

## Company

Automated Document Solutions

## Business

Healthcare records management

[www.adsimaging.com](http://www.adsimaging.com)

## Benefits

- ❖ *Fast client provisioning*
- ❖ *No capital investment*
- ❖ *\$250,000 saved in building equivalent data center*
- ❖ *Additional labor, maintenance & license savings*
- ❖ *Meet stringent healthcare security requirements*
- ❖ *SAS 70 Type II certified facility*
- ❖ *24x7 system & security monitoring*
- ❖ *High availability and rapid disaster recovery*
- ❖ *Easy scalability*
- ❖ *Server consolidation*
- ❖ *Remote application updates*
- ❖ *Add clients without adding staff*

## Rx for Secure Healthcare Records Provided by Host.net Cloud Services



In October 2009, Florida-based Automated Document Solutions (ADS) had a new business opportunity with a large hospital group needing 24x7 access to 7 terabytes (TB) worth of medical records. The job required a more robust infrastructure than ADS' existing colocated setup, but building a hardened in-house data center with a Storage Area Network (SAN) would have required at least \$250,000 in upfront costs alone as well as months of lead time that would have disqualified ADS from consideration.

Instead, the firm turned to a cloud-based solution utilizing Host.net's Virtual Private Data Center (vPDC) service. The decision eliminated capital outlays, enabled near-immediate rollout, and helped ADS win the contract by offering the security of Host.net's SAS 70 Type II certified facilities to a client for whom both data privacy and availability are as critical as good emergency room care. It also provided virtualization benefits ranging from faster disaster recovery to consolidated storage and centralized application updates for all ADS client locations. For these reasons and more, ADS is now using Host.net's vPDC for all new clients as well as moving a sister company's application to the cloud.

### Cloud 'Cure'

ADS provides document imaging and management services for the healthcare industry, processing over 100 million medical charts, images and other documents a year for clients ranging from small community hospitals to large multi-campus healthcare systems. When the firm was approached to provide backfile scanning, storage and data access for the hospital group with 7 TB of records, IT managers realized they would need a SAN to handle the load. And that was only part of the challenge.

"Beyond purchasing the SAN hardware, database and application servers, switching equipment and other hardware to outfit a data center, we would have needed backup, redundancy, full-time staff, and a lot more. That doesn't include soft costs such as annual support fees," said Michael S. Crews, Director, Information Technology for ADS. "The costs were staggering, and we had only weeks – not months – to deploy."

### Rapid Ramp-up

With Host.net's custom-built, multi-million-dollar vPDC platform already in place, ADS was able to have the new client provisioned within days. Newly digitized documents are transmitted to Host.net through a secure VPN tunnel and housed in ADS' private cloud for reliable around-the-clock retrieval by physicians and other medical professionals requiring instant access to patient information. An application layer within the vPDC platform manages the electronic records as well as secure user access to them. The platform also runs the ADS management system that tracks transaction activity at all of the firm's client sites.

All Host.net vPDC services are deployed on a custom-engineered platform using best-of-breed technology including VMware vSphere virtual servers, DataCore SAN virtualization software, and Cisco Nexus networking. To support data replication, backup and disaster recovery requirements, ultra resilient and redundant vPDC compute and storage platforms are located at multiple Host.net data centers and interconnected across Host.net's Cisco Powered 10G multinational backbone. Embedded security features range from StillSecure's ProtectPoint managed security services to Host.net's vGATE™ front-end web-based portal for out-of-band management of the systems.



**“Data protection and rapid disaster recovery are imperative in a healthcare environment. With Host.net’s cloud computing services, we can offer much faster recovery than in a colocation scenario, and we ourselves get benefits like server consolidation and significant cost savings over building and running our own data center.”**”



**Michael S. Crews**

*Director, Information Technology  
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Automated Document Solutions (continued)

## **Savings & Security**

For ADS, going the cloud computing route has eliminated costly data center build-outs ranging from hardware, installation, redundancy and physical security to annual licensing fees and labor. “If I had to support everything that Host.net is doing for me, I would need two additional full-time staffers for our 7 TB client alone,” Crews said. “Bringing our own data center up to SAS 70 Type II standards would also be cost-prohibitive.”

ADS is also benefiting from Host.net security assurances that reduce ADS’ own workload as well as enhancing the appeal of ADS offerings to potential customers. These include 24x7 managed security services such as firewall, VPN, intrusion detection/prevention and vulnerability scanning (“We can be sure that our firewall is configured properly and have a client’s VPN tunnel set up in 20 minutes, and we don’t have to manage any of it”) as well as Host.net’s backup and disaster recovery capabilities.

“If I had a server failure in a colocation scenario, I would have to drive to the colo’s data center, diagnose the problem and typically wait 24 hours to get it resolved,” Crews noted. “Host.net backs up our data daily and can continue processing even in the event of hardware failure because of the capabilities of their virtualization platform, so no data is lost and downtime is negligible. This is a huge advantage because it assures our customers that the data is going to be available whenever a hospital needs a patient’s charts.”

## **Virtualization Benefits**

Another benefit that ADS is reaping from Host.net’s virtualized architecture is the ability to provision additional SAN space on demand. For the large hospital group with 7 TB worth of paper records to scan, for example, the deployment began with 2 TB of storage on Host.net’s platform and was expanded in increments as the digital records repository grew at a rate of 30,000 to 50,000 images per day.

The same easy scalability applies to server memory in Host.net’s virtualized environment. When Crews asked the provider to double the RAM on his virtual machine in mid-2010, for example, the request was fulfilled in a matter of hours with no downtime or server reboot.

Server consolidation made possible by Host.net’s vPDC is another plus. ADS has servers distributed at client sites up and down the East Coast. Traditionally, each server had to be managed separately. That meant monthly security updates and patches for each site, on-site visits to update ADS software, and inefficient use of server space as well as staff resources. Now those servers are transitioning to a few virtual machines residing at Host.net, with ADS access to both its application software and its transaction monitoring system provided through a VPN tunnel. The result: simplified client management plus reduced physical server needs.

## **Healthy for Business**

With all of these capabilities, ADS is able to offer significant competitive advantages to prospective clients as well as stretch its IT budget farther than ever before. That includes the ability to grow its customer base without adding in-house staff and associated costs. Host.net’s vPDC pricing structure lowers costs even further by providing volume discounts based on the number of virtual machines used.

“I’ve been in this business for 20 years, including building and designing data centers. Virtualization in general and Host.net in particular allow me to do much more with much less and take a lot of worry off my shoulders,” Crews said. For ADS, in other words, Host.net’s Virtual Private Data Center service is good medicine.