

Staying Ahead of the HIPAA Wave: Healthaxis Shows Security Leadership With Voltage SecureMail

HEALTHAXIS

As one of the country's leading solutions providers for healthcare insurance companies and third-party administrators, Healthaxis is a trendsetter in creating, shaping and promoting the technologies the industry relies on to conduct day-to-day business. So it comes as no surprise that Will Long, VP Information Technology and Security for Healthaxis, made sure that his company was an early adopter of Voltage SecureMail.

"We jumped on the encryption wagon early," says Long. "With the HIPAA laws on the horizon last year, we saw some of our clients making plans and getting ready to make decisions around security. By integrating Voltage SecureMail into our IT infrastructure we didn't just improve our service offerings, we established a leadership position from which we could define the terms of how we would handle secure communications moving forward."

Staking out a position as a thought leader on the subject of HIPAA-compliant communication was important for Healthaxis on several levels. Health insurers and third-party administrators rely on Healthaxis to support, automate and execute a number of critical administrative processes, including claims receipt, plan administration, adjudication, fulfillment and self-service solutions. These offerings enable Healthaxis clients to better focus on core competencies and in turn provide customers with a higher level of service.

Unlike the vast majority of organizations in the health and insurance fields using Voltage, Healthaxis is not a HIPAA-regulated entity. Since 99% of the firm's clientele does fall under the HIPAA statutes, however, Long and his team had to ensure that any e-mail communication between these organizations and Healthaxis could be conducted securely. As Long points out, "through the agreements we have with our clients, we are accountable for the safety and security of their data."

Just as important to Long was that Healthaxis get out in front of the HIPAA wave in order to maintain tight control over its own IT strategies and infrastructure. "If we waited to take direction from our customer base, the likelihood increased that they would dictate how we handled e-mail," says Long. "Having to manage a



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Healthaxis is a leading provider of fully integrated business process outsourcing and claims administration technology solutions. The company's technology enhanced solutions include a HIPAA-compliant ASP claims administration software model, PPO cleanup and maintenance tools, and a suite of self-service web-enabled products targeting health benefit administrators and health insurance claims processors.

THE CHALLENGE

- ▶ Implement an e-mail security solution to protect patient health information and other sensitive data contained in communications with customers.
- ▶ Gain the ability to send encrypted e-mail and attachments between any e-mail client software without additional account set-up.
- ▶ Avoid the use of a 'middleman' or remote server, which would present the possibility of security leaks.

THE SOLUTION

- ▶ Voltage SecureMail enables Healthaxis staff and customers to send and receive encrypted e-mail on an impromptu or ad hoc basis.
- ▶ Healthaxis is showing thought leadership and maintaining control over IT initiatives by using Voltage SecureMail to encrypt sensitive e-mail communication.
- ▶ Voltage Zero Download Manager provides an intuitive, user-friendly experience even for people who have never used encryption in the past.

different encryption solution for each client would have been a problem. So by adopting Voltage SecureMail we got an effective solution in place early and then turned around and said: Here's how we're handling HIPAA-compliant e-mail."

Pointing the Way

While demonstrating diligence on security matters was important, Healthaxis also set several very specific criteria for selecting an e-mail security solution. The main concern was that the solution have the ability to encrypt communications containing personal health information. And, it had to provide security for e-mail flowing both to and from Healthaxis customers. This second consideration proved to be a difficult hurdle for nearly all of the offerings Long and his team tested.

"Our customers use all kinds e-mail clients—Outlook, Notes and more," explains Long. "So a big concern was that our security solution work with all the clients out there, and not require additional account set-up. As we evaluated the vendors who had submitted products, we found that some of them just couldn't do it. Of all the solutions, Voltage was the only one that met all the requirements we had set."

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— WILL LONG

VP Information Technology and Security
Healthaxis

Many encryption offerings on the market today require the installation of software on both the sending and receiving ends of an e-mail exchange. This kind of approach requires account set-up, ongoing system management and initial user training. Of course, it also prevents users from sending encrypted e-mail on an impromptu or ad hoc basis—as e-mail users everywhere are accustomed to doing—because the software must be in place before encryption can be used. Voltage represents such a major step forward in encryption technology because it provides an effective remedy to this problem.

Sending the Right Message About Security

"We deployed SecureMail with Voltage Zero Download Messenger, Voltage's browser-based secure messaging platform," recounts Long. "It ensures that recipients of secure encrypted e-mail can receive and reply to messages and attachments without the need to download and install additional software, regardless of their system environment or e-mail client."

Zero Download Manager provides an intuitive, user-friendly experience even for people who have never used encryption in the past. In addition, Voltage SecureMail uses no 'middle-man' or remote server where messages need to be stored. As such, Healthaxis has assurance that there is no chance of security leaks caused by passing messages through third-party servers. Overall, Voltage is meeting the full range of Healthaxis e-mail security concerns.

"Voltage has allowed us to demonstrate to our clients and that we're aware of security in the post-HIPAA marketplace, and that we are actively working to protect it," concludes Long. "As a software services company, it's not our own but our clients' data we need to protect. Using SecureMail tells our clients that we care about their data and the security of their data."