VALLEY HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS
CASE STUDY

Valley Healthcare Systems Realizes Quick Return On Investment with Mitel Unified IP Client for Sun Ray

MITEL

Sun microsystems

VALLEY HEALTHCARE CASE STUDY

COMPANY
Valley Healthcare Systems, leading U.S. healthcare staffing firm.

CHALLENGE
Improve efficiency of contact center employees and IT staff to drive greater productivity and build business.

SOLUTION
Mitel Unified IP Client for Sun Ray with the Mitel Communications Suite on a Sun Server, Mitel Teleworker Solution, Mitel Mobile Extension

RESULTS
- Single sign-on for integrated voice and data systems
- Improved security with centralized applications and data storage
- Simpler, more cost-effective management that frees IT for other tasks
- Teleworking capabilities for greater employee satisfaction and productivity
- Enhanced voice mobility for the "road warrior" and the "corridor warrior"
- Significant operational savings

It didn't take Valley Healthcare Systems (VHS) long to figure out what the integrated voice and data desktop solution from technology partners Mitel® and Sun Microsystems could mean for their business. "One demo and a five-minute talk," says VHS CEO Steven Swan, "and we said 'Hey, we've got to have this.'"

Based in Sacramento, California, with offices in Colorado and Hawaii, VHS is a leading healthcare staffing company. They place nurses and clinicians in hospitals, clinics, and correctional facilities in twenty-five states across the U.S. With demand high, nurses in short supply, and legislation in California requiring hospitals to be in continuous compliance with government-prescribed staffing standards, providing healthcare services is big business.

It's also competitive. And with billing rates typically negotiated only every two to five years, profit margins can be squeezed by increased costs for fuel, flights, rent, and other expenses to get and keep workers where they are needed. As a result, says Swan, "efficiency is paramount for us. We have to do things better than the other guys. We are constantly looking to innovate."

> "We are realizing unprecedented security, flexibility and operational savings as a result of the Mitel Unified IP Client for Sun Ray. It has already provided us with a healthy return on our investment."
>
> — Steven Swan, CEO, Valley Healthcare Systems

Mitel Unified IP Client for Sun Ray

ABOUT MITEL

Mitel delivers flexibility and simplicity in smart unified communications solutions and applications for organizations of all sizes. Combined with a full range of managed services that include voice and data network design and traffic provisioning, custom application development, and attractive financing options, Mitel is reinventing how successful organizations gain competitive advantage by easily collaborating and communicating over distance and time with customers, colleagues and partners. Mitel's (www.mitel.com) US headquarters are in Phoenix, Arizona. Global head-quarters are in Ottawa, Canada, with offices, partners, and resellers worldwide.

ABOUT SUN MICROSYSTEMS, INC

A singular vision—"The Network Is The Computer"—guides Sun in the development of technologies that power the world's most important markets. Sun's philosophy of sharing innovation and building communities is at the forefront of the next wave of computing: the Participation Age. Sun creates products and services that address the complex issues that customers face today, including increasing demands for network access, bandwidth and storage being driven by explosive growth in network participation and sharing.

Sun can be found in more than 100 countries and on the Web at www.sun.com.

Operations before the integrated desktop, and after

At VHS offices, recruiters and account managers spend their time matching facilities in need of staff with nurses looking for work. They are also responsible for selling – trying to add more workers and hospitals to their client list.

In conjunction with all those phone calls, they use VHS's own nurse management software to initiate, track, and update data about qualification profiles, calls made and received, documentation requirements, credential expiration dates, drug screen schedules and results, background checks, life insurance, and immunization status – a seemingly endless list of criteria critical for ensuring that operations run smoothly, legal requirements are met, and patients' lives are in good hands.

Until recently, they did all this using telephones for voice communication and desktop or laptop computers for data management. Now they use the single, Mitel Unified IP Client for Sun Ray™ from Mitel and Sun Microsystems. Instead of booting a computer and turning to their phone to start a shift, workers insert their Java card into a Sun Ray and enter a password to display their personal PC desktop and their phone extension. With this ultra thin client approach, applications, settings, and data are stored centrally on Sun servers, and accessed via terminal-like Sun Ray clients.

Mitel Unified IP Client for Sun Ray

Simple Solutions,
Profound Benefits

The change to the Mitel Unified IP Client for Sun Ray might seem simple, but the benefits are many, substantial, and far reaching.
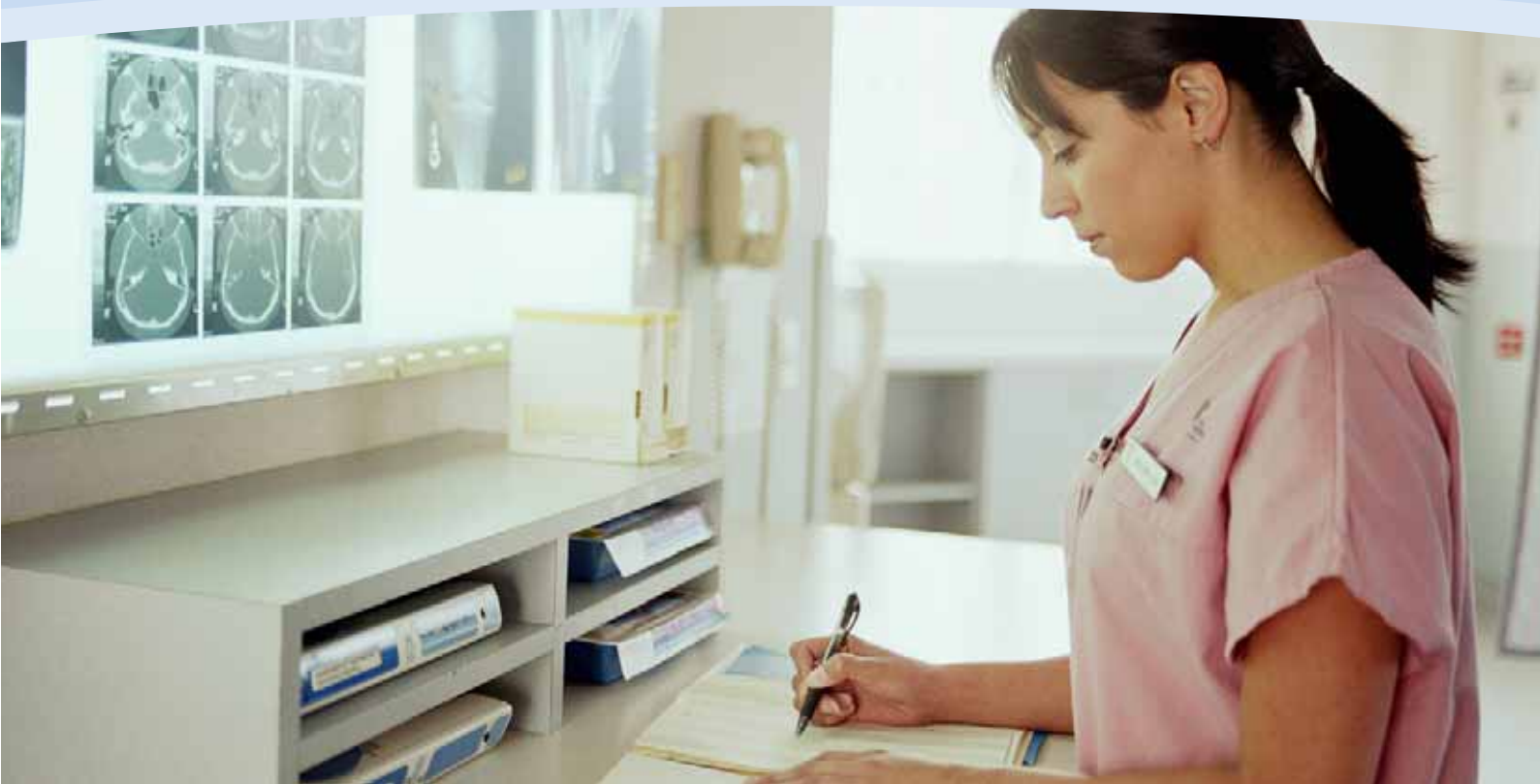
Lower IT overhead, enhanced security

VHS has reduced its hardware spending significantly. A Mitel / Sun Unified IP Client desktop solution is less than a third the cost of a computer / IP voice solution. The solution has a much smaller footprint on workers' desktops. And, because applications and data are stored centrally, employees are no longer tied to a single location – they insert their Java card into any available workstation to display their personal voice and PC desktop and become immediately productive.

Not only does this provide greater mobility and flexibility for existing employees, it means getting new workers up and running faster and more efficiently. As Steven Swan explains, "we no longer have to distribute software or hand out and configure laptops when we have a new employee or an employee moves desks."

For the company's IT department, the Mitel Unified IP Client for Sun Ray means less time spent installing and managing software – formerly so onerous that they skipped versions of Microsoft® Office – and an end to troubleshooting and maintaining computers. "If a computer wasn't working right," says Swan, "IT had to set up a temporary solution and then troubleshoot and fix the problem. Now, if a Sun Ray client isn't working we hand the employee a new one, they slide in their card, and they're back at work. We send the unit back to Sun and get a new one sent to us. All maintenance and configuration is centralized. Our IT department can now dedicate their time to enhancing our software and technology instead of being in a reactionary mode with the systems we had in place."

Effective and better security for the sensitive personal data the company accumulates is another benefit. The centralized Mitel / Sun solution means they no longer have to scrutinize how data is transferred from their server to laptops that leave the building. VHS is so confident in the Java card security that they are programming the same cards to provide staff with building access as well as voice and data access.

Seamless roaming maximizes employee productivity

Perhaps the biggest benefit of the Mitel / Sun integrated desktop solution comes from improved satisfaction and productivity among the company's employees. "Not a day goes by, that I don't walk by someone in the office who says they love this technology," says Swan.

The Mitel Unified IP Client for Sun Ray makes it easier and more secure for VHS staff to work offsite. "We now have integrated desktop solutions at recruiters and account managers homes," explains Swan. "Instead of having to pack up a laptop and other equipment, people simply go home, slide a Java card into their desktop client and work just as they would at the office." Using the Mitel / Sun solution in teleworker mode, employees maintain their voice profile and access to the full corporate network (personalized speed dials, voice mail access, corporate network dialing etc.) while maintaining the same desktop access as if they were in the office.

Teleworking with the Mitel Unified IP Client for Sun Ray has increased VHS employee productivity significantly, while also improved life / work balance and reduced commuting time and costs. For a 24/7 business like healthcare placement, this mobility is invaluable. And by making it easier for employees to work outside the office, employees are working more. "Our people are now working nine or 10 hours a day – not because they have to but because they want to. Because it's easy. They walk home with a card the size of a credit card and work when they need or want to." What's more, explains Swan, "the average time spent selling our services in a day as opposed to managing existing accounts has grown from 4.25 to seven hours."

The solution isn't just for teleworkers and road warriors – it's also an advantage to the "corridor warrior" who needs to stay connected to their data and voice desktop no matter where they are in the office or the building. Swan tells of the time he dropped into the company's training facility while a class was in progress, inserted his Java card into the Mitel Unified IP Client for Sun Ray, and was able to show trainees something he'd been working on in his office just minutes before.

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More productive workers,
onsite and off

Because of the hotdesking feature, all Swan's calls follow him to whatever station he is logged into. While roaming the hallways, any calls that may come to his desk will simultaneously ring his mobile with the Mitel Mobile Extension feature, ensuring that no calls are missed or go to voicemail.

A less expensive, greener solution

For VHS, an added benefit of the Mitel Unified IP Client for Sun Ray is the lower power costs and environmental benefits that go with it. The Mitel Unified IP Client for Sun Ray consumes up to 90% less than the average computer / phone combination. "The Mitel / Sun Solution goes beyond the productivity and efficiency benefits, due to the reduced power consumption, we are paying a fraction of what we are used to in energy costs," says Swan.

In a short time, VHS has quickly realized significant benefits to the company's bottom line, "We are realizing unprecedented security, flexibility and operational savings as a result of the Mitel Unified IP Client for Sun Ray. It has already provided us with a healthy return on our investment," says Swan.

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