

InsidePerspective

ACHIEVE THE POWER OF MEDITECH

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Introducing our MEDITECH Hosting Solution—The best of both worlds

Jim Fitzgerald, Chief Technology Officer



It's been an interesting late summer/early fall here in Canton, Massachusetts, USA. We were humbled, honored, and ultimately thrilled to be recognized by Perot Systems as the knowledge leader for MEDITECH and an opportunity to expand the offering to include consulting and project implementation. As you have read elsewhere in this newsletter, our technology and consulting teams have been working hard to introduce new solutions and services like SAN Health Checks, technical readiness assessments, server virtualization, and ILM (Information Lifecycle Management) to assist you both in meeting the challenges of 21st century clinical computing as well as in planning ahead for MEDITECH Client/Server 6.0. On a human level, there have been at least two happy arrivals of newborns among the extended team that helps launch new solutions and services here at JJWild, our Patriots are compiling an enviable record, the Red Sox won the World Series, and we are enjoying gentle fall weather in which it is neither necessary to run our air conditioning or our heating systems. So it is in keeping with that very positive and upbeat environment that it is my privilege to announce the first child of the JJWild-Perot Systems marriage: our MEDITECH Hosting Solution.

You're kidding, right?

I can just imagine those furrowed brows now. Hosting? New? Hosting services have been around for years and years. Some of you may even remember when MEDITECH hosted their own applications in the late 1970's and early 1980's. We have wanted to launch a service like this for many years, but did not perceive that the economics, the technology, or the environment for such an offering were correct. The conventional wisdom that MEDITECH is self-contained, efficient, has low TCO, and is easy to manage in-house is still generally true, but the world around us keeps changing.

So why now?

I believe we are on the threshold of a generational change in the way Healthcare IT is perceived, funded, and managed. To meet the challenges of 24x7x365 non-stop Healthcare Informatics that drive revenue cycles, innovative, efficient, quality care, and patient safety, Hospital IT Steering Committees, Boards of Directors, and Executive Management Teams are being forced to reassess their assumptions about IT Budgets. There is a growing awareness that IT cannot be done on a "shoestring budget". Data Centers with linoleum floors and room air conditioners cut out of the wall can't get us the results we need. Having a server running a lightly-used application at 30% capacity while the Universe/MIS Server and the EMR are pegged at 80% is not an acceptable operating model. Squeezing one more year out of a storage platform that was designed prior to your PACS install puts your MEDITECH applications at unacceptable operational and recovery risks. Asking overburdened IT staff to roll out a plethora of client-based mobility and security initiatives while still keeping the lights on and the systems running presents dangerous trade-offs in operational models. Being in a situation where the last restorable backup is 22 hours old and will require 2-6 hours of restore time does not facilitate effective clinical computing. Managing a string of events using a classic reactive model does not create the predictable results of an ITIL-based environment.

But Fitzy, even if the perspective of our Board or Executive Management improves with regards to IT investments, the provision of resources to update and modernize our IT infrastructure and processes will likely lag those decisions by one or more years.

I agree, and empathize with those of you who are sustaining solid IT operations with resource support that is not always at the level it needs to be. That is also why I believe the time is right for a solid hosting offering. Hosted offerings in the past have been hampered by the customized nature of technology designs and situation-specific management and operational requirements. While you are facing a perfect storm of escalating IT requirements, the technology sector is cooking up a brew of new software and hardware that enable a hosting service that can successfully leverage these developments to offer you utility-like hosted IT services with the reliability and predictability of results that you require.

What are you building?

A team of leaders from both JJWild and Perot Systems has come together to bring the MEDITECH market “the best of both worlds”. JJWild has contributed its understanding of MEDITECH applications and technology with Perot Systems first class data center facilities, monitoring and management tools, and ITIL-based process disciplines to create our MEDITECH Hosting Solution. Utilizing a distributed grid computing architecture that features technologies and services including server virtualization, Storage Area Networks, Citrix, Integrated Serverless Backup, Integrated Disaster Recovery, Multi Protocol Label Switching, Virtual Private Network, and Perot Systems’ leading edge Operational Process Applications Suite (OPAS), JJWild and Perot Systems are making it possible to turn on tomorrow’s MEDITECH healthcare computing environment with the relative ease of filling a bucket with tap water. Some MEDITECH customers will need 3 “gallons” of computing power, and some will need 10, but all who choose this option will benefit from the leverage of shared state of the art technology platforms, cutting edge MEDITECH operations expertise, and ITIL-based processes.

What does it do for my hospital?

Our MEDITECH Hosting Solution takes the day-to-day grind of managing the data center off of you and your IT staff’s shoulders, and frees you and them to focus on strategic initiatives and the delivery of better client services and support to your end users. MEDITECH server maintenance and provisioning, storage administration and maintenance, backup, recovery, and tape administration are delivered to you as a scalable, reliable, attractively priced service. With predictable, repeatable operating costs and easy scalability, our MEDITECH Hosting Solution can also simplify your MEDITECH IT planning. MEDITECH MAGIC and Client/Server 5.X customers considering a future move to Client/Server 6.0 technology will be able to activate their data center today and transition to 6.0 with minimal disruption and incremental technology investment.

What makes this MEDITECH Hosting Solution different from other hosting services?

Our Hosting Solution is designed and delivered by the same MEDITECH-expert consultants, engineers, and systems administrators from JJWild who have been creating innovative solutions for MEDITECH customers for 15 years. MEDITECH Hosting Solution customers benefit from the best of our design knowledge without bearing the risk of breaking new ground “on their own.” JJWild’s close alignment with MEDITECH’s systems and development teams keeps you current, safe, and ready to take advantage of new MEDITECH technologies like Client/Server 6.0. Customers benefit financially by accessing a leveraged set of shared technical infrastructure deployed in a unique “pod” architecture. The MEDITECH Hosting Solution’s deployment in Perot Systems’ hardened data center facilities adds measure of availability and reliability difficult to achieve in the community hospital environment. In addition, the MEDITECH Hosting Solution is monitored and managed using ITIL-based process administered through OPAS.

How do we get started with the MEDITECH Hosting Solution?

Your JJWild sales manager can pull together a team to assess your current environment and share the information you need to help you decide if the MEDITECH Hosting Solution is a good fit for you and your organization. The team will interactively review your options and preferences with regard to server availability, operational recovery, disaster recovery, and applications support. If our hosting model makes sense for you, we will work together to develop a plan to migrate your applications.

What if the MEDITECH Hosting Solution doesn't make sense for me?

From my perspective, everyone in the MEDITECH community benefits from the thinking and execution behind our MEDITECH Hosting Solution. Customers will be able to focus on delivering IT and applications services, rather than managing servers, disk drives, network ports, and backups. For those customers who prefer to manage their own MEDITECH computing infrastructure, the technical and operational innovations that our hosting solution uses will be available through JJWild's normal design and delivery process. MEDITECH benefits through direct and frequent feedback on the performance and operations of customer software at our hosting site. MEDITECH is historically one of the most efficient HCIS platforms – together with both our MEDITECH Hosting Solution customers and our technology integration customers we will reach new levels of performance and efficiency.

The MEDITECH Hosting Solution from JJWild/Perot Systems is entering its launch phase and will be available for customer access in the near future. Please contact us at editor@jjwild.com with your questions, or contact your JJWild sales manager for more information.