

Datawatch|ES Revitalizes Legacy Systems at Eastern Virginia Medical School

As early adopters of technology, health care organizations have invested billions of dollars in operational legacy systems. Through report mining and Internet-based report distribution, Datawatch|ES helps these companies reap a better return from their technology investment.

Founded in 1973 and home to the U.S.'s first in vitro fertilization clinic, Eastern Virginia Medical School boasts state-of-the-art educational facilities and clinical offices used by hundreds of medical students, residents, educators and doctors. With operations in five states, EVMS treats more than 300,000 patients and generates \$140 million in revenue each year. As you might expect, keeping track of the school's financial, accounting and payroll records is not an easy task. In fact, EVMS' three data centers support hundreds of users, manage millions of transactions, and generate several hundred thousand pages of reports each year. Yet amazingly, only 19 of the school's 1,600 employees work in the information technology department. How can this be?

"By choosing the right combination of hardware and software, we meet the needs of our users and minimize costs," says Debbie Taylor, long-time Director of Business and Financial Information Systems at EVMS. "We run canned accounting and financial software on powerful Digital VAX servers, and we manage 900 PCs with Microsoft Office-equipped Novell file servers. For decision support, we develop Oracle applications in-house, and for enterprise reporting, we rely on Datawatch|ES from Datawatch."

Debbie Taylor chose Datawatch|ES for many reasons. "Thanks to Datawatch|ES, my people aren't chained to printers anymore because fewer reports are actually printed," says Taylor. "We use Datawatch|ES and our e-mail system to deliver electronic reports and report segments directly to end users. There is no need to print, split and deliver reports by hand, so users get their reports in minutes, even if they are located in another state. In terms of labor and supply expenses, we expect to save \$40,000 per year."

While EVMS uses Datawatch|ES to streamline report generation and delivery, Taylor believes the product's greatest strength is its ability to analyze data. In fact, EVMS users no longer inundate Taylor's group with requests for new reports because they use Datawatch|ES to sort, filter, aggregate, graph and otherwise manipulate data themselves, data that had formerly been locked away in bulky reports.

Why Eastern Virginia Medical School chose Datawatch|ES:

- Delivers reports electronically via the Net
- Liberates data from hardcopy reports
- Lets end users analyze legacy data themselves
- Reduces costs associated with report generation and delivery
- Eliminates the need to rekey data into multiple systems



“Datawatch|ES lets our users analyze data themselves, so we don’t have to continually write new report programs.”

“Datawatch|ES has helped us expedite putting data in users’ hands,” says Taylor. “We were a traditional data center where report requests came in and somebody sat down, wrote code, tested it, deployed it, put it on a schedule, and produced a paper copy on a regular basis. Now we don’t do that. We push reports out to the population and they can do whatever they want with it. They can export to Excel, they can get it into Word, they can do graphs in Monarch, they can push data into their own custom databases. These people are happy. They didn’t want the paper, they wanted the data.”

In fact, Taylor herself used Datawatch|ES’ analytic power to streamline salary recalculations at EVMS. Because the school relies on both revenue and government grants, its salary figures can consist of 200 separate components, each with 30 decimal places. To re-cost salaries, users had to manually input data from multiple sources into the re-costing model. With Datawatch|ES, users now pull data from various reports electronically, automating the re-cost effort. “Just being able to view the data in a different way allowed me to solve that 20-year-old payroll problem,” states Taylor.

In summarizing her experience, Taylor concludes, “my users have this wide-eyed awe just like I did when I first saw Datawatch|ES. These people are happy. They didn’t want the paper, they wanted the data. So now, getting the data electronically, is the best of all worlds... It is one of the most worthwhile investments of my time and this institution’s money that I have made in the 20 years I have been here.”



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