

## Case Study – METAmessagE Advanced Paging in Healthcare

### Heart Clinics Northwest

#### *The Problem*

Heart Clinics Northwest (HCNW) is a single-specialty clinic of physicians and associated health care workers specializing in the delivery of cardiovascular care. Based in Spokane, Washington, the group serves a satellite network of over 15 clinics in three states – Idaho, Montana, and Washington.

With operations distributed over such a substantial area, and given the innate immediacy and urgency of cardiovascular care, instant mobile communications is a must not only between practitioners and support staff but amongst providers and clients as well. Like many healthcare organizations, HCNW relied on pagers for years – both for its MDs and for its nurses and nurse practitioners.

However, with the increasing popularity of BlackBerry smartphones, HCNW found itself supporting multiple devices used by an ever increasing proportion of the staff, both professional and support. HCNW faced both increased service fees and the IT overhead of maintaining multiple handheld devices – the traditional pagers and the new BlackBerry smartphones. And, the staff faced carrying around pocketfuls of hardware – pagers, smartphones, and standard medical equipment as well.

#### *The Solution*

HCNW requires the simplicity and urgency of paging. Typically, a page consists of a simple, direct alert – “call this number now.” The message is clear and can’t be missed. At the same time, doctors and staff want the convenience of BlackBerry for email access, calendar and task updating, and other basic office tasks, not to mention use of the cell phone.

For HCNW, METAmessagE Advanced Paging for BlackBerry solved the problem by delivering traditional paging features to the BlackBerry smartphone – eliminating the need for HCNW personnel to carry two devices while maintaining the dependability and reliability of its traditional solution.

METAmessagE Advanced Paging is a client-server solution comprised of a behind-the-firewall, 5<sup>th</sup> generation server component and a simple, intuitive client

application installed over-the-air (OTA) on user smartphones. Sitting behind the firewall, the METAmessage Server accesses the BlackBerry Enterprise Server database to maintain accurate user lists and PIN addresses of licensed users. It maintains communications with user smartphones via PIN messages that bypass HCNW's email servers, similar to the functionality of its traditional pager solution but controlled and maintained by HCNW rather than a third-party paging service provider.

Authorized HCNW personnel use a browser interface to compose and send pages and monitor page status – who's received and read pages, and when. The client interface was quickly installed on user smartphones after the HCNW IT group sent an email to users with instructions to access a link using their BlackBerry browsers. According to the IT personnel, the client installed on their devices in minutes and required virtually no training or support.

HCNW staff know when pages arrive via customizable alerts, set by the IT group, which can vibrate, play special audio files, pop-up windows, and even continue alerting until a page is acknowledged. For alerts going to staff in 24-hour facilities, IT set up audible alerts for daytime use and vibrating alerts for nighttime.

**“For healthcare professionals, having one less device to carry around is huge,” said Mary Odenthal, COO at Heart Clinics Northwest. “Our staff already use their BlackBerry smartphones for email and to sync with their calendars and tasks, so adding paging capabilities makes perfect sense for us. Their smartphones with METAmessage are now the only messaging tools they need.”**

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