PEER SOFTWARE DRIVES REMOTE RESEARCH PRODUCTIVITY FOR PHARM-OLAM INTERNATIONAL

PROJECT PROFILE

⬡ **PEER SOFTWARE SOLUTION**
PeerLink®

⬡ **INDUSTRY**
Contract Research

⬡ **CUSTOMER'S PLATFORM**
Windows Server

⬡ **LOCATIONS**
15 global locations on nearly every continent.

THE CHALLENGE

When people envision clinical trials for a new vaccine, drug or therapy developed thanks to rapid advances in the pharmaceutical and biotech industries, they tend to imagine this process taking place in a modern headquarters facility. This same facility would have a large staff of doctors, scientists and other professionals with ready ac- cess to patients, all surrounded by the latest technology and equipment.

In reality, the process of conducting clinical trials is very different. "In our business we go to where the diseases are, often in remote areas of the world. This means that we assemble the medical personnel, scientists and data specialists along with the infrastructure and processes needed to support them at that location," stated Matthew Mills, regional IT director for Pharm-Olam International, a provider of clinical research services. "As you can imagine, we encounter a variety of limitations in these locations including telecommunications infrastructure that varies greatly in quality and perfor- mance."

Since 1994, Pharm-Olam International has reduced time to market for its clients through the optimization of all aspects of the clinical trial process and functional ar- eas including study design, execution, statistical analysis, regulatory submissions and publication of outcomes data. "Ultimately, to efficiently conduct trials and research we need to be able to effectively share and analyze captured data amongst our various locations," continued Mills.

With 15 office locations to support on nearly every continent, Mills had the challenge of setting up infrastructure to enable sharing and collaboration for a variety of file types including Microsoft Office documents and linked spreadsheets.

After determining that a centralized content management system (CMS) was not a viable option for its distributed environment, the company tried Microsoft DFSR and another solution, but quickly discovered their limitations. Mills further added, "With all of our locations, DFSR became a beast of its own. Yes, it was free, but it lacked file locking, had limitations in a mixed mode environment and was difficult to troubleshoot. Everything we tried struggled with unpredictable, high latency WAN links and seemed to be constantly re-scanning, which impacted performance."

Faster, more reliable connectivity would have helped, but it wasn't economically fea- sible to implement at each location, especially considering that they move based on client needs.

After additional Google research and a recommendation from a local IT colleague, the Pharm-Olam team discovered PeerLink, a business file sharing and collabo- ration solution from Peer Software. After installing PeerLink on their servers and spending some time on the phone with Peer's European office near Munich, Mills and his team had the system up and running by the end of the day. "It was brilliant! It was like PeerLink was designed for us," said Mills.

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KEY FEATURES

- Fast, multi-threaded performance with byte-level replication to minimize band- width utilization

- Real-time event detection and mirroring enables file events (file add, delete, modify, open, lock) to be securely mirrored to participating servers immediately

- Intelligent connection check and file conflict resolution grace- fully manage con- nection breaks and conflicts created during connectivity outages

- Sync Office files to the target systems while source files are still open

- Reporting and email alerts

- File revision protection stores the last "x" versions of a document to enable easy rollback to a previous version

- Files being edited at any location will propagate a file lock (to prevent version conflicts) at all other locations

ABOUT US

Peer Software develops data management solutions addressing the unique challenges related to data backup, replication and collaboration in a WAN environment since 1993.

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RESULTS

The more the Pharm-Olam team utilized PeerLink, the more benefits they discov- ered. One bonus was the disaster recovery potential of PeerLink, thanks to its real- time replication architecture. If one site is offline, researchers can still work remotely with synchronized files on other servers. "The environment in which we work is not very friendly towards IT infrastructure. Thanks to Peer's support team, one of the best we have experienced in terms of responsiveness, knowledge and ability to trou- bleshoot, PeerLink has contributed greatly to our goal of zero data and zero time lost while boosting our productivity," said Mills.