

Case Study:

Emergency Communications Center

By partnering with GDS, a 911 agency is able to increase the security and availability of its IT environment and outsource routine management tasks.



Efficiency. Accuracy. Integrity.

These are the core values of emergency communications centers.

Their mission is to answer 911 calls quickly, treat each caller with professionalism and respect, and help ensure that the right resources are dispatched promptly to the right location. Any operational task that falls outside that mission can be a distraction.

An emergency communications center has partnered with Global Data Systems for more than 20 years in order to minimize the distractions associated with day-to-day IT management. GDS has assisted with a number of major projects, including the buildout of IT infrastructure in a new facility. The GDS team also provides an array of managed services and user support.

The agency trusts GDS to make unbiased recommendations that are in the agency's best interests, and to provide strong engineering expertise that helps ensure the security and performance of its IT systems.

NEW CONSTRUCTION, NEW CHALLENGES

The emergency communications center began the construction of its current facility five years ago, and asked GDS to provide all of the network infrastructure.

The agency wanted a network that was highly available, with multiple points of redundancy, and protected against malware and other security threats. The network needed to provide wireless access so that staff could roam throughout the building and maintain connectivity for their laptops and mobile devices. In addition, the agency needed new servers to run all of its applications,

not only for 911 operations but for administration as well.

More recently, the emergency communications center opted to outsource its IT infrastructure and desktop management to GDS. The agency's limited IT staff had trouble keeping up with patches and security updates across its servers, routers and switches, and more than 100 endpoint devices, which left them more vulnerable to cyberattacks. The agency also wanted to outsource the management of its firewall infrastructure.

BUILDING A CUSTOM SOLUTION

As part of the relocation project, GDS deployed new servers that enabled the emergency communications center to virtualize all of its applications so that they could be recovered quickly from backup in the event of an issue. GDS also built in network redundancy to eliminate single points of failure. GDS provided all the hardware and professional services to deploy the new infrastructure. The GDS project management team worked hand in hand with the agency's IT staff to coordinate the project.

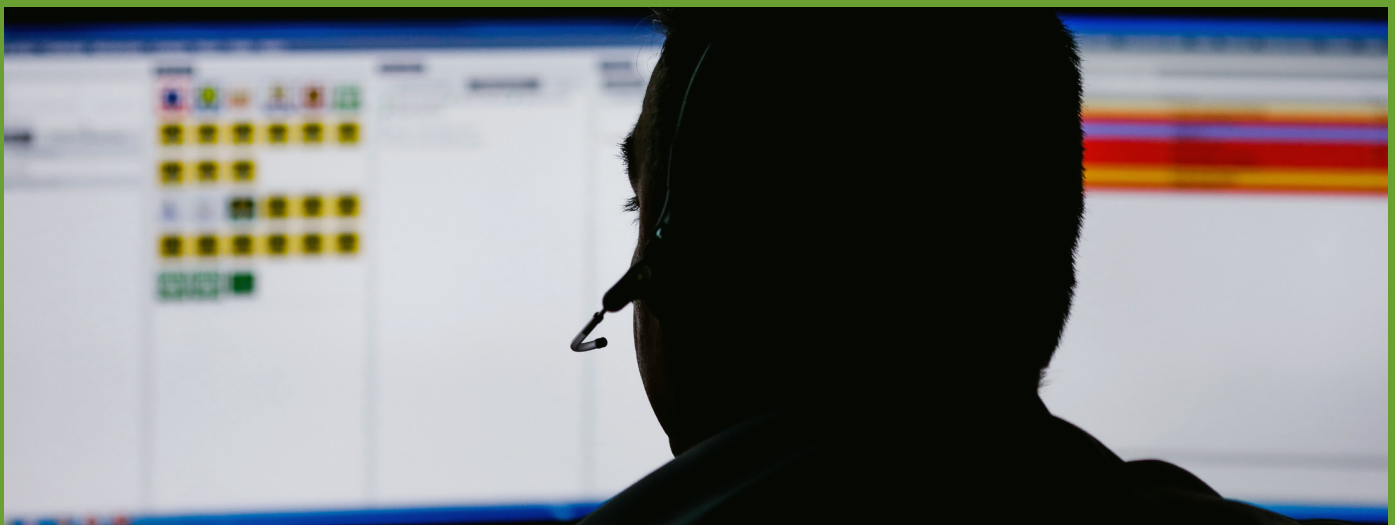
When a key member of its IT team left, the emergency communications center began talking to GDS about managed services. GDS implemented a solution that would ensure the proper management and protection of endpoints using Cisco Secure Endpoint and Umbrella. These solutions provide advanced malware protection and DNS protection.

Through its infrastructure management solutions, GDS manages and monitors

the agency's servers, desktops, routers, switches, and firewalls. The agency's has around 100 endpoints and servers under management with GDS. GDS ensures that all systems and devices are patched and up to date to reduce the risk of a security breach.

GDS helped the agency deploy and configure industry-leading firewalls, and harden them according to best practices. The GDS team then took on the monitoring and management of the agency's firewall infrastructure, utilizing the state-of-the-art tools in our Network Operations Center. GDS performs preventive maintenance and quickly detects and resolves any hardware problems that do occur.

The GDS desktop management services also include highly responsive remote user support. When the agency's employees have an issue, they can open a ticket and GDS will access their systems remotely to resolve the problem.



DELIVERING RESULTS

The implementation of infrastructure in the agency's new location had to be coordinated around the building's construction. GDS completed the implementation and provided connectivity to meet the timeline of when the building would be ready, enabling the agency to open on schedule.

The managed infrastructure and desktop services that GDS provides have simplified the operations of the agency's IT environment. These services, coupled with user support, also free up its in-house IT team to focus on strategic initiatives.

GDS normally conducts quarterly business reviews with customers, but meets monthly with the emergency communications center. The GDS customer experience team joins in those meetings to review all open service tickets and ensure that everything has been handled to the agency's satisfaction. The customer

experience team also provides a report with graphs that show how many tickets were resolved and the time required for each one. This transparency and meaningful discussion is very valuable for the customer and allows the customer to align IT to support their business strategy.

For More Information:

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