



Bringing Systems Together with Siemens OPENLink

Customer Case Study: Baptist Health South Florida

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Baptist Health South Florida is the largest not-for-profit healthcare organization in the Miami/Key West/South Dade County region, with 1,465 licensed beds at seven affiliates including Baptist Hospital of Miami, Baptist Children's Hospital, South Miami Hospital, Homestead Hospital, Mariners Hospital, Doctors Hospital, and Baptist Cardiac & Vascular Institute. The enterprise offers a variety of healthcare services, such as 10 outpatient diagnostic and treatment facilities, and home healthcare.



Challenge

Because the facilities within Baptist Health were once a set of unconnected hospitals operating as separate business units, there were disparate applications in each of its facilities, with a high redundancy of work among its many systems. With the goal of standardizing on enterprisewide systems, Baptist instituted a project methodology and review process involving all levels of users, from physicians to administrators, to select and standardize IT solutions for as many clinical and administrative tasks as possible in the organization.

Cross-institutional standardization of integration is key to enterprisewide interoperability and achieving the organization's long-term vision of cost-effective information management. Therefore, several years ago, Baptist began seeking a solution that would allow all of its systems to communicate with each other and work together seamlessly. In addition, according to Jason Stoyles, Supervisor of Interfaces and Integration for Baptist Health, "As part of our cost-savings strategy, we wanted to be able to handle complex integration requirements such as one-to-many or many-to-one transactions, not just straight-through point-to-point type interfaces."

In its search for an integration solution, Baptist reviewed offerings from Siemens Medical Solutions, McKesson Corp., General Electric Company, Philips Electronics, and Eclipsys Corp. Baptist's application portfolio included Siemens INVISON® with NetAccess and OAS Gold as its primary Health Information System, along with Siemens Pharmacy and NOVIUS® Radiology, as well as applications from McKesson, Philips, GE and others.

Solution/Implementation

Baptist selected the Siemens OPENLink™ application connectivity management solution because it enabled the institution to optimize enterprisewide information access and to implement interfaces quickly where they were needed. Siemens OPENLink helps Baptist's Information Technology professionals to more effectively monitor and manage this information exchange with a comprehensive, easy-to-use Graphical User Interface.

Baptist first purchased Siemens OPENLink to install 28 initial interfaces in 2001. Now, the organization has successfully deployed approximately 225 interfaces, and they have another 120 new interfaces in development. Siemens OPENLink addressed Baptist's need for reliability using a high-availability, clustered (redundant) solution with automatic failover, allowing for the uninterrupted flow of data — an essential requirement in the support of mission-critical systems.

All of Baptist's systems are now integrated using Siemens OPENLink. Besides supporting Baptist's interface development and operations management, Siemens OPENLink also provides the organization with support for HIPAA compliance, and secure Internet connectivity.

“To date, we have not run into a system connectivity requirement that Siemens OPENLink could not handle.”

Jason Stoyles
Supervisor of Interfaces and Integration
Baptist Health South Florida

Results

Baptist achieved a successful mix of heterogeneous IT applications using Siemens OPENLink’s data messaging and transformation technologies. “To date, we have not run into a system connectivity requirement that Siemens OPENLink could not handle,” notes Stoyles.

In addition to solving the problem of system incompatibilities, Siemens OPENLink helped Baptist extend the value of its legacy systems by integrating them with newer applications, as well as with medical devices. For example, the integration of Baptist’s PACS imaging system improved imaging department productivity by reducing turnaround times — in some cases, cutting them by more than half.

Other operational improvements linked to the benefits realized by using Siemens OPENLink include increased laboratory efficiency via automated billing. “When the new lab system was integrated using Siemens OPENLink, all of these non-clinical charges were automated, eliminating a great deal of manual work, human error and accidental oversight,” says Stoyles.

Similar returns on investment have been realized in reduced labor requirements for previously time-consuming tasks, such as with the recently implemented Scheduling system, where because of Siemens OPENLink, charge reconciliation now takes one-third less time to complete than before.

“We are also saving consulting fees by using our own internal resources,” observes Stoyles. “Our internal integration group has been able to integrate our systems easily with Siemens OPENLink, eliminating the need for expensive outside consulting.”

Comments Stoyles, “Siemens OPENLink is critical to our goal of improved customer service. It gets Baptist Health employees the information they need, when and where they need it. We’re very happy we chose this path.” He adds, “The service team at Siemens has been a great value and resource to us. We can count on them for an immediate response.”

Future

Future plans at Baptist Health include opening a new hospital in 2010, which will bring about the need for even more system connectivity. Says Stoyles, “Siemens OPENLink has the flexibility to grow with us. We look forward to continuing with additional Siemens OPENLink clustered systems.”

To learn more about how Siemens OPENLink can help you improve information exchange at your facility, contact your Siemens representative or call 1-888-826-9702.

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