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Outsourcing Management of ICT Infrastructure in Finland

Author

Simo Pietilä

IT Manager, Hospital

District of Helsinki and

Uusimaa.

The Hospital District of Helsinki and Uusimaa (HUS) is a federation of municipalities established in the year 2000 in Finland's southern coast. Its 1.5 million inhabitants are serviced by 21 hospitals, which employ close to 20,000 health care professionals and treat approximately 475,000 patients each year. All major medical specialties are represented at HUS hospitals. Acting as a part of HUS, Helsinki University Central Hospital has the responsibility for teaching health sciences within the hospital district.

HUS ICT and Medical Engineering is responsible for the HUS information systems as well as ICT infrastructure. There are a total of 190 ICT and medical engineering professionals of which 20 work for the ICT infrastructure and 50 for user support.

In 2005, HUS began implementing a new patient information system together with an electronic patient record. The software was developed in collaboration with Finland's other four university hospital districts. After implementation, all Finnish university hospitals will have a uniform information system for patient care.

In HUS, this project required transition from a system developed and installed in the 1980s, and the replacement of thousands of 'dumb' terminals by workstations.

The process also entailed an overhaul of its entire ICT infrastructure which was until then managed internally, and the need to find an external supplier for a wide range of ICT services and support.

HUS's priorities for the latter included the ability to provide comprehensive IT on-site support, reliable server management and top-notch monitoring solutions. HUS also required that its outsourcing partner coordinate ICT collaboration with third-party application vendors and developers, given that it has several concurrent development projects in different levels of progress at any time.

In 2006, HUS made a decision to outsource its ICT infrastructure services to outsourcing partner Fujitsu. The implementation project included the following steps:

- î Creating the data connections to the outsourcing partner
- î Cataloguing and marking the work stations and other assets
- î Designing and setting up user support services
- î Integration of control and management of HUS servers with those of the outsourcing partner
- î Designing the information system services
- î Setting up the asset management
- î Designing the logistics for workstation acquisition and installation
- î Organising the maintenance of workstations, printers and servers
- î Documentation of responsibilities concerning data security and privacy

î Defining the principles of collaboration between HUS and the out sourcing partner

î Making a communication plan for internal information

The implementation project was a huge effort, and tailored according to the specific needs and HUS requirements. It lasted six months and involved considerable contributions from HUS's own personnel.

Several project groups were established to perform the necessary tasks. All service functions were listed and their processes documented, and work stations catalogued on site. Several information events were arranged, alongside articles in print and on the Intranet.

By end April 2007, the service was launched at Helsinki University Central Hospital area, in other words at 15 of the 21 HUS hospitals. The service initially covers 12,000 workstations. Within a period of three years, Fujitsu will be managing a total of 14,500 HUS workstations.

The round-the-clock 24 x 7 service covers on-site support services as well as the monitoring and management of about 250 servers. The outsourced services work is implemented in close collaboration with HUS's own functions. For example, HUS has its own call centre which is connected with the outsourcing partner's help desk. Enduser support has also grown with 40 new persons who take care of on-site services.

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