, Solyst can ensure that his team always maintains access to every hospital computer—even those in closed environments. “We have PCs that are in the ER and OR suites, and obviously I can’t walk into a sterile environment if there’s a computer glitch,” he says. Remote Support and Remote Access make it possible for him to maintain an IT presence during a major surgical procedure without getting in the surgeon’s way.

By using the System Management component of WebEx Support Center, Solyst keeps hospital administrators apprised of the resources that he and his team require to maintain compliance. He can provide up-to-date information regarding which machines are out of warranty, helping the hospital budget more effectively for IT upgrades. “With the tools available through System Management, I can ensure that hospital administrators understand our needs more fully,” says Solyst.

WebEx Support Center also offers significant time savings for Solyst’s team. He no longer needs to spend at least half of each day walking, or even driving, to provide IT support. “We have a remote pharmacy that’s an hour away,” he says.

“Before WebEx, I might’ve driven out there to apply a five-minute software upgrade. But now I can do that almost instantly with Support Center.” With the capabilities available through WebEx, Bozeman Deaconess can provide better patient care.

“A hospital only thrives if your patients are satisfied,” Solyst observes. “So if a machine isn’t working, especially during a critical procedure, you have to get in there quickly and fix it quickly. WebEx has really done the job for me, not to mention for our patients. It’s been a lifesaver.”

The Future

Solyst is looking for new ways to use the capabilities of WebEx Support Center for even more comprehensive support initiatives. “One thing we’re considering is to use the recording feature in WebEx Support Center to record a live support session, then publish the file on our Frequently Asked Questions page,” he says. By answering questions via on-demand recordings, the IT staff at Bozeman Deaconess can achieve greater efficiency while providing even more comprehensive support. “That’s just one more way that WebEx can help us extend our resources,” says Solyst. “This is technology that can really help us work smarter.”

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HIGHLIGHTS

- WebEx helps ensure that all hardware and software remains up-to-date across the hospital’s network.
- WebEx offers Bozeman’s IT staff easy, consistent access to a wide range of mission-critical systems over a large area.
- WebEx saves a significant amount of time by eliminating the need for IT staff to travel to remote clinics.