

George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust

Customer Case Study

The George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust is a single site hospital of 330 beds on the outskirts of Nuneaton, Warwickshire. Employing 1749 staff, the Trust provides a range of traditional district general hospital health services including medical, surgical and maternity care to a population of approximately 280,000 people from the surrounding areas of Nuneaton and Bedworth, North Warwickshire, South West Leicestershire and Northern Coventry.

The background

In July 2006, the hospital was among the first wave of Trusts within the NHS to be designated a 'Turnaround Trust' because of its inability to balance its finances. In danger of being replaced, the George Eliot put in place a wide ranging plan to establish financial stability and rapid operational recovery. As part of this plan a new Board and a new Executive team were appointed who rapidly came to the conclusion that accessibility to and analysis of management information was critical to the recovery process. James Norman, newly appointed as Associate Director of Information and Performance, was duly tasked with delivering an improved Information Management system.

The challenge

As part of his initial review, James undertook a study of current systems and processes.

'I was faced with a range of major issues,' said James, 'not least that data was being collected across disparate databases from a variety of data sources and systems. Reporting from a live system meant that

when data was presented to use in the Trust it was impossible to know if the data was up to date as it couldn't be compared with previous reports. This led to the data being considered unreliable and on occasion confusing,' added James.

'I was faced with a fundamental question – how was I going to get commitment to invest in a major IT infrastructure and software upgrade when we were facing severe financial pressure and low morale amongst staff,' said James. 'I also had to take into account the imminent delivery of a new Patient Administration System driven by Connecting for Health.'

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With support of the Board, James put in place a formal procurement exercise to find a company capable of defining, designing, developing and deploying a data warehouse and reporting solution. Initially it seemed that a bespoke software system would offer the most attractive solution but it was soon evident that such a system would be expensive to purchase and costly to maintain. As a result, the requirements of any new solution became quite simple – affordability, ease of use and easy access to relevant information.

(Continued overleaf)

Quick Facts

Industry
Healthcare

Business Plan

Make information simple to access, easy to use & clear to understand.

The Result

Staff get the answers they need, when they need them, helping the Trust to enhance its financial and corporate performance.

Products

MS SQL Server 2005.

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Continued



The solution

The logical answer to these requirements was to make use of Microsoft's Enterprise-wide application agreement with the NHS, ensuring that if Microsoft software was available to the Trust under that agreement then it was incorporated into any solution. In addition, the solution needed to be kept deliberately simple and straightforward in order to minimise the requirement for staff training, but still offer the option of adding additional, low-cost, nice-to-have applications over time.

Following a formal tender process, and after short listing and reviewing several other vendors, the Trust eventually awarded the contract to business intelligence specialists CONTEMPORARY, who recommended a solution using a core platform of Microsoft SQL Server 2005 and Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2007.

'CONTEMPORARY offered us an honest and realistic approach to our requirements,' said James, 'giving practical advice on a solution but without dictating a project direction. Their consultants recognised our financial pressures and gave us a range of options that enabled us to hit the ground running, while still offering us a scalable solution that would grow with our long-term requirements.'

The solution ultimately utilised Microsoft SQL 2005 to deliver data warehouse and analytical services, integrated with a Proclarity 6.3 business intelligence engine and 90 Degree Software's Radius90 reporting solution. But despite the delivery of new applications, the solution was still able to integrate with existing Access databases and Excel reports. Microsoft SharePoint Server was used to deliver a scalable, flexible and secure but familiar, user-friendly front-end.

The result

Satisfying the Trust's requirements for an affordable, yet powerful solution which would make information simple to access, easy to use and clear to understand, CONTEMPORARY was able to deliver a set of standard but customisable Microsoft-compliant applications that enable business managers to access and analyse information from a variety of different sources. Staff get the answers they need, when they need them, helping the Trust to enhance its financial and corporate performance.

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'The same senior staff were involved throughout the delivery, giving support and advice as required, even on issues that were outside the scope of the delivery, for example on the new Patient Administration System', said James, 'and we always received regular feedback on progress. The CONTEMPORARY consultants even accompanied our staff to internal meetings to answer technical questions and update the various directorates on the progress of the project.'

'Most importantly with a project of this type – if CONTEMPORARY said it would arrive on a certain date, it did,' James added.

About CONTEMPORARY

Established over 15 years ago CONTEMPORARY is a leading provider of Business Intelligence solutions, its people are highly focussed and experienced and provide software, consulting, training and support. The success of the company can be attributed to its understanding not just of the technology, but also the business requirements and needs of its customers.

For additional information:
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