

Zuercher Suite: The Managed Servers Difference.

Agencies that use Zuercher Suite's managed server system say they appreciate having a technology partner that takes the responsibility to make sure their system is working at optimal levels. The benefits can be seen in a variety of areas: budget, staff workload, system reliability, and general peace of mind. The strength of the system has been proven in both every day performance and long-term sustainability.

Case Study: Managed Servers

Cherokee County E-911 Deputy Director Brandon Peeler wanted a system that would really grow with his agency. The South Carolina 9-1-1 center saw the managed servers aspect of Zuercher Suite as an obvious way to make sure that software and servers were always poised to handle his immediate needs and future needs.

Before the agency went live with Zuercher Suite in October 2017, their new server system was carefully sized and configured by Zuercher staff to be able to handle both regular and emergency demands. In the past, the county's cloud-based system routinely went down requiring server restarts. Dispatchers would have to go through the "nightmare" of using pen and paper to dispatch. The new Zuercher server system is constantly monitored by expert Zuercher staff for performance, ending the constant concern that the system will fail.

"I can go home and I don't have to worry about anything. The system just works," said Peeler. "Huge weather emergencies, major traffic interdiction events, nothing takes it down. I know that the citizens will never lose their ability to have a good dispatch or 9-1-1 experience."

Preventing the "Crash"

For the Clinton County Sheriff's Office in Iowa, having a system that has continual backup is an important issue. Zuercher has an automated rolling backup process that continuously streams changes to the software to a stand-by server, Zuercher's secure off-site storage facility, or both. If the agency's server goes down (due to catastrophic failure or disaster) the data is available and can typically be restored in 30 minutes or less.

"If you've been through a system failure with a data loss, you'll understand why this is a big deal," said Paul Banowetz, System Analyst for Clinton County Sheriff's Office, Iowa.

In August 2013, Clinton County's RMS/JMS server stopped and would not power up. After getting the system back up and running, they discovered that databases and backup files were no longer in the folders being backed up by their IT department. In fact, the last good backup had been more than one year earlier, around the time that their previous software vendor had done an update and migrated their CAD to a different server.



SUMMARY

AGENCIES

Cherokee County E911, SC
Clinton County Sheriff's Office, IA

AREA SERVED

Cherokee County: 397 sq. miles
Clinton County: 710 sq. miles

POPULATION

Cherokee County: 56,000
Clinton: 47,768

EMPLOYEES

Cherokee County: 30
Clinton County: 90 (multiple agencies)

PRODUCTS

Zuercher Suite managed servers

After the server crashed, IT staff spent hours each day searching backup files for current databases. About three weeks after the crash, they were able to restore the RMS data with a loss of only four days. The agency was not as lucky with JMS database. They lost approximately 13 months of data. They were fortunate enough to have paper files, but to get it back in the system it had to be re-entered manually by sheriff's office staff. The project took more than six months to finish.

The IT department tried to repair their server, concluding that the issue was the server system board. Staff spent more than \$1,500 and much time sourcing used and refurbished parts for the server trying to resurrect it without success. It just couldn't be fixed.

"We estimate our total data loss from this incident was only approximately four to five days of RMS data as we were able to maintain paper files during the downtime, which we considered minimal for the situation, but the major factor was the incurred labor cost for the incident and recovery as well as the disruption of service during and after," Banowetz said.

Since going live in March 2017, the agency has been confident that their Zuercher Suite system is fully backed up, without requiring staff to monitor or repair server issues. "It gives us peace of mind that continues," said Clinton County Sheriff's Office Lt. Tom Paarmann

Updates to Servers and Software

Zuercher Suite maintenance includes major and minor software updates which are uploaded through the managed server system, plus any needed upgrades or replacements to the server system. Paarmann said Clinton County was pleased to be able to simply budget for those maintenance costs and then never have to worry about emergency server repair or replacement.

"Our goal is that we're going to be using the software for a long time. Eventually the server will become obsolete," Paarmann said. "It's up to Zuercher to take care of that and we don't even have to think about when to budget for it."

Peeler said he's been frustrated in the past with other software systems, where software upgrades were not available or he was forced into a "forklift upgrade" to get the latest update. With Zuercher Suite and his managed server systems, he gets regular updates without any disruption of service. And he can see the constant small fixes and updates that are pushed out almost daily.

"With my old system I just didn't get updates," Peeler said. "Now I get those notifications on my computer every time I restart. You don't always even know what all the updates are, but they are working and making my system better."

Rationale

Zuercher Suite's managed servers provide agencies with a reliable, budget-friendly system that is monitored and backed up by Zuercher's technical experts. Agencies benefit from trouble-free software updates and can count on Zuercher to replace and upgrade outdated servers before there is a problem.

"We love our CAD and we really love our server solution," said Peeler. "We haven't had any issues since day one and that helps us serve our citizens better."