



## Case Study: Cambridge Health Alliance

Doing more with less staff

### Business Value

- 4x scalability
- \$2M savings
- Easy resource reallocation
- More productivity with less staff
- Automated failover in one minute, for every application, at no cost

### Executive Summary

Cambridge Health Alliance chose the Egenera® system to run Epic Systems Corporation's ambulatory product suite in a strategic initiative to automate its ambulatory-care environment. Over a five-year period, the Alliance expects to save \$2 million with Egenera, including \$1 million in initial capital costs. Equally significant, Egenera is freeing up quantifiable human capital by reducing system administration requirements—enabling Alliance IT professionals to focus on activities that add real value to the user community.

*"If we'd purchased any other platform to support the Epic applications, we would have had to hire more system administrators. The simplicity and automation of the Egenera system take the place of two people."*

Judy Klickstein  
Chief Information Officer  
Cambridge Health Alliance

### Business Challenge

Cambridge Health Alliance (the Alliance) is a unique model that integrates public health, clinical care, academics and research in greater Boston. An integrated system of three hospitals, a public health department and more than 20 primary-care practices, the Alliance offers a wide variety of health services including medical specialties, surgical specialties, obstetrics and primary care for all ages. This nationally recognized, award-winning healthcare system also offers unique programs for multicultural populations and is a strong regional provider of critical psychiatry services.

The Alliance has deployed the Egenera system to run Epic Systems Corporation's ambulatory product suite in a strategic initiative to automate its ambulatory-care environment, which generates 500,000 patient visits per year.

"Deploying our new ambulatory-care application meant finding a platform that could meet three crucial objectives," explains Judy Klickstein, Chief Information Officer for the Alliance. "First, the system needed the power to support complex clinical applications and deliver the nanosecond response times clinicians demand. Second, since IT infrastructure in healthcare competes for capital with initiatives that directly impact patient care, the solution had to be extremely cost-effective. And third, considering the mission-critical nature of the application, we required an exceptional level of availability without the cost and complexity associated with traditional HA clusters and fault-tolerant systems."

To support the Epic applications, the Alliance evaluated proprietary UNIX systems, generic x86 servers ("white boxes") and Egenera. A performance benchmark revealed that the Egenera solution readily scaled to accommodate four times as many concurrent users as planned.

A multi-year TCO analysis was also performed, with the Egenera system emerging as the optimal alternative. According to Klickstein, over a five-year period the Alliance expects to save \$2 million with Egenera. Compared to UNIX systems, the Alliance saved approximately \$1 million in equipment costs alone on its initial purchase. A white box solution also would have cost more because of the additional infrastructure required.

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Equally significant was Egenera's impact on management costs, which represent 50 to 70 percent of a typical IT budget according to market research firm IDC. Said Klickstein, "If we'd purchased any other platform to support the Epic applications, we would have had to hire more system administrators. The simplicity and automation of the Egenera system take the place of two people."

The Alliance reports that Egenera frees up quantifiable human capital versus white boxes or commercial UNIX systems, enabling its IT professionals to focus on activities that add real value to the user community. For example, tests performed by the Alliance show that the Egenera system provides automated failover in slightly over a minute. Moreover, resources are never locked into a single configuration and reallocation is no longer a painful experience. The system's lights-out access is also critical, since 99 percent of system administration is performed remotely.

Egenera's unique approach to high availability (HA) also adds significant value. With either UNIX machines or white boxes, the Alliance would have to pick and choose which servers to configure for failover since it costs too much, takes too much time and adds too many failure points to implement HA across all applications with legacy architectures. Alternatively, Egenera's pooled, N+1 approach enables the Alliance to provide automated failover for every server, at virtually no cost.



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