



“The whole issue is uptime now. Before we contacted Vision Solutions, we were down as much as one hour per day—now we’re at less than two minutes!”

Ernie McKinley, Director
UMC Information Services

Business Profile

Company name:
University Medical Center
of Southern Nevada (UMC)

Headquarters:
Las Vegas, Nevada (USA)

Industry:
Medicine

Employees:
More than 1,800

- Business Environment:
- UMC is affiliated with the University of Nevada School of Medicine
 - Premier teaching hospital in Nevada
 - Serves the medical needs of Southern Nevada and parts of California, Utah and Arizona as well as the millions of visitors to Las Vegas every year

Vision Solutions Product:
iTera™ HA for i5/OS®

Critical Issue

For processing in the MedSeries4 system, UMC users were offline for 30 minutes to an hour each night. The resulting difficulties included requirements for manual data entry that took far more than the actual downtime. UMC sought an HA solution to bring end-of-day downtime to less than five minutes and discovered a solution that reduced it to less than two minutes.

Results

- Reduced end-of-day downtime to less than two minutes.
- Also significantly reduced downtime for monthly system saves, upgrades, migrations, and file reorganization.
- Increased availability of MedSeries4, driving higher profitability.
- Near point-of-failure recovery in the event of an object failure.

Technologies

- iTera HA for i5/OS from Vision Solutions
- MedSeries4® healthcare information system from Siemens®

Business Challenge

When has an IT professional ever been in trouble for having completed a successful tape backup? Never. It's the downtime required to do daily saves and day-end processes that cause a problem. And for busy hospitals like Las Vegas' University Medical Center (UMC), downtime can mean headaches for numerous departments.

Ernie McKinley, Director of UMC Information Services, explained: “We were down as much as one hour each night. Our Radiology group entered patient information manually during their third shift because that's the time we do our saves. Even though total downtime was typically 30 minutes, Radiology experienced one hour of manually entering patient information for every five minutes that Admissions was offline. That's six hours!”

And it wasn't just Radiology complaining; other clinical departments were suffering as well.

UMC uses Siemens'® MedSeries4® healthcare information system (HIS). For nightly processing, users were often offline for approximately 30 minutes between midnight and 1:30 a.m. The downtime was caused by events including daily backups, incrementing census data, the auto discharge/re-admit process, generation of OC charges, medical records interfacing, and others.

The longer a system is down, the more problematic things become. “We have an extremely busy emergency room,” said McKinley. “There's a direct correlation between the length of time a system is down and difficulties with processing admissions, discharges, and transfers.”



Solution

UMC chose to solve its downtime problems with iTera™ HA for i5/OS® from Vision Solutions.

With iTera HA, UMC made minor changes to a couple of standard objects within MedSeries4. Vision Solutions suggested making a sequential copy on a particular file, and this recommendation alone immediately shaved eight minutes off of UMC's downtime.

The goal of the Vision Solutions technical team was to create a complete solution to reduce UMC's end-of-day downtime to less than five minutes. In fact, the solution was so successful that UMC's downtime is currently under two minutes (a month-long record).

To get to the two-minutes, they used iTera HA to eliminate the save-checkpoint requirements during the save process and resolved the issues related to incrementing census data, the auto discharge/re-admit process, generation of OC charges, medical records interfacing, and others.

With minimal impact and expense, iTera HA also significantly reduced the downtime for monthly system saves, IBM OS upgrades, hardware upgrades, IBM system migrations, and reorganizing files.

The UMC staff is happy that the system is more available. And since UMC MedSeries4 users are now able to run with little or no break in their routine, the hospital is more profitable.

Most MedSeries4 environments have difficulty achieving better than 90 percent uptime. But with iTera HA and the related modifications, uptime of 99.9 percent is achievable.

With iTera HA, UMC gained efficiencies within day-end processes, eliminated the save-checkpoint requirements, and added recoverability. Vision Solutions provides a complete, easy-to-use solution with near point-of-failure recovery should UMC ever experience some type of object failure.



17911 Von Karman Avenue, Suite 500, Irvine, CA 92614
1-800-957-4511 ▪ 1-801-799-0300 ▪ visionsolutions.com



◆ High Availability ◆ Disaster Recovery ◆ Systems and Data Management ◆