



## County of York, Pa. Leveraging Technology to Achieve Regulatory Compliance

Spanning more than 900 square miles, York County is one of the largest counties in Pennsylvania and is home to approximately 400,000 residents. The Department of Information Technology (IT) designs, implements and maintains the computer networks and software applications needed to keep county offices and agencies running smoothly. The department works closely with outside contractors and federal and state agencies by developing electronic interfaces for reporting and data sharing.

### THE CHALLENGE: COMPLYING WITH HIPAA AND PROVIDING SECURE ACCESS TO CRITICAL DATA

Because York County operates a nursing home that provides long-term care and keeps electronic copies of its residents' medical records, the county needed an IT solution that would enable compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). The county was also under a state mandate to provide its municipalities with secure access to state law enforcement data to enable information sharing among police officers and other law enforcement officials.

The county also needed an updated IT infrastructure that would support upgrades to mission-critical accounting, tax and social services applications. These powerful applications were beyond the capability of the county's existing computers and client-server architecture. To avoid the high cost of replacement hardware, York needed an alternative that would allow the existing system to function at greater capacity.

### CITRIX APPLICATION DELIVERY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

The county worked with **Continental Technologies, Inc.**, a Citrix State and Local Government Expert partner, to implement Citrix Presentation Server™ and Citrix Access Gateway™ with Microsoft® Windows® 2000 Server. The solution was installed at the county nursing home on two local servers to meet the federal HIPAA requirement.

HIPAA mandates stringent security procedures for accessing patient information. "Citrix imposes a strict two-step user authentication at sign-on and enforces other

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#### JEFFERY SHIFLETT

Assistant Director of Information Technologies, County of York, Pa.

### Key Benefits

- Achieved HIPAA compliance for county nursing home
- Achieved compliance with Pennsylvania mandate for secure information sharing
- Saved \$80,000 per year from use of thin-client devices and extended PC lifecycle
- Increased user productivity and satisfaction with faster application access

#### Applications Deployed

More than 50 applications, including:

- Microsoft® Office Suite
- Pennsylvania's Justice Network (JNET) state judicial and law enforcement databases

security procedures before allowing users to access information, which is exactly what we needed to comply with HIPAA,” said Jeffery Shiflett, assistant director of Information Technologies for the County of York.

Following its success with HIPAA compliance, the county expanded the use of Presentation Server to address the state mandate to provide the county’s 72 municipalities with secure access to Pennsylvania’s Justice Network (JNET), a group of state judicial and law enforcement databases maintained by the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC). Users, including police and parole officers, are authenticated via Citrix Access Gateway and connect over a private point-to-point circuit to the AOPC Citrix server environment, where they access drivers’ license, arrest, and probation records, as well as other law enforcement and judicial information. Because AOPC functions are only available through the point-to-point link, not via the Internet, Citrix Access Gateway acts as a front-end interface for all remote municipalities to access the York County Citrix farm and pass through the private link to the AOPC and JNET.

“Previously, York County provided access to JNET only for county law enforcement officers,” Shiflett said. “The state mandate required us to find a way to provide secure, near-instant access across our 72 municipalities without overburdening the county IT staff. Citrix provided the solution.”

In addition to security benefits, the county’s law enforcement and nursing home users saw an immediate increase in computing performance and administrative efficiency. Soon, other departments were asking to move to the Citrix centralized server environment. Today, 2,500

users across the county in human services, administration, and law enforcement at the county nursing home, county prison, judicial center, and human services and administrative buildings are leveraging the technology on 29 Citrix servers. “Once we were successful implementing the technology at the nursing home, it was easy to demonstrate the value of Citrix to other county departments,” Shiflett said.

#### REALIZING TAXPAYER SAVINGS AND IMPROVED EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY

With application processing centralized on the server farm, rather than on individual devices, clients require less processing power and storage capacity to access even the most robust applications. As a result, York County can deliver the latest applications without upgrading aging operating systems on each device, and has extended its technology refresh cycle from three years to six years, cutting spending on client devices by approximately \$80,000 annually. Furthermore, the Citrix centralized application delivery allowed the county to replace its old desktops with HP Evo t5500 thin clients, simplifying IT administration. Thin clients are low-cost, centrally managed computers devoid of CD-ROM and diskette drives and expansion slots.

“With thin clients, because users do not have the option to download applications or save data directly to the client machine, our IT staff can devote more time to mission-critical projects than day-to-day troubleshooting at employees’ desks,” Shiflett said. “And our users appreciate their improved computing performance more than they miss their desktops. We now have more thin clients than desktops.

“Many of our users were grappling with equipment that could not support the bandwidth requirements of robust accounting,

#### Networking Environment

- Citrix Presentation Server™ running on 29 HP DL360 servers and ProLiant BL20p blade servers
- Citrix Access Gateway™
- Microsoft® Windows® 2000 Server
- More than 1,300 client devices, including 527 Dell desktops and laptops and 814 HP Evo thin clients

tax, and social services applications,” Shiflett said. “Their support needs — along with their frustration — were steadily increasing. With Citrix, they saw immediate relief, as they are now able to instantly access the data and applications they need to provide critical citizen services, from healthcare to tax administration to public safety.”

When users do need IT support, the Citrix Application Delivery Infrastructure solution has improved the ability of the 11-member IT staff to respond quickly. Most support can be provided remotely using the session-shadowing capability, and because application upgrades and patches are applied on the server farm, users access the most up-to-date applications when they log on. Additionally, help desk calls have decreased 14 percent county-wide.

“Citrix has allowed the county to work smarter, not harder. The Citrix Application Delivery Infrastructure solution helped us comply with federal and state mandates and improve efficiencies across county government. As a result, our technology costs have decreased as employee productivity has increased,” Shiflett said.

**About Citrix Presentation Server:** Citrix Presentation Server™, the #1 application virtualization solution, enables applications to be centrally deployed and managed while providing easy, secure, instant access for any user anywhere.

**About Citrix Access Gateway:** Citrix Access Gateway™ is a line of universal SSL VPN appliances that provide a secure, always-on, single point of access to all applications and protocols, including multimedia and Voice over IP (VoIP).