

EPIC Management, L.P.

“Meraki provided a future-proof solution that passed our rigorous wireless requirements while providing superior value over our legacy system. With Meraki, I have one less thing to keep me awake at night.”

Marshall Veerkamp, Senior VP and CIO, EPIC Management, L.P.

Challenges

Redundant, seamless network needed for roaming EMR tablets

20 facilities require remote management

Strict encryption standards to ensure HIPAA-compliance

Guest access must be isolated from patient data

Results

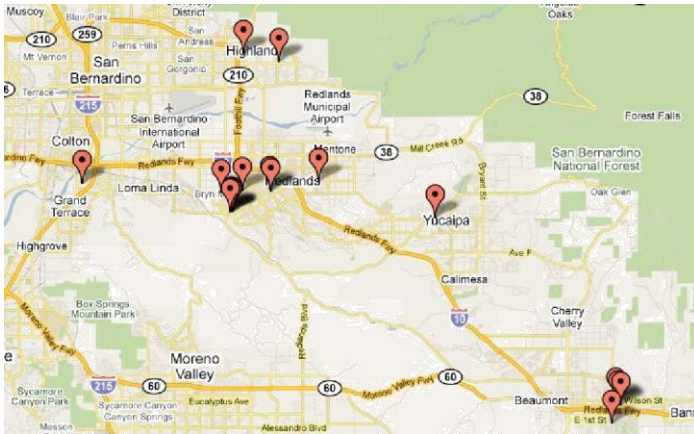
Self-healing mesh network offers reliable, redundant coverage

Enterprise Cloud Controller empowers one remote help desk to solve client issues

802.1x radius authentication and virtual guest isolation protect sensitive patient information

Overnight plug-and-play deployment gets new facilities online fast





20 centrally-managed facilities across Southern California

As a leading provider of healthcare management and consulting services, EPIC Management, L.P. is responsible for the IT infrastructure used by over 275 physicians serving more than 150,000 patients. Beaver Medical Group, L.P. (BMG), EPIC's largest client, is one of the most comprehensive multi-specialty medical groups in Southern California, with over 170 physicians. Together, EPIC and BMG are preparing to roll out a multi-million dollar electronic medical record (EMR) system that will improve efficiency and quality of patient care.

With Meraki, we can take the equipment to a new facility, push it out, and get the site up and running overnight.

The physicians and nurses at BMG's 20 medical facilities will carry handheld tablets running GE Centricity, EPIC's EMR system. Relying on wireless networking, the staff will use these tablets to retrieve patient records, make notes about patients' conditions, update prescriptions, view lab results, monitor patient status, and record dictation - all as they move freely between patients' rooms, private offices and labs.

To keep the EMR system running, a secure, robust, easily manageable wireless network is a must.

"Having a high-quality wireless infrastructure is a key success factor for our electronic medical records initiative," said Marshall Veerkamp, senior VP and CIO at EPIC Management. "It directly impacts patient care, clinician satisfaction, regulatory compliance and ultimately the success of our initiative." BMG's existing

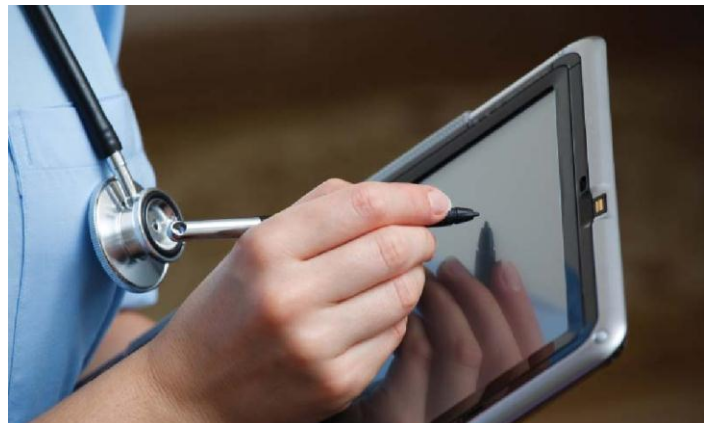
wireless network, a legacy Cisco system without a central controller, was not a viable solution for the EMR initiative. According to EPIC's Network Engineer Matt Steele, the system could not be managed easily and the encryption settings were not meeting best practices. In addition, EPIC had observed numerous connectivity issues, and the 802.11b/g Cisco access points (APs) were limited to the 2.4 Ghz spectrum.

As part of the upgrade, EPIC also sought to add guest Internet access - a service increasingly expected by patients and visitors. As confidential healthcare data passes over the wireless network, security was a strict requirement for EPIC; the wireless system needed to offer a HIPAA-compliant environment, and guest access needed to be isolated from sensitive patient data.

EPIC's Infrastructure Architect Michael Crabtree first heard about Meraki from a previous partner, who had used Meraki in a medical lab environment and was impressed with it. "When you have a peer highly recommending a product, it's usually something worth checking out, and in this case I'm glad we did," Crabtree said.

Working with Value Added Reseller Novacoast, EPIC evaluated solutions from Meraki and Ruckus and also considered an upgrade of the existing Cisco APs. But, Crabtree noted, "the cost of that deployment would have been equal to the cost of deploying Meraki, so it didn't make sense to refresh the existing environment just to have an old solution and potentially have points of failure."

Novacoast helped EPIC run a trial deployment of the different solutions across three of BMG's largest facilities, installing



Securely connected tablets with GE Centricity EMR

27 access points in just two after-hours sessions. To ensure sufficient coverage for the doctors and nurses roaming with their EMR tablets, the trial team walked around the facilities, testing signal strength and performance of each solution in real time, and compared the results.

This deployment confirmed that Meraki's 802.11n access points were rapid to deploy, delivered fast, reliable coverage, and that Meraki's security capabilities - including 802.1x radius authentication, VLAN tagging, and virtual guest isolation - protected sensitive patient information. "Meraki's Cloud Controller enabled us to deploy a secure, HIPAA-compliant network without compromising simplicity or ease of use," said Geoff Gilbert, Novacoast's Manager of Engineering Services. After the successful proof of concept, EPIC purchased an additional 93 Aps - for a total of 120 - to cover the 20 locations.

"With Meraki, we can take the equipment to a new facility, push it out, and get the site up and running overnight," Crabtree said. He also praised the Meraki dashboard for its testing tools and for its remote management design, enabling one help desk to solve most client issues. "Meraki has been so responsive during the whole process," he said. "They have the professionalism of a large company, but they are also nimble and have been able to make things happen quickly for us."

EPIC's CIO Veerkamp agreed. "As a healthcare organization, security, reliability, and flexibility are particularly important to us," he said. "Meraki provided a future-proof solution that passed our rigorous wireless requirements while providing superior value over our legacy system. Having worked with a number of other wireless solutions in healthcare, I feel confident recommending Meraki to our clients and any healthcare organization. With Meraki, I have one less thing to keep me awake at night."

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