



## Homecare Homebase

### Homecare Homebase uses SANsymphony-V to Pool Storage, Ensure High Availability & Support an Entire Virtual Environment

#### About Homecare Homebase

Homecare Homebase, based in Dallas, Texas, is a leading healthcare software company serving the technology needs of the fast growing homecare and hospice industry. Homecare Homebase offers a comprehensive integrated web-based software solution to improve the clinical, operational and financial success of homecare and hospice agencies. Homecare Homebase enables real-time, wireless information exchange and communication between office staff, field staff and physicians; automates workflow processes; enables accurate billing through numerous integrated checks and balances; and, provides powerful management reporting via a back-office data analysis tool that ties together all agency operational information.

[www.hchb.com](http://www.hchb.com)

With co-location sites in both the Dallas as well as Louisville metro Homecare Homebase areas, HCHB empowers the homecare and hospice industry to be more effective in providing healthcare to patients. Currently 4,375 office workers and over 11,000 field agents rely on applications running on HCHB's IT systems infrastructure. Everything HCHB customers do is mobile and all of the applications HCHB offers these agents in the homecare industry are both mobile and real-time. "The combination VMware platform and a DataCore SAN has really given us the needed flexibility to more rapidly deploy consistent images of systems - especially in the Citrix farm," explained Chris Kane, Homecare Homebase. "In addition, the VMware-DataCore combination has given us much improved VMotion capability - allowing us to perform maintenance in the middle of the day, if we have to." The HCHB IT team worked with DataCore partner the Mirazon group to implement their systems and now uses DataCore to manage eight (8) terabytes at each site. There is an "Active-Active" architecture in place, whereby Dallas and Louisville-based customers run HCHB's hosted application and also synchronize their data to each site across the Internet everyday. The system that DataCore supports in terms of backend storage currently supports over 15,000 concurrent users.

#### Streamlining homecare and hospice efficiency

HCHB's customers benefit from the company's hosted applications. They do so through two mechanisms offered by HCHB. One is the Citrix thin client space that HCHB hosts out of its Dallas and Louisville sites. The other is a Windows mobile device application called PointCare. HCHB agents and branch office users use these Citrix-powered applications to do scheduling, billing and reporting. The mobile agents that use those branch offices as their home base enter data in real-time on the mobile device, which is synchronized up to HCHB's hosted synchronization servers at either site. "We at HCHB help our customers to provide better care for their patients," said Kane. "Our customers' caregivers are able to completely document their home health and hospice visits while they are caring for those patients - it is all done in real-time, on-the-spot."

In terms of storage, before the DataCore SAN was introduced at both HCHB locations, the company was using a lot of local storage - scattered across many different systems. It had a couple of NAS (network attached storage) units in place - specifically Adaptec snap units, which had been working for some time. "We quickly outgrew the storage we had - both in terms of the amount of space presented by those units as well as the performance of those units," noted Kane.

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*- Chris Kane  
Homecare Homebase*

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On its own, HCHB looked at EqualLogic from Dell, LeftHand from HP, as well as EMC and NetApp. Noted Kane, “The DataCore SAN solution suits our IT administrative style better than the other solutions we saw. The more we looked at traditional SAN solutions - encompassing hardware, software and professional services - for us, these weren’t the type of solutions that we have typically dealt with. We have a lot of skilled technology people in house and we like to be able to get our hands on every piece of technology we bring in. The fact that DataCore is Windows-based gives us a little more control - particularly being able to manage the hardware ourselves. Moreover, DataCore gave us a full, high availability solution. Not to mention that DataCore is very competitive price-wise - so all of this made DataCore the best choice for us.”

### A Consistent Environment

HCHB has two high-availability (HA) SANsymphony-V pairs at both co-location sites. The company has full HA on all of the storage. There is a mixture of direct-attached storage (DAS) on its Supermicro SAN nodes, which connects through a Fibre Channel connection to additional Xiotech storage from an Emprise 5000. The DataCore SAN is fully dedicated for HCHB’s virtual environment. In terms of virtual infrastructure, HCHB is a VMware vSphere shop. All the virtual servers running within the VMware virtual infrastructure are plugged into the SAN. HCHB has also replaced its Citrix application tier and replacing all of its physical, Citrix “pizza boxes” with virtual machines. Future plans include hosting SQL databases on the SAN in 2010.

Virtualizing the Citrix environment with VMware and DataCore running in tandem has provided a real, tangible benefit in terms of system maintenance and administration. Before - with the physical, Citrix environment, the IT team at HCHB was very limited in terms of what they could do with those systems during the working day. “Just the patch management aspect of keeping up with all the physical boxes has been greatly improved in the virtual environment because we can deploy patch

templates versus having to constantly update from Microsoft or other vendors,” added Kane.

### Benefits for Customers & Engineers

With the SAN in place, the virtual environment at HCHB has delivered real benefits to customers and system administrators alike. These benefits are a direct result of the improvements made possible through these new virtualization capabilities. For instance, HCHB as a whole is able to roll out new services more rapidly and consistently. Moreover, the current databases and applications that HCHB uses internally to run its business, such as file servers (documentation that support internal needs) or Microsoft Office Sharepoint (that supports customers), have benefited - either directly or indirectly - from the VMware virtual infrastructure and the DataCore storage virtualization SAN.

HCHB has 75 virtual machines running within the virtual infrastructure in Dallas, all actively providing services. In Louisville, HCHB has 125 VMs online. At both locations, HCHB duplicated both its storage and its SAN nodes. DataCore runs on Supermicro servers, mirrored to the same hardware at each location. Xiotech Emprise 5000 units have been added for growth and are connected via Fibre Channel to each SAN server at each location.

“It has been very rapid growth for us recently,” summarized Kane. “I am very, very happy with the performance we are getting both out of VMware and the DataCore SAN at this point. The SAN has made a world of difference to us. There were many choices for a SAN - from a variety of SAN vendors. For us, DataCore was the right fit. DataCore gives us the ability to select and maintain the hardware of our own choice. It gives us the ability to have a fully redundant, highly available SAN - not just at the controller-level, but at the storage-level itself. That, combined with the price point DataCore’s portable SAN software offers - even when having to purchase hardware and licensing - is still much more effective than anything else we found on the market.”

For additional information, please visit [datacore.com](http://datacore.com) or email [info@datacore.com](mailto:info@datacore.com)

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