

Pharmaceutical Services Company Saves Time, Increases Reliability

Customer Case Study



Smart Net Total Care gives Quintiles instant visibility into more than 700 devices and contracts.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Customer Name: Quintiles

Industry: Healthcare

Location: Durham, NC, U.S.

Number of Employees: 25,000

Challenge:

- Time-consuming inventory processes often resulted in lapsed service coverage
- Staff spent days reconciling device data with no greater assurance of accuracy
- Multiple contracts for covered equipment increased costs and complexity

Solution:

- Cisco Smart Net Total Care

Results:

- Gained visibility into all devices and service coverage
- Securely consolidated all device and contract data into one database, saving time and increasing inventory accuracy and accessibility
- Reduced risk through proactive product notifications and security alerts that help prevent service disruptions

Challenge

Bringing new drugs to market successfully is a complex process that demands thousands of people devoted to research, development, testing, trials, and marketing. Quintiles is the only fully integrated biopharmaceutical services company that provides pharmaceutical companies with clinical, commercial, consulting, and capital solutions in 60 countries. In 2010, Quintiles helped develop or commercialize all of the top 50 best-selling drugs or compounds for oncology, cardiovascular, and central nervous system anti-infective therapeutics. In 2012, Quintiles was named Best Clinical Research Organization in the Vaccine Industry Excellence Awards, presented at the World Vaccine Congress in Washington, D.C.

The company recently launched IT services that allow clients to outsource data storage and management, so in addition to serving Quintiles' needs, the network must also support paid services 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Any network outage dramatically affects employees, and if data cannot move across the network, Quintiles cannot generate service revenue.

The Quintiles network is based on Cisco equipment and is distributed globally across 106 sites. More than 700 devices are on the network, and maintaining accurate inventory information for all of the devices and their service contracts has been a time-consuming task. Using Cisco® LAN Management System, the IT team can create reports of serial numbers and device names. However, until recently, the team could not easily find a complete picture of each device with its associated service contract information.

"We have people around the globe gathering network device data manually and submitting that information to management for consolidation," says Wil Bolton, senior network systems engineer for Quintiles. "In spite of that, I have spent at least



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Wil Bolton
Senior Network Systems Engineer

40 additional hours myself combing through spreadsheets and comparing multiple sets of data to try and assemble the most accurate spreadsheet possible to send to Cisco for our service agreement renewals.”

Sometimes obtaining data took so long that service coverage would lapse on devices. In the event of a question about a particular device, no way existed to quickly look up serial numbers and verify contract coverage. At these times, it was faster to call the Cisco Technical Assistance Center (TAC) or visit the website and try to open a case and see what happened.

“We have long wanted to consolidate all of our Cisco SMARTnet contracts,” says Bolton. “When we learned about Cisco Smart Net Total Care Service, we were in the process of completing a huge renewal for hundreds of devices. We decided to deploy it and bring everything together into one place where we can more easily manage it.”

Solution

Cisco Smart Net Total Care integrates extensive networkwide inventory management and analysis with customized security alerts, service contract management, and proactive diagnostics. It also provides smart service capabilities that deliver proactive support and actionable intelligence to increase operational efficiency and improve risk management.

Using smart service capabilities, Smart Net Total Care identifies Quintiles’ installed base of Cisco equipment and securely communicates this data to a secure Cisco data center, where it is analyzed to provide a comprehensive view of equipment, software versions, and service contracts. Detailed inventory information, life-cycle status, contract coverage, and targeted alerts are available to Quintiles’ teams through a secure web portal. Proactive device diagnostics and foundational technical service capabilities work together to simplify equipment maintenance, budgeting, and planning.

Quintiles also has access to the Cisco Technical Assistance Center (TAC) 24 hours a day, giving the company access to fast, expert response. The company retains its Cisco LAN Management System to deploy configurations and for additional device system data that it provides.

Results

“Smart Net Total Care gives us visibility into all of our contracts, so that we can proactively manage our SMARTnet coverage,” says Bolton. “We simply log onto the portal and check coverage on a device before spending time to open a TAC case, explaining a problem, and then finding out that the device is not covered.”

Since implementing Smart Net Total Care, Bolton no longer has to spend time reconciling device data between spreadsheets or searching for contract information. He has received email from his directors in Europe commenting about how much time they have saved during the contract-renewal process. He estimates that they have already saved “massive” amounts of time.

Real-time hardware and software alerts and field notices help preempt service disruptions and notify Quintiles about important end-of-life and end-of-sale information. In the past, this information was difficult to correlate with specific devices in the network, but today it automatically delivered, significantly reducing the time needed to assess specific vulnerabilities and take corrective action.

One of the pleasant surprises that Quintiles experienced with Smart Net Total Care is its ability to identify devices that might have security vulnerabilities. Product Security Incident Response Team (PSIRT) alerts are listed in the Smart Net Total Care portal for easy access and organization. Information on each type of alert is available by category or device and contains summary information with a link to the actual alert on Cisco.com, where the complete text is displayed.

“In the past, our security team would receive a notification and need detailed data from us to determine our level of risk,” says Bolton. “Now we can be proactive, because we can check the portal and know immediately. We have already completed some critical upgrades based on PSIRT information and can be confident that we are aware of a potential vulnerability.”

Smart Net Total Care is helping Bolton and the Quintiles teams complete initiatives more efficiently. For example, to implement a specific security release on the company’s LAN, switches must be certain models or on certain versions of code. Smart Net Total Care’s inventory reporting provides the required information in seconds to accelerate progress.

Deep visibility into inventory and service contracts has helped Quintiles move closer to its goal of consolidating all of its service contracts. When Smart Net Total Care was initially deployed, the IT team quickly realized how many different contracts were implemented with the same serial numbers. Today they are systematically working through the inventory to simplify and consolidate contracts.

Overall, Bolton says that Smart Net Total Care delivers better information than the team originally expected and that they did not know that the service provided end-of-life data, but now use it frequently. The security alerts were a bonus, and users find that the portal and data are easy to navigate.

“By having Smart Net Total Care, we have reduced the risks of an outage or a failure and not having service contract coverage to remediate it quickly,” says Bolton. “Now we can be proactive and know whether or not something is covered, which all adds up to increased reliability and availability for our users and clients.”

For More Information

To find out more about Cisco Smart Net Total Care, visit: www.cisco.com/go/total.

To learn more about Quintiles, visit: www.quintiles.com.

This customer story is based on information provided by Quintiles and describes how that particular organization benefits from the deployment of Cisco products and services. Many factors may have contributed to the results and benefits described; Cisco does not guarantee comparable results elsewhere.



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