

# Agility, security, and access: Reaping the rewards of a smooth transition to a hybrid cloud environment

MEDITECH references its own journey to the cloud when guiding healthcare customers to transformative solutions.

## MEDITECH

With solutions that have a proven track record of seamlessly and securely sharing data across all care environments, **MEDITECH** partners with influential organizations to break down barriers and create roads to true connectivity.

Healthcare workers, as a rule, expect the unexpected. As we watch them fight on the front lines of public health in this era of COVID-19, we've come to appreciate just how crucial a role they play. At every turn, they're dealing with unexpected, unprecedented challenges. This begs an important question. What happens if the technologies medical professionals depend on go offline unexpectedly? How can they get access to the medical records and other types of patient information they need to practice medicine safely?

Service disruptions during "Backhoe Season" have been an annual ritual for Avera Health, a large healthcare system in South Dakota. "Forces outside anyone's control often challenge access to on-premise systems," says Scott Radner, vice president of advanced technology at MEDITECH. "In rural America, farming equipment and tractors literally dig things up, and weather emergencies can likewise take things offline." As Avera Health's longtime partner, MEDITECH stepped in to help, drawing from its own positive experience migrating internal systems and operations to the cloud.

Since many of the challenges MEDITECH's customers face echo their own, helping customers land smoothly in the cloud has become a company passion. "Our customers are spending too much time trying to run an IT shop when they should be caring for their own customers, first and foremost—running hospitals, surgical centers, and ambulatory clinics and caring for patients," Radner says. Freeing customers to focus on patients and services, rather than on running the technology that supports them, is core to MEDITECH's mission. "For the same reasons MEDITECH succeeded in this space, our customers will succeed as well," Radner says.



### Hybrid solutions for smoother transitions

“We wanted to make sure that no matter what happened, Avera Health’s physicians would have access to the information they needed,” Radner explains. MEDITECH worked with Avera Health to create an agile collaborative product—dubbed a High Availability Snapshot—as a hybrid solution bridging Avera Health’s on-premise systems and the cloud. “One of the biggest impediments for our customers is the upheaval they anticipate a move to the cloud potentially brings to their lives,” Radner says. “Hybrid is really your friend in this environment. There are easy ways to make this transition, augmenting what you already have with what you hope to achieve in the future.”

For Avera Health, Radner continues, “we have services that run in the on-prem system, which constantly keep a relevant copy of data for the clinician in the cloud. Right now, we’re trying to make sure that the system is updated and nothing is older than 15 minutes.” If anything goes wrong—as it often does in Backhoe Season—everything the physician needs is available from the redundant cloud-based system.

The solution does more than just backup data in the cloud. “We have a lot of privacy requirements around healthcare data,” Radner says. “We have authentication requirements, authorization requirements, and a lot of problems to solve.” Google Cloud provides the services necessary to meet these requirements.

### A progressive journey to the cloud

From the start, MEDITECH’s own cloud journey progressed hand in hand with Google Cloud. “We began with the G Suite offering and had a wonderful experience in that environment, both simply as a replacement for existing systems and as a new way to collaborate with our development teams,” Radner recalls.



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Building upon this success, MEDITECH expanded its use of Google tools and cloud offerings from internal communications to the development environment. “The availability speaks for itself,” Radner says. “Being able to get what we need when we need it has cut out significant impediments to getting our job done and made us very agile as developers: we change things around, we hydrate entire new systems, we get rid of them if they fail, we augment them if they succeed.”

Google Cloud's affordability also played a key role in MEDITECH's increased agility. "The system is, for the most part, pay for what you use," Radner says, which removes financial constraints that arise from committing to on-premises infrastructure that may or may not do the job. "And then, of course, the universal access of those components is amazing," he continues. "Most of our staff is now working remotely. We barely felt a hiccup in making that transition, thanks to the universal access this environment gives us. We're now considering some of the advanced services which come with that cloud platform."

MEDITECH also benefits from the security Google Cloud provides. "We have a limited security staff, so having Google's full front of security forces has made things simpler," Radner says. "They guided us in various directions to make our products more secure, too, and that's been comforting. It's just been a big win for us overall, and that journey continues today."

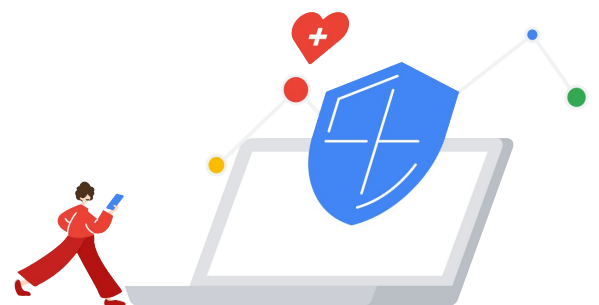
#### Eliminating backhoe interruptions

The agility, security, and access that have made the Google Cloud Platform such a successful part of MEDITECH's evolving business model are precisely the features MEDITECH helps its customers utilize. "We saw the benefits and decided to bring these benefits home for our customers," Radner says. At Avera Health, physicians no longer need to worry about backhoes taking down their systems. "They can deliver healthcare regardless of whether or not they have access to the primary on-premise system," says Radner. "And that seems to be going very well."



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