



SYNERNET

Synernet supports remote workers through trusted partnership



Synernet
MaineHealth

CLIENT:

Synernet

INDUSTRY:

Healthcare

KEY BENEFITS:

- Round the clock 24/7 first line support
- Faster resolution, improving service to end user
- More effective use of IT resources

Headquartered in Portland, Maine, Synernet Inc. provides technology based support services to healthcare organizations across the United States. With a network of 200 remote-workers spread across 4 time zones and 30 states, Synernet offers a 24/7, 365-day service with contracted turnaround times, HIPAA/HITECH security and a high degree of accuracy.

Medical Transcription is one of six service lines at Synernet. The service, built on a Citrix platform, has been placing a growing demand on IT infrastructure and security oversight. Medical transcriptionists access Synernet's systems using thin client terminals and transform health professionals' dictation into accurate documents for distribution back to clients' electronic health record (EHR).

Michael Michaud is Synernet's Senior Director of Information Technology. He and his team are responsible for all aspects of IT across the company. This includes ensuring that the remote-workers can always be productive and responsive to clients' needs. As he explains, "The transcription service is a key component to patient care. When a doctor dictates into our system, they may need the document turned around immediately as it is required for patient treatment or release."

The transcription business has expanded significantly over the past three years, with the number of transcriptionists doubling from 100 to 200. However, the IT support team has remained static.

SHARING THE SUPPORT LOAD

Providing adequate IT support to the medical transcription service was essential. Meeting

agreed customer service levels was important and transcriptionists' pay is productivity based. If they can't operate effectively, patient care, Synernet's reputation and individuals' pay are all impacted.

Previously, Synernet had used a service firm to provide first-line IT support during office hours; Monday to Friday, from 8 am to 5pm. Outside of these hours, support calls were routed to Michael's core team of four. However, as the transcription service grew in scale, so did the volume of out-of-hours calls that Michael's team received. He explains, "Whoever was on call was getting between five and seven calls every night. Sometimes, they could be on the phone all night working through an issue. Obviously, that impeded the engineers' ability to work the next day, which had a negative effect on other work."

Michael wanted to find a better solution; one that would free his in-house team to concentrate on essential core work but which would provide a consistent level of support whatever time a user called. He also wanted to off-load some of the regular support tasks handled by the Synernet team, again freeing their skills to focus on value-add projects.

"I wasn't looking for another vendor," he explains. "I was looking for a partner."

“EnablesIT could relate to my challenges. They took the time to understand what we were trying to achieve and they gave examples of how they were solving these challenges for other customers.”

Michael Michaud,
Senior Director of IT,
Synernet Inc.

A SINGLE SERVICE TAILORED TO REQUIREMENTS

Finding a partner was more difficult than expected. Many firms simply couldn't construct a service that met Synernet's need for a consistently high level of support around the clock. Other firms didn't demonstrate the basis for the committed partnership Michael was seeking.

EnablesIT proposed a solution built around its Service Desk offering. The Service Desk operates with teams of engineers based in different countries around the world. Sharing the same IT system and knowledge base, engineers in any team always have access to the same, up to date information. This enables seamless, round the clock support for users. Michael says, “It seemed like the perfect fit.”

Synernet shared its support knowledge base with the enablesIT teams so that all engineers – at Synernet and enablesIT, anywhere in the world – followed the same scripts and processes in diagnosing support calls. No matter when a user called, and wherever their call was routed, the engineer would know who they were and what their issue was.

FASTER AND BETTER SUPPORT FOR END-USERS

The new service desk solution provides better support for medical transcriptionists. As Michael explains, “If there's a problem, at any time of day, they are able to get in touch with someone immediately. They know they can call a number and speak directly to an engineer who is familiar with the user's system and who can help diagnose the problem.”

Using a shared system across both companies is an important part of the partnership. Michael's team gains greater insight into recurring issues and, with all the data saved centrally, they are able to run tests almost instantly, rather than after the fact. As part of evaluating and enhancing the service, Synernet and enablesIT implemented instant-messaging between the engineering teams to discuss issues as they are in progress, further speeding resolution and improving service to the end-user.

“With enablesIT, we have people who are polite, educated and really trying to help the end-user in a very professional manner,” says Michael.

MORE EFFECTIVE USE OF IT RESOURCES

With enablesIT providing round-the-clock, first-line support, Michael's team is able to focus on other important tasks.

“With a small team, I'm very aware of their time and their talents,” explains Michael. “I want them to be working on improving and securing our infrastructure; things that the average user isn't cognisant of, but which are vital to improving availability. The team now has more time to dig deeper into these ... and they're not up all night dealing with tier 1 or 2 support issues.”

A STRONG BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP

Together, Synernet and enablesIT have developed a strong partnership. As Michael explains, “You build the trust, then you build the partnership, then you talk about other services that might be of value.”

EnablesIT also now monitors the external availability of Synernet's web sites and undertakes any necessary root-cause analysis on website outages.

Looking ahead, Michael is exploring how he can use enablesIT's services to support a hardware refresh for Synernet's remote workers. The two companies are discussing how enablesIT's resources could support the purchasing, provisioning and shipping of 200 thin client terminals to users across 30 states.

“EnablesIT are a partner I can rely on to adapt to circumstances and to work with us. I can't stress enough the value of their ability to understand the customer's challenges, and create a process and solution around it.”

Michael Michaud,
Senior Director of IT,
Synernet Inc.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ENABLESIT'S SOLUTIONS



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