

HEALTHCARE: CHRISTUS St. Michael Health System

THE CUSTOMER

CHRISTUS St. Michael Health System is located on a 128-acre campus along I-30 in Texarkana, Texas and serves residents of Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana and Oklahoma. The hospital is one of the premiere medical facilities in the region and relies on its communication services to keep its business running.

CHRISTUS St. Michael offers a full scope of expansive health care services including heart care, surgical, cancer care, women's and children's services, including a level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, and 24-hour emergency services. The CHRISTUS St. Michael hospital in Texarkana was opened in 1916 and relocated to the current campus in 1994. The hospital's phone system was originally installed by GTE, and then taken over by VALOR Telecom (which became Windstream in 2006).

THE CHALLENGE

By 2002, Christus St. Michael was using US Comm for its telecom services. But the company was not able to provide the responsive customer service that the health care system needed, local hospital representatives said.

So they turned to Tim Day, a business account executive for Windstream (then VALOR Telecom). Day helped the hospital with a private branch exchange (PBX) system upgrade and created a telecommunications plan for the hospital that included local phone and long distance service with specialized billing to meet the needs of the hospital's accounting department. As a result, the hospital switched its phone service back to Windstream.

"We went with VALOR (now Windstream) back then because of the local support and pricing they were able to provide us for long distance service," said Joe Gill, title here.

Windstream now provides the hospital with Nortel PBX phone systems and connectivity to its main 312-bed hospital, 50-bed rehabilitation hospital, outpatient rehabilitation center, wound care center, imaging center, billing department and two professional office buildings.

The rehabilitation center uses the Nortel Communications Server 1000 solution, which is designed for large businesses that need the benefits of a converged network. The product also offers advanced applications and more than 450 telephony features, including unified messaging, customer contact center, IVR, wireless VoIP and IP phones.

THE SOLUTION

CHRISTUS St. Michael Health System is one of Windstream's largest customers, with eight primary rate interface (PRI) connections to two switched telephone networks and three point-to-point T-1 lines.

“Our Nortel system has been an excellent system, including when we did Y2K testing, and Windstream’s service record is rock solid,” Gill said.

That service record also is a direct result of the support that Windstream has been able to provide the hospital over the last 15 years. Local Windstream customer service technicians are able to respond to needs immediately, and hospital administrators can call Windstream technicians directly.

“Other people say they’ve got the Cadillac version of phone support because they get service technicians at their hospitals within a couple hours, but I don’t think that’s good support at all,” Gill said. “When I need a Windstream technician here I get on the phone and have someone here within 20 minutes. You cannot beat the local support that we get from Windstream. The company knows that we’re a hospital and what we do for the community and they give us excellent service.”

Windstream proactively monitors the hospital’s PBX system every day for alarms and responds before issues arise.

“We feel like it’s such a large hospital with people coming here from four states, that providing them with excellent communications systems is a must,” said Buster Brady, Windstream area manager of operations for Texarkana.

If you are interested in implementing similar technologies, please call Windstream at 1-888-673-WIND (9463), or speak to your current Windstream account manager to learn more.

To learn more about Windstream’s solutions, call 1.866.445.5811
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