



The Computerworld Honors Program

Honoring those who use Information Technology to benefit society

Final Copy of Case Study

Status:

Laureate

Year:

2013

Organization Name:

Dell SonicWALL

Organization URL:

<http://www.sonicwall.com/us/en/>

Project Name:

Our Kids of Miami Dade Monroe - Case Study

Please select the category in which you are submitting your entry:

Safety & Security

Please provide an overview of the nominated project. Describe the problem it was intended to solve, the technology or approach used, how it was innovative and any technical or other challenges that had to be overcome for successful implementation and adoption. (In 300 words or less.)

Our Kids of Miami-Dade/Monroe, Inc. is the non-profit lead agency for community-based care in Miami and the Florida keys. Since 2005, the agency has provided foster care, adoptions and related services for more than 3,500 abused, abandoned and neglected children and their families. Patricia Smith, CIO of Our Kids, was charged with keeping the agency's sensitive and extremely confidential data secure at all times and in compliance with HIPAA requirements. This data encompasses birth documents, Social Security numbers, personal health information and information pertaining to child abuse cases. Patricia faced a challenging predicament. Part of Our Kids' mission is to provide a safe haven for children who've suffered emotional, sexual or physical abuse by being an

umbrella organization for the community. This entails working with hundreds of organizations that provide everything from psychiatric services, temporary shelter, schooling, medical care and services for teens transitioning into adulthood. In order to collaborate with these outside services and ensure the best possible care for Our Kids' population, Patricia needed to extend access to agency data and systems to other providers. At the same time, caseworkers increasingly required remote access to agency data while in the field with clients. Patricia's strategy was two-fold. First, she set out to safely and securely ensure the right level of access to the right person. She implemented a Dell SonicWALL Aventail secure remote access appliance that would grant over 1,000 outside providers in the community secure access to Our Kids' systems. And second, she responded to the Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) trend by promoting mobile technology and letting employees connect using their own devices. This enables case workers anywhere, anytime access from any device, so that they can free up time from administrative tasks.

When was this project implemented or last updated? (Please specify month and year.) Has it incorporated new technologies and/or other innovations since its initial deployment? (In 300 words or less.)

Project implemented in 2010 with its last purchase in June of 2011.

Is implementation of the project complete? If no, please describe the project's phases and which phase the project is now in. (In 300 words or less.)

Yes.

Please provide at least one example of how the technology project has benefited a specific individual or organization. Feel free to include personal quotes from individuals who have directly benefited from the work. (In 300 words or less.)

Patricia's security measures led to an increase in the utilization of her network by 30%. She achieved this with no addition to staff or changes to policies or procedures. This expansion of access and utilization of Our Kids' network means that the agency can provide even more services for its clients. Our Kids expanded their user base from 200 employees to a community of over 1,000, which includes guardians, counselors, attorneys and others. In addition, Our Kids' innovative use of technology has dramatically improved the productivity of staff. One case manager, after receiving the technology to allow her to work remotely, stated, "For the first time in three years, I feel like I can get my job done." Unlike many organizations that prevent staff to use social networking, Our



Kids uses Facebook to stay in touch with chronic runaways, while blocking the use of Facebook games for staff, all managed through the firewall.

Would this project be considered an innovation, a best practice or other notable advancement that could be adopted by or tailored for other organizations and uses? If yes, please describe that here. (In 300 words or less.)

This project is an example of best practices in general and an innovation in this industry. Our Kids promotes mobile technology and allows its employees to connect using their own devices. Mobile access enables case workers to connect to the network anywhere, anytime from any device, so that they can free up time from administrative tasks to spend more time with children during home visits and in the field. As an example, social workers are now able to upload their clinical notes via iPad or research important client details without the need of a trip back to the agency.