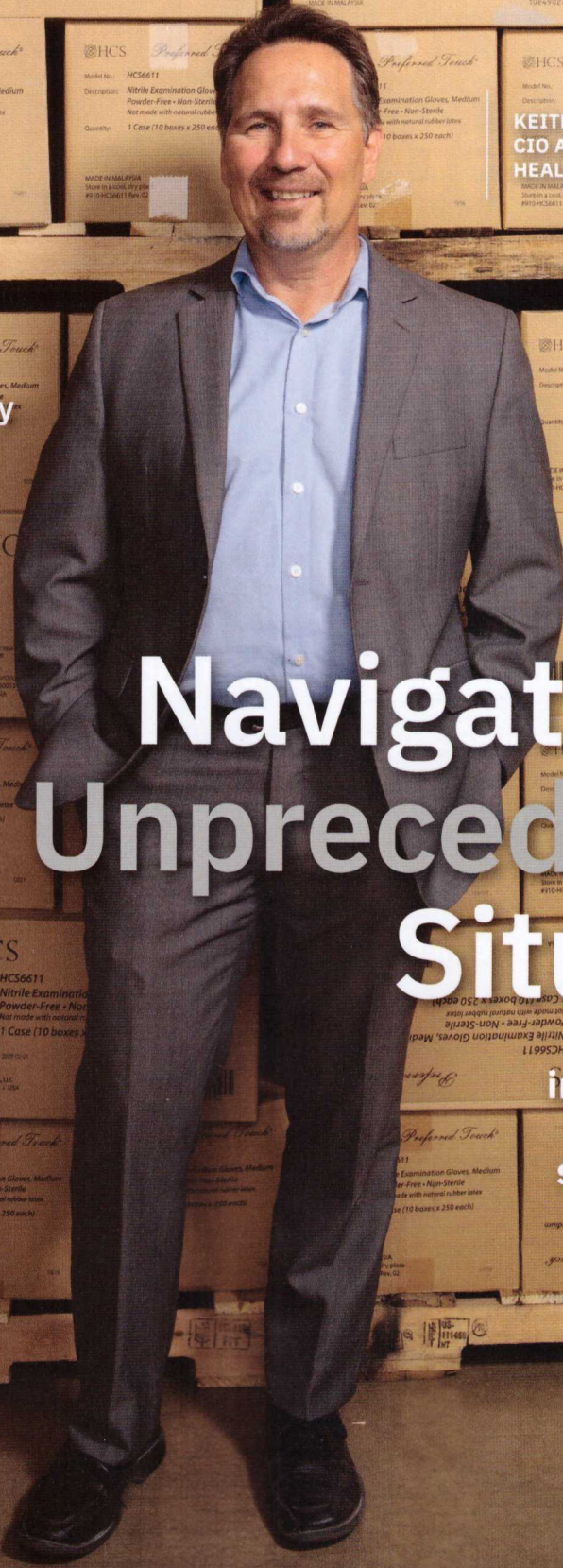


Power Systems

IBM Systems



KEITH PRICE
CIO AND COO, CONCORDANCE
HEALTHCARE SOLUTIONS

Global Reliability Survey
highlights TCO for
IBM Power Systems
clients

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Navigating an Unprecedented Situation

A consolidated
infrastructure helps
Concordance meet
surging demand for
medical supplies

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Navigating an Unprecedented Situation

Consolidated infrastructure helps Concordance Healthcare Solutions meet customer demands

By Jim Utsler // Photography by Michael Nemeth

KEITH PRICE
CONCORDANCE CIO
AND COO

When three previously independently owned and operated medical supply companies merged to create Concordance Healthcare Solutions, their platforms and solutions also had to be merged. To accomplish this, the company moved to a faster IBM Power Systems™ server and a unified ERP environment that impacts every aspect of the business.

In addition to simplifying operations and increasing efficiency, this IT consolidation helped Concordance more efficiently address the needs of hospitals and other healthcare providers when COVID-19 began ravaging the U.S. and the world.

As Keith Price, Concordance CIO and COO, explains, “Being on one system made it easier for us to do our work. We had our server, the main ERP system, a single VPN solution and one phone system, which allowed us to create a cohesive network running across

the entire organization, even for employees who rapidly moved to remote workspaces.”

Consolidating Hardware and Software

Tiffin, Ohio-based Concordance Healthcare Solutions was created

in 2016, the result of the merger of three companies in the medical supply industry: Kreislers, Midwest Medical Supply (MMS) and Seneca Medical. Previously, each of these organizations only had a regional distribution reach, but Concordance now has a near-nationwide

UP CLOSE

CUSTOMER: Concordance Healthcare Solutions

HEADQUARTERS: Tiffin, Ohio

BUSINESS: Medical supply distribution

CHALLENGE: Merging three IT environments into one and a timely COVID-19 response

SOLUTION: Creating a collaborative atmosphere to create a standardized computing, application and warehousing environment to better support new markets and rapidly changing needs

HARDWARE: An IBM Power Systems S914 and a Power Systems S814

SOFTWARE: VAI's S2K Enterprise ERP application



IBM Systems ^{MEDIA}

WEBINAR

Making the Case for the IBM Cloud®

Tuesday, September 15 | 1 ET / 12 CT

Determining the most cost-effective cloud strategy for your IBM Power Systems™ environment

Many IT organizations look to the public cloud to realize infrastructure cost savings, yet they lack the necessary data to determine cloud feasibility for their IBM POWER environments. As a result, they often choose a “lift-and-shift” migration strategy because it is faster and less resource-intensive. However, a rehosting approach can easily lead to overspending, which is something none of us can afford in our current economic state.

Using real-world examples, ATS will take you through the steps required to develop a sound cloud strategy for your POWER environment in minutes.



FEATURING:



John Byers
Director of Managed Services



Bill Asimos
VP of Sales



Steve Horan
Principal Cloud Architect

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HEALTHCARE SOLUTIONS

Delivering service beyond your expectations.



Keith Price, CIO and COO, is photographed at Concordance headquarters in Tiffin, Ohio.

“A lot of people put in many hours to do what needed to be done to take care of healthcare workers and their patients, to make sure that they had the proper supplies, and I’m very proud of them. But we had it easy compared to the healthcare workers dealing with thousands and thousands of patients every day.”

***—Keith Price, CIO and COO,
Concordance***

presence with 20 strategically located distribution centers across the US. It’s able to serve 67% of healthcare systems in the country with some 260,000 items.

“We had different types of customers prior to the merger. Seneca was probably 90-95% focused on acute care. MMS was a mix. It was

around 60% post-acute, long-term care physicians, and then 40% acute care. Kreislers was probably 70% U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the other 30% was a mix across post-acute markets,” Price says.

Facing a heterogeneous computing environment, the newly

formed company decided to consolidate on common hardware and software solutions. The choice was made to upgrade to an IBM Power Systems S914 server and repurpose Seneca’s existing Power Systems S814 server as an offsite high-availability box. Seneca’s existing instance of VAI’s S2K Enterprise was selected as the operating platform of choice.

During this process, Concordance also decided to standardize on a warehousing solution to help workers throughout its office and distribution centers. The company implemented radio frequency technology and made the strategic decision to adopt a company-wide voice-based picking system Seneca had been using since 2013.

“This really increases productivity because it’s a push type technology that gives users voice prompts as they’re filling orders,”

Price explains. "Once they're done with one piece, the organization gives them information about the next piece and continually feeds their progress back to S2K to assure orders have been completed correctly."

Concordance's S914 is running 20-30% CPU utilization on an average day, whereas the organization was utilizing up to 50-60% on its previous system. The decision to migrate everyone to S2K allowed the company to standardize across all departments.

Unified Systems

The unification of systems was a benefit when COVID-19 struck and Concordance had to slightly modify its business model. Rather than operating as usual, it shifted its focus to the distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE) needed by frontline medical workers, including N95 masks, gowns and gloves.

"What we saw was a slowdown in certain segments of our business, largely because elective procedures had halted in most regions, and then other segments of the business picked up," Price recalls. "And certain areas of the country were open, but many were closed, which impacted our usual sales volume as we put most of our efforts into procuring and distributing PPE."

Much of this equipment went directly to nurses, doctors and other emergency personnel, while some of it was steered toward government and hospital stockpiles. This meant order sizes varied greatly, from hundreds of units to multiple thousands, depending on customer requirements. During this grueling time, the only things Price didn't worry about was his supporting hardware and software infrastructure. It worked as designed, as a unified solution that touched every part of the business. He also credits the employees who used those sys-

tems to make sure everything ran as smoothly as possible.

"A lot of people put in many hours to do what needed to be done to take care of healthcare workers and their patients, to make sure that they had the proper supplies, and I'm very proud of

them," Price remarks. "But we had it easy compared to the healthcare workers dealing with thousands and thousands of patients every day. Our days were long and hectic, but I just can't imagine what those people went through. That was remarkable." 📺



Getting Started with IASP on IBM i

Thursday, September 24 | 11 ET / 10 CT

Do you know how to implement an independent auxiliary storage pool (IASP) on IBM i? Getting started is easier than you think.

Join us, as the experts at HelpSystems help you get started with IASP technology. You'll learn what IASPs are, how to assign your disk to an IASP, how to load libraries and the IFS into an IASP, how to point your application to an IASP, and the HelpSystems software that supports IASP.

Knowledge is power. We'll help you take advantage of powerful technology that relies on IASP, like IBM® PowerHA® for replication.

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