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Doncaster and Bassetlaw NHS Foundation Trust Selects Brocade Ethernet Fabric to Underpin Innovative Patient Records System

NHS Foundation Trust Deploys Brocade Ethernet Fabric to Support Paperless Records, Boosting Access to Critical Patient Data and Increasing Efficiency Across Three Hospitals

BRACKNELL, UNITED KINGDOM -- (Marketwired) -- 03/03/14 -- With the UK Government recently announcing delays to its planned digitisation of patient records¹, NHS organisations are facing increased scrutiny over how these systems are implemented. They remain under growing pressure to ensure that the network infrastructure which will underpin these applications is fit for purpose. To help prepare for the move to digital records, Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, one of the region's largest healthcare organisations, has selected [Brocade](#) (NASDAQ: BRCD) to deliver the advanced networking infrastructure required to support the organisation's planned electronic patient records system. The new infrastructure will be based on [Brocade® Ethernet fabrics](#) and [VCS® Fabric Technology](#), which are designed to guarantee higher levels of performance, automation, efficiency, availability, and operational simplicity.

One of South Yorkshire's largest NHS Trusts, Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust consists of three hospitals across the region, as well as a number of smaller sites. The Trust employs more than 7,000 permanent employees and serves more than 420,000 people in South Yorkshire, North Nottinghamshire and the surrounding area.

With the first phase of the Government's [care.data](#) initiative scheduled for Autumn 2014, Doncaster and Bassetlaw hospitals is one of many NHS organisations looking at the impact this digitisation programme will have on existing IT systems. The organisation is keen to move away from paper-based records and implement a digital patient administration system (PAS) that would allow hospital staff to access critical information faster and from any location, as well as increasing operational efficiency across the three hospitals. However, when assessing the core infrastructure needed for such a system to run effectively, the Trust's IT department quickly realised that a significant networking upgrade would be required if potentially disastrous outages were to be avoided.

Nigel Hall, ICT Infrastructure Manager, Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust commented: "There is a real appetite within the organisation for a digital patient administration system. Digitising patient records will be incredibly powerful for our hospitals; enabling better availability of vital information for our front line staff and reducing the burden on the operational side by eliminating the need to physically manage and store paper records."

Hall added: "However, we knew it was vital that the right networking foundations were in place before we moved away from paper records. The PAS will be used to manage critical information across all of our facilities. Therefore any outage or infrastructure failure would have a major impact on patient care and our previous infrastructure simply could not have coped with the increase in traffic. We needed a network that was faster, more robust and more flexible. We quickly realised that Brocade's Ethernet fabric technology was the way to achieve that."

After a competitive tender process, Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust selected [Brocade's VDX 6740 Ethernet fabric switches](#). The Ethernet fabric Top of Rack (ToR) switches feature 10 Gigabit Ethernet (GbE) ports with 40 GbE uplinks. Together with Brocade VCS Fabric Technology, these switches are designed to deliver the high performance and low latency that the organisation needed to support its PAS.

12 VDX 6740 switches will be installed across two sites, greatly increasing the resilience of the network and boosting speed and reliability by enabling greater traffic across the network edge (known as 'East to West' traffic) without data needing to be directed back through the core network. With Gartner predicting that more than 80 percent of network traffic will be server-to-server in 2014², this capability is becoming increasingly critical for organisations across all sectors.

Deployment and testing of the Brocade solution has already begun and the Doncaster and Bassetlaw team is delighted with the results achieved to date.

"We wanted a best-of-breed solution that would be based on industry standards, rather than locking us into a single vendor," commented Hall. "We had a very specific set of criteria in mind during the tender process and it quickly became clear that Brocade was the only vendor that could match our requirements exactly."

Hall continued: "The improvement in performance has been fantastic, delivering the faster connectivity and increased resilience we needed. The fabric-based system is also much easier to configure and manage which helps us to be far more agile as an organisation. I'm now very confident that we have the platform we need to implement an electronic patient records system and we'll be moving ahead with that deployment in the coming months."

Joy Gardham, Regional Director, EMEA West, at Brocade, commented, "The NHS is understandably very keen to move towards a fully digitised patient records system. Reducing the reliance on paper records can bring myriad benefits, for both healthcare organisations and patients. However, as with so many innovative and ambitious projects, the network underpinning these mission critical applications can often be the difference between success and failure. The approach Doncaster and Bassetlaw has taken, to begin by making sure they have the right networking infrastructure in place, is undoubtedly the right one and promises to deliver real value for NHS staff and patients. We are delighted that they have chosen Brocade's Ethernet fabric technology to support their journey towards a faster, more connected future."

About Brocade

Brocade (NASDAQ: BRCD) networking solutions help the world's leading organizations transition smoothly to a world where applications and information reside anywhere. (www.brocade.com)

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¹ <http://www.england.nhs.uk/2014/02/19/response-info-share/>

² <http://newsroom.brocade.com/press-releases/2014-nfv-and-sdn-deployments-gain-pace-cloud-loo-nasdaq-brcd-1076221#.UuJQJRBFCt8>

BROCADE CONTACTS

Media Relations

Abigail Watts

Tel: +44 (0) 20 8432 5166

Mob: +44 (0) 7796 937 925

awatts@brocade.com

Investor Relations

Ben Jones

Tel: +1.408.333.6601

Mob: +1.408.627.5434

bjones@brocade.com

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