



# Security Technologies Winner

● This MSP used its private label hosted solution to capture recurring revenue by answering a medical center's need for secure email.

by Gennifer Biggs

**W**hen most people think about network security, the concern lies with data leakage or threats filtering in through Internet gateways. But for some customers, the question of security is tied to communications. In the case of a cancer treatment center with two offices, the challenge came when it was time to communicate about patients over email. With its records secured by an electronic medical records (EMRs) VAR, the medical center knew the next step was securing its communications about patients. To accomplish that, it needed to move past traditional post office protocol (POP) email, especially since, with no IT staff, each individual at the medical center was responsible for their own hard drive backups. More often than not, that meant a hard drive problem equaled lost email, lost contacts, and lost time.

The answer, provided by managed services provider (MSP) SAGE Computer Associates, was hosted email, a concept gaining popularity throughout the SMB market. "We were referred to this client by the EMR supplier, which only handles records management; they don't touch security in terms of the outside world," explains Jeff Cohn, president and CEO of SAGE. The two VARs have worked together on past projects, adds Cohn, which has built a high level of trust with the EMR VAR. Once on the project, SAGE sat with the client to determine exactly what the needs were at the medical center before proposing a hosted solution.

"The client currently has about 25 users, and the care providers [doctors and nurse practitioners] must get emails no matter where they are — at the office, in one of several hospitals, or anywhere in between," explains Cohn. "Their focus is on their patients — either making them feel better or getting them through a tough time — so the entire staff values and needs effective communication." In addition, the center's staff wanted to share calendars and documents at any time or place, which meant security was a top concern. Legal requirements about patient confidentiality are strict and played a large role in SAGE's proposed solution. "The customer was already very cautious about what they mentioned about patients in emails. They

knew they were open to attack," says Cohn.

With those needs identified, SAGE proposed AppRiver Hosted Exchange with SecureTide, which SAGE rebrands with its own name and logo. "Their communications needs dictated a centralized email system with the ability to securely push email, appointments, contacts, and tasks to mobile devices," explains Cohn. He adds that because the medical center had no Microsoft servers in place to begin with — the EMR system ran on Linux — it didn't make sense to install an in-house email server that would require monitoring and maintenance by an IT staff that didn't exist. "Our hosted solution met their needs, plus protected their network from any outside threats, and they didn't need to worry about maintenance."



JEFF COHN,  
PRESIDENT AND CEO

## SAGE Computer Associates

HEADQUARTERS: ALBANY, NY  
FOUNDED: 1983

VENDORS: APPRIVER, CISCO,  
DELL, HP, MICROSOFT

WEBSITE:

WWW.SAGECOMPUTER.COM

EMAIL:

JEFF@SAGECOMPUTER.COM

center staff. As simple as that, SAGE completed the \$1,500 installation project. Today, it serves as an MSP for the medical center, billing the client for the appropriate number of mailboxes hosted by AppRiver while also monitoring and managing the center's IT network. "We are the trusted advisor now," says Cohn.

SAGE estimates the new solution has saved at least \$6,500 in lost productivity simply by eliminating the cost of each employee wading through spam that slipped through on its prior email system. With each of the 25 employees spending about 30 minutes per week handling spam, that totals 12.5 hours lost each week. At a conservative rate of \$10/hour, that time was costing the center \$6,500 per year in lost productivity.

"We see these sorts of problems in many small to medium professional offices, so we are actively marketing this solution," says Cohn. His advice for other VARs — network and truly listen to your customers. "Being referred certainly can get you in the door, but listening to the client and understanding their business will keep you in." ●