

Client Success Story

Albemarle Hospital
Summit Express Connect



Albemarle Hospital

CLIENT

Albemarle Hospital in Elizabeth City, North Carolina

CHALLENGE

Searching for a streamlined approach to integrating its complex interface and workflow automation needs

SOLUTION

To find a solution to exchange data in real time for disparate systems and better manage existing and future interfaces for the hospital.

RESULTS

- ROI more than double the facility's five year estimate
- An easy-to-use, reliable integration of applications
- Reduction in customization costs for state project

PROFILE

In the cozy North Carolina town of Elizabeth City, known as 'The Harbor of Hospitality,' residents enjoy an expansive waterfront filled with docks, boat facilities, shops and restaurants. Coast Guard Air Station Elizabeth City, the largest United States Coast Guard Air Station on the East Coast, is located directly south of the city limits. Residents also are able to take advantage of Albemarle Hospital, one of the area's premiere full service medical centers.

In addition to providing critical, surgical and comprehensive women's care to area residents along with a state of the art cancer treatment facility through its Regional Oncology Center, Albemarle Hospital invests heavily in community service programs. The hospital adopts local schools, donates more than 28,000 hours of volunteer time to area organizations and continues to make substantial employee-backed financial donations to the United Way, the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life and other such area organizations.

CHALLENGE

One of Stephen Clark's first steps after joining Albemarle Health as its CIO and leader of the Information Technology department over five years ago was to familiarize himself with the hospital's application landscape. He also wanted to assess operational areas in the facility that needed improvement through internal process modification as well as those areas that could benefit through the implementation of the right integration technology.

One area of integration that immediately caught his eye was the number of Point-to-Point HL7 interfaces running from his MEDITECH HCIS to third party vendors. Although Albemarle Hospital is about 80 to 90 percent MEDITECH in terms of the applications it uses to manage its clinical and financial systems, the organization still had a fair number of disparate systems that needed to exchange data real time. This exchange of data was necessary in order to avoid the error prone and laborious method of manual reentry of patient data into Albemarle's third party specialty applications.

“I am extremely pleased with the investment in the Summit Express Connect interface engine.”

– **Stephen Clark**, CIO, Albemarle Hospital

After learning that Albemarle had a number of the ‘direct’ interfaces coming straight from MEDITECH to each third party application to exchange key information like ADTs, Orders and Results to and from ancillary systems, Clark decided to find an integration method with which to move forward that would meet his short and long-term goals. In addition to researching methods such as application programming interfaces (APIs) and custom interfaces, he wanted to find out more about the benefits of implementing an integration engine to help him better manage the hospital’s existing and future interfaces and an integration partner that could provide Albemarle with the right level of professional services.

After collaborating internally with his peers, Clark knew he needed to invest in an integration engine that would help him achieve his current integration goals but also was built for the future. He wanted to ensure that the solution he chose would support key protocols and services including Web services, SOAP, Windows Communication.

Foundation (WCF), XML (HL7 3.x) and Flat Files. The solution also needed to have the ability to handle custom requirements for an upcoming Albemarle interface project which required custom components. The State of North Carolina needed an interface with specific data elements that did not exist within his standard HL7 feed from MEDITECH.

SOLUTION

After pairing down his list of vendors, Clark chose the Summit Express Connect interface engine technology, which provides integration software and solutions that simplify and accelerate the development, deployment, and integration of healthcare applications. The Summit Healthcare product line delivers a distributed, cost-effective, easily managed platform that reliably integrates applications, automates workflow and simplifies business

processes across the healthcare enterprise.

Summit Express Connect is used to support clinical integration between Albemarle Hospital’s MEDITECH HCIS and its third party applications for facilitation of rapid access to crucial healthcare information for the hospital’s clinical decision makers. Summit Express Connect, which also embeds the Summit Scripting Toolkit, had all of the necessary components Clark needed to manage and develop interfaces in one, easy-to-use application.

Summit Express Connect carries the ability to eliminate Albemarle Hospital’s redundant point to point interfaces and the inherent dashboard component would enable his team to effectively monitor the interfaces 24/7 from any location. The Summit Scripting Toolkit component (SST) would help him avoid spending significant customization dollars for the State of North Carolina project because he could use the solution to extract the required data that wasn’t included in the standard MEDITECH interface feed. In addition, Clark could leverage SST’s workflow automation functionality as a process improvement tool throughout his enterprise by eliminating redundant tasks like data entry between systems (billing, budget, clinical, price increase uploads and more).

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“Albemarle’s implementation of Summit Express Connect is a prime example of how Summit Healthcare’s proven technology can make a resounding impact to the clinical and financial environment of a healthcare organization,” added Jim McKinnon, Executive Vice President of Summit Healthcare.

Because of his limited in-house IT resources, Clark decided to participate in Summit Healthcare’s Integration Outsource program, in which he could hand over the interface construction, implementation and support to a cast of seasoned engineers without compromising his return on investment (ROI) goals. After identifying to his staff the benefits of implementing Summit Express Connect, Clark performed an analysis of the total cost of the ownership investment and a forecasted ROI for Albemarle for the next five years. His ROI plan stated that, within five years, Albemarle Hospital would achieve a solid net ROI gain of approximately \$200 thousand dollars.

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– **Nathia Karasch**, VP Engineering, Summit Healthcare

Albemarle Health awarded Summit Healthcare with the project and the timeline goals were set. Within a short period of time after implementation, Stephen and his team were able to start feeling the positive effect of their investment, specifically reduced maintenance fees and interfaces that ran smoothly.

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– **Jim McKinnon**, Executive Vice President, Summit Healthcare

RESULTS

Five years after first implementing Summit Express Connect, Clark reviewed his original ROI plan and was thrilled to find out that as a result of his decision to implement the solution, Albemarle had more than doubled its ROI goals at almost \$300,000.

“I’m extremely pleased with our investment in the Summit Healthcare technology,” remarked Clark. “I had projected that within five years, Albemarle Health would have a net ROI gain of approximately \$200K by reducing the number of point-to-point interfaces we manage. However the true number turned out to be over \$500,000 once I factored in other impacting variables like maintenance cost of existing point-to-point interfaces and reduced IT resources that may have been required to develop new code.”

For More Information:

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