

VSA by Kaseya Keeps Methodist Healthcare Ministries HIPAA Compliant

Roy Herron, systems analyst for Methodist Healthcare Ministries (MHM) in San Antonio, was well-versed in the benefits of VSA by Kaseya. Prior to working for the healthcare organization, Herron had worked for a managed services provider (MSP), where he became acquainted with the remote monitoring and management (RMM) solution. He knew the software would be able to bring IT efficiency and compliance to the fast-growing healthcare system.

“I worked at an MSP that was on Kaseya. I saw it firsthand and learned how easy it was to use and to navigate compared to some of the other industry software. That is what sold me,” Herron remembered.

VSA helps MHM achieve very worthy goals. “We use the profits to set up clinics for underserved and underprivileged people that don’t have Medicaid or Medicare insurance. Without us, they would not be able to get any sort of care. We provide dental services, medical services, and behavior or health counseling. We’ve also been able to provide some people with help getting housing, paying their bills, and getting food from the food bank,” Herron explained.

With so many needs to serve, MHM is growing like a weed to fill them. That leaves Herron with his hands full. “As systems analyst, I am responsible for all the servers — application servers, Exchange servers, file servers — and medical health records. For analysts, it is just me and one other person. We have two networking guys, one help desk guy, and two desktop guys,” Herron explained.

Those seven staffers have a heavy and growing load. “We have 130 server endpoints, and another 565 end-user endpoints,” Herron said. This is just the beginning. “In the next six months, we are going to hire about 200 to 300 new people, adding another two endpoints per person,” Herron added.

Compliance and Security

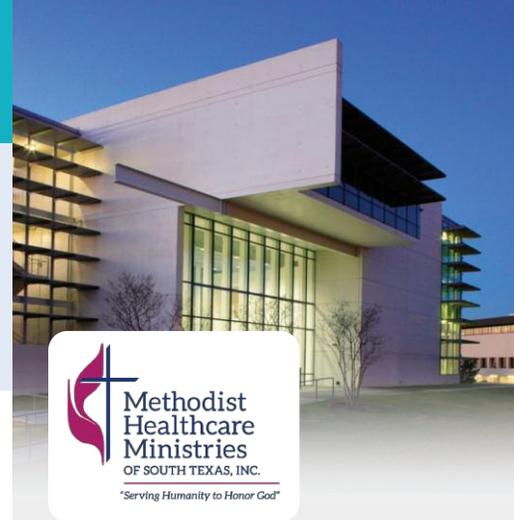
As a healthcare concern, MHM has serious compliance regulations to meet. “VSA is a big help in keeping costs down and allowing us to stay in compliance with HIPAA and the HITECH Act,” Herron said. While complying with these regulations takes a lot of effort, it also creates a safer environment. “The HITECH Portability Act is a big component of our security checklist. It helps keep everything up to date, which is a big thing to protect from breaches,” he added.

VSA also comes in handy when dealing with breaches. “I use it to correlate data if we have a suspected breach. I correlate between our Active Directory, DNS, who logged on to the machine, and what is going on,” Herron said.

Value of Auditing

Auditing is important to understand where your IT infrastructure has been and to protect the network. It is also absolutely critical for compliance. “Auditing allows me to change local usernames and disable them to keep well-known usernames from being used against our system for breaches. Instead of having to change the administrator password, I send out a bulk one and it is done,” Herron said. “I have auditing trails on every one of our computers and see who is logged in currently or who logged in.”

VSA also helps keep endpoints up to date, making them better supported by vendors and secure. “VSA tells me when our computers are going out of warranty. We usually go on a three-year lifecycle. I get reports every week saying that this machine or that machine is nearing the end of its warranty so we can replace them,” he said.



Kaseya Customer

Methodist Healthcare Ministries
of South Texas, Inc.
San Antonio, Texas
www.mhm.org

About Methodist Healthcare Ministries

Methodist Healthcare Ministries of South Texas, Inc. is a private, faith-based, not-for-profit organization dedicated to creating access to healthcare for uninsured and low-income families through direct services, community partnerships and strategic grant-making in 74 counties across South Texas.

Problems

- Unscalable processes could not meet the demands of aggressive growth
- Inability to address healthcare compliance regulations
- Lack of efficient support for hundreds of remote endpoints
- Insecure passwords

Solutions

- VSA by Kaseya
- AuthAnvil by Kaseya

Benefits

- Enhanced IT processes and automation resulted in a more efficient, scalable, and secure IT environment
- Security, auditing, patch management, and reporting help Methodist Healthcare Ministries meet rigorous healthcare compliance rules
- VSA's Live Connect helps IT techs maintain, manage, and repair endpoints without traveling to a physical location
- AuthAnvil can provide an extra layer of password security



Remote Control and Management

MHM employees are scattered throughout rural areas in South Texas. With “half of our people in San Antonio and 100 to 120 users in remote very rural areas,” according to Herron, sending technicians to these sites was becoming unwieldy.

Herron knows from his own experience. “I was one of them, until I brought it up to my supervisor. I told him this was not working. Sometimes I’d drive three or four hours one way to a site just to do little things, like if it wasn’t connected to our network,” he said. Then, if they needed replacement stuff, Herron would have to drive all the way back to deliver and install the parts.

Remediating problems this way was no longer effective; nor was it a scalable process.

VSA has been a total game changer. “VSA has made it way more efficient. I do not have to take four hours out of my day where I cannot take calls, do tickets, or help anybody out,” Herron said. “VSA keeps us from having to send a technician out to fix their computer. I remote-on to it to help them with whatever they need, such as email or our next-generation health system, and fix it in five to 10 minutes.”

There is also a payoff for the patients. “VSA lets us see more patients. With less downtime, that is more time that we have to get a patient in, get them treated, and see the next one. That has helped our productivity in the clinic increase by around 45 to 55 percent,” he concluded.

A Superior RMM Approach

VSA was not the first solution MHM tried for remote endpoint management. “We tried to use WebEx, but with our licensing, we could only do two remote sessions at a time. WebEx did not come with some of the features of VSA, and it was too cost prohibitive just for a remote solution,” he said.

The organization explored other approaches. “We tried to use the native features within Windows or Mac and would RDP into the system. We also tried to use the Windows Assistant, but that got to be a little cumbersome. Instead of just clicking on the agent and remoting to it, you had to walk somebody through it, get them to send an invitation, give you their code, and accept the connection. That could take five to 10 minutes depending on how technically savvy the end-user was,” he said. The number of man-hours was just not manageable.

“Imagine you get a call volume of 500 to 600 calls a day. VSA cuts those call times down significantly just by cutting out that five to 10 minutes of having to walk somebody through establishing a remote connection,” he said. “VSA allows remote access along with so many other modules that help us out, including the patching, software distribution, and automation that keep us in compliance.”

Speed is key. “The thing that stood out was the time it took to establish a remote connection. With most of the other ones, there is a lag. It is more cost-effective and cost friendly, especially with us going from being a small to midsize business to a full-blown enterprise,” Herron said.

The Power of Patching

With most breaches impacting unpatched computers, keeping machines up to date is an essential safeguard. “I use VSA for Windows patch management instead of having to have three or four different servers just to manage the patches. Everything is agent-driven right now. I have about a 92 percent patch rate within a week of when a new Microsoft patch is released. It is easy to set up. I did not have to tie in with everything else. You set up your policies and automation — and let it go,” Herron said.

Multiplatform is also essential. “I am excited about the ability to patch Macs. Usually there is no centralized mechanism for that. In the enterprise arena, you usually build your own Mac server to do that. VSA cuts down on the cost of standing up different servers to do different things,” he said. A broad patching reach is more than handy. “It patches third-party software, not just the Microsoft Windows updates. I patch Firefox, Java, and some Flash. That is a big

“VSA lets us see more patients. With less downtime, that is more time that we have to get a patient in, get them treated, and see the next one. That has helped our productivity in the clinic increase by around 45 to 55 percent.”

Roy Herron

Systems Analyst for
Methodist Healthcare Ministries

help. Otherwise, you probably have to send somebody out to physically patch each system, or spend tens of thousands of dollars on SCCM or SCE from Microsoft,” he said.

Meanwhile, the unified interface makes tasks easier to perform and manage. “The single pane of glass lets me see a group of our users and patching states. I can push everything out from my desk. Over the course of the day, it saves me probably two to three hours walking around,” he said.

Finally, the event viewer not only lets Herron see if anything major or malicious might be going on, but also makes patching broader and more effective.

Role of Reporting

Reporting is another key VSA feature. “VSA lets me do reports to see which machines don’t have a service running or if something’s wrong. It tells me if they have not been patched, or how many patches are missing. That is important for compliance. One of the big factors in keeping your environment secure is patching,” he said.

Connecting with Live Connect

VSA’s Live Connect brings remote access to a whole new level, providing fast access to the computer even while an end-user is working. “I am a heavy user of Live Connect, using it for command prompt scripts or VBS scripts that need to run, and to transfer files between computers. I also see in real-time the processor usage and memory usage so I can tell that a machine may need more memory, or something on the computer is eating up the processes,” he said.

Live Connect also makes sure credentials are secure and up to date. “There are times when people’s Windows Credentials Vaults get stale, and it starts alerting us that something is going on. I can go into the computer and turn off the Credential Manager Service. The service is not that secure, so I like to shut it off because it will start locking their accounts out consistently. Once they are locked out, they have to wait 15 minutes to try to log back in. We keep that from happening so they can continuously work,” Herron explained.

VSA and Live Connect are a big part of the IT efficiency story. “The time savings is plus or minus 20 to 30 minutes on a single call. It keeps call volume down, and our throughput has gone up significantly — probably by as much as 75 percent,” Herron estimated.

Two-Factor Authentication Adds an Extra Layer of Protection

MHM recently acquired AuthAnvil by Kaseya, which offers two-factor authentication (2FA). Herron is contemplating ways to put it to work. “We are looking at use cases like tying it into our electronic health record system and using it for sign-ins and sign-outs,” he said.

Herron also likes the idea of password cycling. If a password changes every five minutes even if an intruder gets the password, it will change in a matter of minutes – blocking access.

In Conclusion

So what does VSA mean to Roy Herron? “Kaseya has allowed me to keep my hair and keep from pulling it out,” he concluded. “Not only that, MHM can support a large expansion in users and endpoints, and keep IT costs and staff low through IT automation.”

“Kaseya has allowed me to keep my hair and keep from pulling it out. Not only that, MHM can support a large expansion in users and endpoints, and keep IT costs and staff low through IT automation.”

Roy Herron

Systems Analyst for
Methodist Healthcare Ministries

ABOUT KASEYA

Kaseya® is the leading provider of complete IT management solutions for Managed Service Providers and small to mid-sized businesses. Kaseya allows organizations to efficiently manage and secure IT in order to drive IT service and business success. Offered as both an industry-leading cloud solution and on-premise software, Kaseya solutions empower businesses to command all of IT centrally, manage remote and distributed environments with ease, and automate across IT management functions. Kaseya solutions currently manage over 10 million endpoints worldwide and are in use by customers in a wide variety of industries, including retail, manufacturing, healthcare, education, government, media, technology, finance, and more. Kaseya, headquartered in Dublin, Ireland is privately held with a presence in over 20 countries. To learn more, please visit www.kaseya.com

©2017 Kaseya Limited. All rights reserved. Kaseya and the Kaseya logo are among the trademarks or registered trademarks owned by or licensed to Kaseya Limited. All other marks are the property of their respective owners.

Rev 111317

