

Potomac Hospital Achieves 150% ROI in First Year with **LOCATE**

As the person responsible for data communications for Potomac Hospital, Manager of Network Services and Technology Officer, Tony Davis, is always looking for ways to do more with less. The Hospital's network supports 1200 users in a multi-building campus environment. Maintaining the health of the network is literally a matter of life and death for the patients and staff of the Hospital.



"Initially I was skeptical about eTelemetry's Locate," says Davis. He agreed to try Locate in March of 2005 and was quickly sold on its value.



Tony Davis' Locate appliance is indispensable to his network operation.

Locate correlates people to the IP, hardware address and switch port information. Davis uses Locate in conjunction with other network management solutions such as Fluke OptiView, Trend Anti-virus console, firewall, and other network diagnostic tools. With Locate, Davis has the name, phone number, MAC address, physical location, and department of the person behind the IP address.

"Oftentimes you know you have a problem but you need to identify exactly where it is coming from," says Davis, adding: "I get a lot of information from various angles, not a complete picture. Locate fills in the blanks."

For example, in the past when his core main switch was throwing errors, Davis had to run a cable trace and look in switch logs to track down the problem device and its user. Now he enters the problem IP in Locate and can go directly to the problem machine to resolve the issue—typically a bad network card or an incorrect network protocol.

"If you have a network card spewing junk it's hard to track it down from the switch. It's taking up so much bandwidth that it is difficult to get the switch to respond," notes Davis. Locate works from a copy of the network traffic and includes an archival function. If the switches are overloaded, Locate will still be running—both in real-time and going back to just before the issue began.

“We had legacy systems that were running old network protocols. With Locate, I’ve been able to clean all that up. It’s saved me a ton of time,” says Davis.

Davis uses Locate to improve end-user support as well. Via Locate’s “Instant Assist” feature, help desk staff can look up a user by name, and click to troubleshoot the issue directly via Remote Desktop. No need to walk the end-user through an IP look-up on the command line. In fact, there is no need for the user to be in the office. Davis uses Locate’s Instant Assist feature to setup new programs and perform routine desktop maintenance while end-users are out of the office without having to go to their locations—saving even more time.

While network issue diagnosis is the main use of Locate, Davis uses it for asset tracking and security enforcement as well. By tying people to IP and MAC addresses, he’s been able to enforce “acceptable use” policies internally and thwart spoofing attempts from would-be hackers in the parking lot.

Davis estimates that Locate saves at least 5-10 hours per week. This calculates to a 150% return on his investment in the first year alone. Locate also enables Davis to comply with both of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002, both of which require employers to account for end user activity on their network.

“Unlike most other products, I use this one every day. I have grown dependant on (Locate) and can’t imagine not having it now. It is sort of like my cordless screwdriver; I never knew how much I needed it until I got it. Now I use it for everything and can’t imagine driving all those screws by hand,” says Davis, adding, “To be honest, if most of the network managers I know had Locate, you couldn’t pry it from their cold dead fingers.”

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— Tony Davis

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