

A prescription for flexible IT with no CapEx

RelateCare onboards customers in days whilst doubling service availability thanks to Dell Technologies APEX Flex on Demand and cloud-like IT consumption model

Customer profile



Professional Services | United States and Ireland



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Jordan Reinhardt

Director of Information Services, RelateCare

Business needs

RelateCare constantly challenges IT partner Arkphire to improve service delivery. To help the company onboard customers faster and drive service development whilst ensuring the compliance of healthcare data, Arkphire proposed Dell Technologies APEX Flex on Demand.

Business results

- Onboards customers in days, not weeks or months
- Gains cloud-like consumption model
- Avoids the burden of 5 years’ server CapEx costs
- Eliminates compliance issues
- Scales IT automatically in line with need
- Doubles system availability to almost 99.999%
- Powers artificial intelligence and machine learning solutions
- Supports tripling in business over the next three years

Solutions at a glance

- [Dell Technologies APEX Flex on Demand](#)
- [Dell EMC VxRail](#)

RelateCare is a joint venture between Cleveland Clinic in the U.S. and Rigneydolphin in Ireland. It combines Cleveland Clinic's healthcare expertise and Rigneydolphin's experience in contact-centre management to provide patient communication services to hospitals worldwide, including three of the top 10 in the U.S.

RelateCare solutions feature wellness programmes where qualified clinicians contact recently released hospital patients. They also include 24x7 nurse triage, enabling patients to speak to registered nurses. In all cases, the solutions are based on client consultations to address specific requirements.

The need for speed and compliance

Technology plays a crucial role in every RelateCare solution. "It gives us an edge in a highly competitive market," says Jordan Reinhardt, director of information services at RelateCare. "We believe in the power of technology to make healthcare better, and we invest around 7% of our total revenues in it — whereas the average across our industry is no more than 5%."

Asked why technology is so important, Reinhardt's answer is succinct. "IT enables us to respond to opportunities faster and find new ways to deliver more value to customers," he says. Though that doesn't mean that RelateCare simply looks for the most powerful technology available. "Healthcare-related data is heavily regulated. As such, compliance, security and stability have to be your main considerations when designing the IT behind a service," he explains.

When a partner is an extension of your team

RelateCare can build solutions at speed whilst meeting regulatory requirements by working with IT partner Arkphire. Says Reinhardt, "We see Arkphire as part of our IT team. We share the same philosophy around providing solutions, not simply services and products." The partner, which is an expert in Dell Technologies, has supported RelateCare since it launched. "Arkphire understands healthcare and knows the pressures we're under. IT provides solutions that add value to our business," comments Reinhardt.



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Flexibility without concerns for security

With this insight, Arkphire proposed Dell Technologies APEX Flex on Demand to help transform RelateCare's IT capabilities. Historically, the company bought servers, storage and networking solutions. "When a new client came along, we'd procure the hardware from Dell Technologies and Arkphire would deploy and manage it," says Reinhardt. This process seemed lengthy compared to new cloud-based IT offerings with zero procurement cycles and pay-as-you-go finance models. However, the cloud wasn't an option for RelateCare. Even if the cloud platform were compliant, the number of conversations with clients to assure them of this would have delayed onboarding and added to the company's costs.

Avoids the burden of hardware CapEx costs

The beauty of APEX Flex on Demand through Dell Financial Services was that it gave RelateCare a cloud-style IT consumption model whilst ensuring data stayed on-premises. Arkphire deployed the latest hyperconverged infrastructure Dell EMC VxRail appliances at its data centre to serve RelateCare customers. APEX Flex on Demand enabled RelateCare to onboard fast, using pre-positioned, highly cost-effective VxRail nodes to handle growth as well as sudden spikes in workloads. The solution created a buffer for those spikes, with RelateCare paying only when the buffer was used. Says Reinhardt, "It would allow us to achieve a lot without having the financial burden of paying for 5 years of server equipment in one instance."

Customers onboarded in days, not weeks or months

Even though RelateCare could onboard customers relatively quickly before, it's now much faster. "We were onboarding customers in three to four weeks," says Reinhardt. "But we've brought that down to a couple of days with our Dell Technologies solution through Arkphire." In that time, the RelateCare IT team can spin up the virtualized servers, allocate the networking and storage and begin the integration work with a client's own systems. "We're as flexible and cost effective as any cloud solution, but without the concerns over data residency," adds Reinhardt.

Doubling system availability — achieving close to 99.999%

Besides gaining greater agility, RelateCare has been able to improve the level of service to its customers. The company measures performance not only by system uptime, but also by service availability. "Our systems could be available, but our services offline," explains Reinhardt, "so service availability is a better indicator for us." This figure has been constantly increasing with the support of Arkphire and Dell Technologies. "We're now at almost five times availability — double what it once was. That's great news for our customers, but really satisfying for us as an IT team because it shows our work with Arkphire and Dell Technologies is paying off," says Reinhardt.



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Adding AI and ML technology to the mix

Today, RelateCare is developing new services using artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML). Chatbots that use natural language processing, a form of AI, to deliver contact-centre services is one example. The chatbots answer high-frequency, straightforward questions, freeing up the human agents to tackle more complex queries. RelateCare is also tying chatbots to robotic process automation, enabling them to complete simple tasks to free up even more time. Adds Reinhardt, “Our operations generate a lot of information that’s incredibly useful to our customers. By connecting the dots using AI and ML, we can give them insights to boost engagement and service delivery.”

The green light to tripling business size

Over the next three years, RelateCare expects to triple in size as it increases the number of services to customers. And managing that growth — which will see the number of employees grow to around 2,000 — will be key. The IT systems will need to scale with no loss of performance and stay available around-the-clock. Likewise, system management will have to remain efficient to avoid increasing costs. Says Reinhardt, “We have a great team behind us with Arkphire and Dell Technologies. We constantly challenge both to help us make our IT better, and they’ve never let us down.”

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