

Compumedics Medical Technology

Compumedics slashes software delivery time to customers by 90% with YouSendIt



Compumedics

Compumedics, headquartered in Melbourne, Australia, is a medical technology firm that develops computer-based diagnostic technologies in the areas of sleep, neurology and cardiology. Its products are developed and manufactured at its Melbourne headquarters. The company conducts sales, service and support operations for the North American market from a base in Charlotte, N.C. Compumedics is constantly developing new software in Australia that must be distributed to employees and customers in both Australia and the United States.

THE PROBLEM

- In trying to transfer software files as large as 2 GB, FTP sites were very difficult for both employees and customers to use.
- Downloading the software files from FTP sites could take as long as 17 hours.
- Frustrations led some employees to burn files to disks and ship them by courier, a potentially expensive and slow solution.

THE SOLUTION

YouSendIt Corporate Suite

- With YouSendIt Corporate Suite, Compumedics slashed the time required for downloading files by as much as 90 percent.
- In the first year of using YouSendIt, Compumedics saved nearly \$10,000 in FTP and courier expenses alone.
- Senders now can be certain regarding who received software and who had not, thanks to YouSendIt's tracking features.
- Because the company can distribute its new and updated software to field salespersons more rapidly than before, they are ready to demonstrate it to prospects sooner and thereby shorten the sales cycle.



Situation and Challenges

Compumedics, headquartered in Melbourne, Australia, is a medical technology firm that develops computer-based diagnostic technologies in the areas of sleep, neurology and cardiology. Its products are developed and manufactured by 100 associates at its Melbourne headquarters; and the company conducts sales, service and support operations for the North American market from a base in Charlotte, N. C., that supports another 100 employees.

The company is constantly developing new software in Australia that must be distributed to employees and customers in both Australia and the United States. Furthermore, employees must be trained on each new software application or upgrade, so the training department needed to send new software with accompanying training materials to employees. While brochures for American customers were written in Charlotte, the graphic artist for the company was in Melbourne. As a result, illustrations and other heavy graphic files for marketing and training materials needed to be shared between Australia and the U.S.

Additionally, customers using Compumedics software occasionally had trouble with a file containing data they had gathered. They would send these huge files—some as large as 2 GB—back to the company for advice.

With a meager 5 MB limit on attachments imposed across the company, e-mail was out of the question as a way to try to deliver very large software files, because the attachments would bounce back. Therefore, Compumedics set up FTP servers for uploads and downloads. The company maintained separate FTP sites in each of the two countries. Neither office was large enough to have a fulltime IT specialist, so employees generally needed to handle uploads and downloads themselves. Issues arose, because the FTP sites were very difficult for both employees and customers to use.

"We would have to transfer very large files back and forth between the two countries," said Compumedics Education Services Manager Marjie Cummings. "They would put a file on their FTP server then we couldn't get it and vice versa. Often, we would need to send customer files back to Australia to troubleshoot a problem and our FTP permissions would not work. It was a big issue."

When an employee did succeed in using FTP to send new software, even within the United States, the file would require an entire night to download from the FTP site. In at least one instance, a download took 17 hours.

Frequently, Cummings also wanted to send sample data to employees for training purposes. Because the FTP operation was too much of a hassle, employees would burn material onto a disk and send it by courier service. Employees were sending as many as 20 disks a quarter, which was quite expensive.

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“ YouSendIt has simplified my file delivery process. I no longer worry about sending out critical files and wondering if they got to their destination. It has slashed the time for downloading files by as much as 90% and has given me back valuable time to tackle many other critical projects.”

*Marjie Cummings
Education Services Manager
Compumedics Limited*

Solution

Compumedics Operations Manager Steve Johnson sought a better way to deliver large files and turned to the Internet to see what was available. “We looked at many options, such as a mail server or FTP server. All these options had greater expenses in terms of servers, management and security vulnerability.”

Eventually, he discovered YouSendIt and set up an account for Cummings and three other people in the company to try. “I and the others said, ‘This is it. We need this,’” Cummings recalled. “As soon as we tried it in the U.S., we said we have to use this in Australia, too.”

Johnson set up another account for Melbourne and quickly realized the company could benefit from a corporate account, because he felt that every department needed to use YouSendIt. Today, at least one coordinator in every Compumedics department uses YouSendIt Corporate Suite. Many of them have integrated YouSendIt directly into their Microsoft Outlook e-mail with the free Outlook plug-in, so they can send files via YouSendIt right from their e-mail application.

The company also set up a drop box on its site where customers can leave files for either the Australian or American office.

Why YouSendIt?

Many of YouSendIt’s features were attractive to Cummings and other employees. Speed and ease of use were important factors. The time required to deliver very heavy digital files was slashed, and the drop box made the exchange of files a simple matter. “One of our research customers commented on how much faster and easier this is with YouSendIt,” Cumming said. “It’s making customers happier.”

In addition to the tremendous reduction in the time required to deliver digital files, compared with FTP, Cummings liked the ability to password-protect individual files. “You don’t want just anyone getting your software,” she commented. When new software is released, the company now can password-protect and post the software on YouSendIt’s servers for customers to access it. Compumedics also can control how long the software file remains available for download. “The ability to password-protect and control who can get files is wonderful,” Cummings said.

Reliability and security were important issues to Compumedics, as well. “No one in the company has ever had a reliability problem with YouSendIt,” said Cummings.

YouSendIt’s ease of use led to rapid adoption throughout the company. It is now employed by marketing, training, service and other departments. In addition, YouSendIt freed up servers and staff. Now, the company can keep just service documents, files that take much less time to download than software does, on the FTP servers.

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Results

With YouSendIt, the time required for downloading files has been slashed by as much as 90 percent. A 2 GB file that once required 17 hours to deliver now can be in the hands of a customer or employee within two hours. "Even if you shut off your computer in the middle of a download, YouSendIt comes back to you and can finish," Cummings explained. "I have never had anything go wrong with YouSendIt."

She reported that YouSendIt's reliability, speed and ease of use have brought many benefits to Compumedics, its employees and its customers:

- **Cost savings.** Weighing the expense involved in operating and maintaining FTP sites and using courier services against the low subscription fee for YouSendIt, Compumedics saved nearly \$10,000 in its first year of using YouSendIt. The company expects to save \$4,000 annually in the years to come. Johnson adds, "It is difficult to put a price on security, but YouSendIt provides us peace of mind."
- **Reduced complexity.** Cummings is the principle liaison between Australian and U.S. offices for delivering new software releases to employees for training. "My job is a lot less frustrating, and I'm finding great time savings with YouSendIt," she said. "I'm sending more information now to the field because it's no longer a hassle."
- **Improved processes.** Cummings says her work process has changed. Sales people no longer can claim that they did not receive a file. "They'd give that excuse all the time," she commented. "Now, I get the receipt back from YouSendIt and I just forward them the link again. I don't have to re-send all the materials."
- **Better tracking of file delivery.** Employees want to know who has received the software they send and who has not, so those who send files to customers use YouSendIt's tracking features. "One division in particular was skeptical about using YouSendIt to deliver software, so they tried it and now are very happy," Cummings said. "They love those tracking features and can tell exactly who got the file."
- **Improved access to files.** Occasionally employees have a problem with their computers or obtain new computers and no longer can call up a particular training file. Cummings simply will forward them a link, and they can download the file to their new laptop.
- **Expedited sales cycle.** Because the company can distribute its new and updated software to field salespersons more rapidly than before, they are ready to demonstrate it to prospects sooner and thereby shorten the sales cycle.

By eliminating the need to use FTP or courier services to deliver files between Australia and North America and to a wide range of customers across the U.S., Compumedics has eliminated much of the frustration and delay that had been inherent in its workflow.

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