



How a HIPAA-Compliant Cloud from ServerCentral Helped A Health Care Company Go Global



A Case Study By



There has to be a better way.

How an agile, global infrastructure is helping HPS scale

In the healthcare industry, there is no room for error. Massive growth can happen overnight, and reliability and compliance are not just check boxes — they're the core of the business.

At Health Payment Systems (HPS) in Milwaukee, those needs were keenly felt. HPS, which simplifies healthcare billing by giving consumers a single statement for all their in-network claims, has grown just under 200% in 5 years. As they began to strategically address their scale requirements, the management team kept in mind the core principle founder Jim Brindley built HPS around:

“There has to be a better way.”

This is when the team took a good look at its infrastructure. The few cabinets of servers had been set up when the company was much smaller and far more centralized. It wasn't equipped to handle a growing staff located across the globe

or the sophisticated Disaster Recovery plan HPS needed. Most importantly, it wasn't nimble enough to scale along with the company.

Simplifying something as complex as healthcare billing requires an agile company and a global workforce that can quickly respond to shifts in the industry. “When we say HPS needs to be agile, we aren't specifically talking about the software development process. We're talking about a company whose operations and culture are based squarely on [agile principles](#),” says HPS Chief Operating Officer Terry Rowinski.

To help HPS tackle this business challenge, ServerCentral worked on delivering an infrastructure that could be as swift and flexible as the company needed to be.

Here's how Terry and his team prepared HPS to scale rapidly:

3 steps to scalability: HPS' approach to infrastructure

Step One: Create an accessible, scalable, reliable, secure and compliant infrastructure

Infrastructure became the core catalyst for switching to an agile approach at HPS. Because the data and applications were at the center of the HPS business, creating a global, agile infrastructure could radiate through the company, triggering a shift to the global, agile approach necessary to scale.

With HPS, the infrastructure requirements were clear. Everything has to be accessible to a workforce all over the world. The infrastructure has to be scalable, since the company grows by leaps

when it adds large healthcare networks and accountable care organizations (ACOs). It has to be reliable because HPS is processing payments. It also has to be secure and compliant, because HPS transmits HIPAA-protected data. There wasn't any wiggle room. Each requirement was and remains mission-critical to the success of HPS.

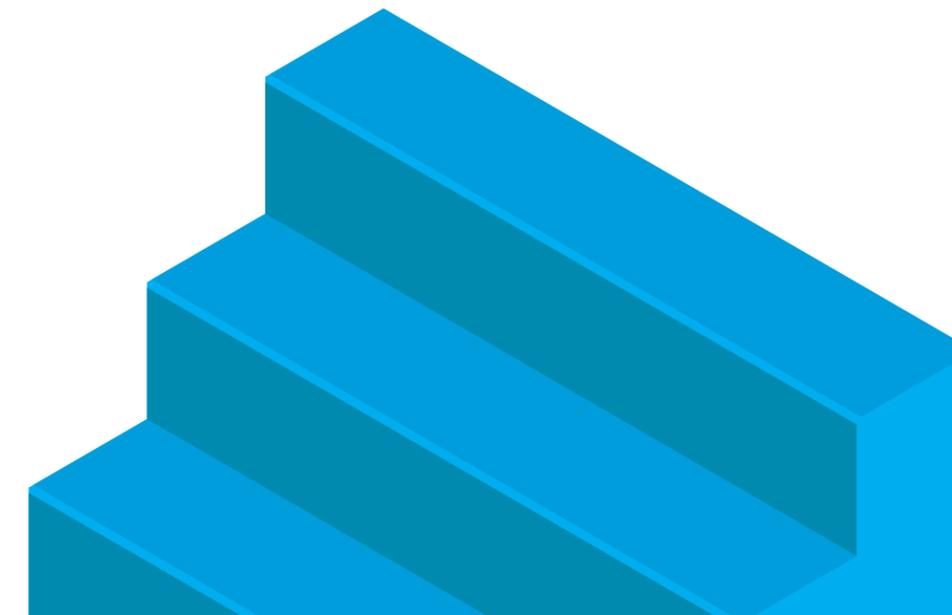
We approached Terry and his team at HPS with an immense amount of questions and a lot of checking and cross-checking to make sure we created an airtight private cloud. We also built

out a Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery plan, setting them up with a failover site in our Ashburn, Virginia, location. HPS will save hundreds of thousands of dollars in the long run, and can failover to our Virginia location and be back up and fully operational within a few hours.

We are experts in healthcare payment and billing processes. We are experts in understanding the payer, provider and customer requirements and expectations for billing and support. We are not experts in architecting, deploying, managing, scaling and supporting mission critical IT infrastructure.

This is where we turned to ServerCentral.

They clearly understood our culture and were intimately familiar with our challenges and opportunities. From the jump Lauren, George, Paul, Tom and the entire ServerCentral team recognized that we wanted a business partner, not just a technology provider. We wanted someone who not only understood the 'ilities' we need to operate our business: accessibility, scalability, and reliability — but someone who also recognized the security and compliance requirements — the trust our payers, providers and customers put in us — and took that trust to heart in the same way we do at HPS.



Step Two: Enable collaboration and execution across a globally distributed workforce

A simple connectivity issue at 3 p.m. isn't so innocuous when it's also happening to someone starting their workday on the other side of the world. To get the best talent, HPS knew they had to think globally — it needed an infrastructure that worked everywhere, all of the time.

Finding the right people with the skills, aptitude and interest in working with leading-edge technologies is a significant challenge. Keeping them is an entirely different — and equally important — challenge. In order to build the team we knew we needed to succeed, we looked around the world to find the best possible talent, wherever it may be. We knew a widely distributed workforce, working around the clock, was going to be paramount to our success — and empowering them with the collaboration and orchestration tools

necessary to execute from wherever they are, in whatever time zone they're working, was critical.

Without the ability to collaborate in real-time across the entire company, utilizing all of our internal- and external-facing systems, we wouldn't be able to keep pace with this industry or our customers' requirements.

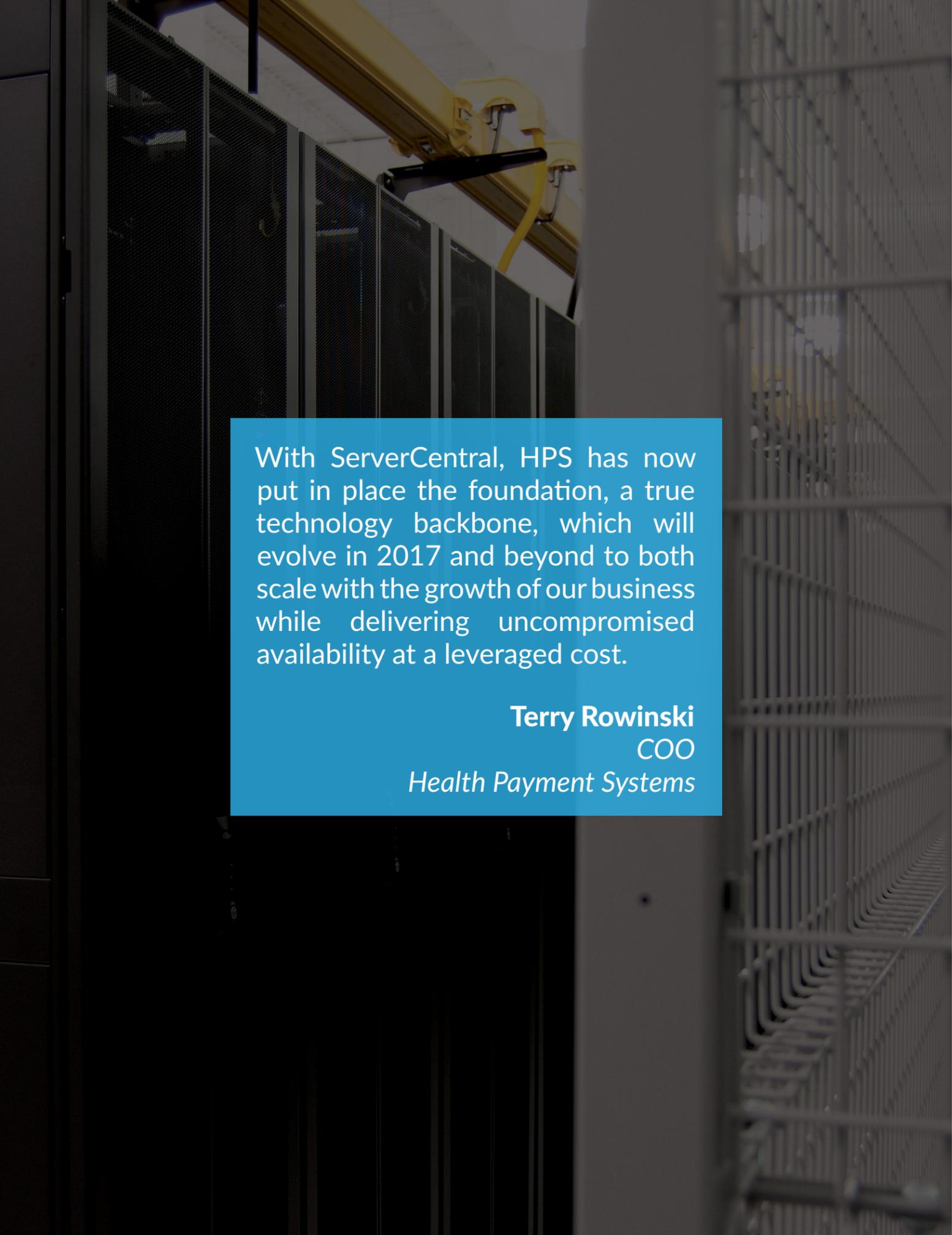
A globally accessible and reliable infrastructure is the foundation that enables HPS to grow. Collaboration is critical — and that doesn't just mean chatting in Slack. Everyone needs to be working together to solve problems, then executing those solutions, everywhere, all the time.

Step Three: Establish 3-week project cycles for all HPS projects

Ready to put the speed of its infrastructure to the test, HPS executed on the final element of its push to an agile workflow — breaking all of its work down to three-week sprints. The company had seen how effective time-boxed work could be on its technical projects, and decided to apply the same focused thinking to all of its projects.

In order to keep pace with the healthcare industry, and evolve our business, we implemented three-week cycles for all HPS projects. We chose three weeks as the cycle because it provided a complete extra week for the in-depth testing of all processes and technologies — a critical requirement for our business and our industry. Everything has to work right the first time. There are no reset buttons.

*At first, this was as much of a culture shock as you'd expect. However, over a very short period of time, probably six months, the entire organization came to embrace the clarity and consistency with which we were operating. What was also amazing is that **the quality of work across the entire organization dramatically increased.** The ability to focus and execute on clearly defined objectives made everyone's lives easier while improving our ability to operate the business.*



With ServerCentral, HPS has now put in place the foundation, a true technology backbone, which will evolve in 2017 and beyond to both scale with the growth of our business while delivering uncompromised availability at a leveraged cost.

Terry Rowinski
COO
Health Payment Systems

How HPS is preparing its infrastructure for what's next

Delivering a bespoke private cloud isn't the finish line, it's the starting point. Instead of handing off the infrastructure and waving on our way out the door, we start figuring out how to make it even better. This is when we begin regular failover testing, start understanding scale and find improvements for global connectivity. Now that we've set HPS up with an infrastructure that can handle its needs, we're working every day to optimize the systems to better handle current and future tasks.

And we have to. HPS is on track to grow double in size in the next few years.

Terry Rowinski

Terry Rowinski serves as Chief Operating Officer and has a wide range of responsibilities including developing business strategy to guide all business operations. He is responsible for the information technology and operational infrastructures across HPS. Terry's own passion as a lifelong learner is exemplified through his unwavering support of

his team's professional development as well as his support for secondary education via his service to multiple educationally focused organizations in Wisconsin.

Health Payment Systems

Health Payment Systems (HPS) offers a fully outsourced technology and services solution set that delivers an enhanced consumer experience that no one else offers today in healthcare. Headquartered in Milwaukee, WI the HPS solution set includes "one statement, one payment and one place to call" for the consumer to access all of their providers' claim data and payment options.

HPS patented technology brings together health-care claims and bills from multiple in-network providers into a single, credit card-like statement making it easy for consumers to understand exactly what they needed to pay.



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