

## Evolve IP Provides Disaster Avoidance, Visibility into the Call Center, Improved Customer Experience, and Significant Cost Savings for Apria Healthcare

Location  
Nationwide

Industry  
Home Medical  
Equipment  
Provider

### Apria Healthcare Customer Profile

Offering a comprehensive range of home respiratory therapy, diabetic supplies, medications and equipment, home infusion therapy and home medical equipment services, Apria Healthcare is America's leading provider of integrated home healthcare products and services. Headquartered in Lake Forest, California, Apria employs more than 12,000 healthcare professionals in more than 550 Apria branch offices across the United States.

#### An overview

Apria was seeking a phone system and call center solution that would unify its 550 locations, and provide cost-savings, simplification, and a good customer experience with disaster recovery capabilities to support its customer's critical medical needs.

#### Business Situation

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Apria Healthcare is 12,000 employees distributed across 550 U.S. offices, operated with disparate ACD/PBX solutions at every location – Avaya at the larger locations and a mix of various platforms at the smaller locations. The maintenance of the IT infrastructure was outsourced to a managed services provider.

A few years earlier, when Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans, Katrina storm waters knocked out telephone service, preventing Apria employees in the area from taking calls from customers – many of whom had made hurried departures to escape to higher ground and were now in need of extra oxygen tanks, among other supplies.

“Patients couldn't get through to us after Katrina,” said David Slack, vice president of IT at April Healthcare. “There was an alternative – calling a national toll free number – but few patients had it when they needed it. Something had to be done.”

Apria sought a new solution that would provide cost-savings, simplification, and a good customer experience, as well as Disaster Recovery (DR) / Business Continuity capability.

Apria looked at backups to its phone system from the major carriers, who expected the firm to spend \$2,000 to \$4,000 per office to upgrade to SIP trunkline services. With more than 500 offices nationwide that would have brought the total bill to over \$2 million. It found a lower-cost solution in the firms that carry enterprise voice and data over IP networks. Only Evolve IP offered the complete service offering for both voice and data that Apria needed.

Apria relies heavily on its call centers and phones to connect with customers – creating, in many cases, a literal lifeline. Due to the importance of their communications systems the company selected Evolve IP's cloud solution that places calls, routing and data in the cloud.

## Products

- Evolved Network
- Hosted IP Phone System
- Evolved Call Center
- Call Recording
- Call Center Dashboard

## Solution

Evolve IP provided a single hosted PBX/ACD platform across all locations, with “true” call center capabilities and inherent DR / Business Continuity

## Solutions

Evolve IP began installing its enterprise-class IP phone solution hosted in its geographically redundant, active-active data centers, at Apria locations in 2011. Evolve IP installed a single hosted PBX/ACD platform across the Apria locations, implemented “true” call center capabilities and provided inherent Disaster Recovery / Business Continuity capabilities.

The system is accessible through the cloud and designed to automatically forward calls to an alternative location (e.g. another branch, voicemail, an answering service, etc.) if the primary destination becomes unavailable for any reason. Further, it can be easily reprogrammed remotely and on the fly to select a secondary backup

## Benefits

The Evolve IP solution provides Apria with new insights/visibility into staff and branch office performance, call recordings leveraged for training and disputes and significant cost-savings.

“During one of the recent storms we lost connectivity in a key location,” said Dave Slack. “Immediately the phones started ringing in the backup site. All the emergency routing intelligence was in the cloud and it understood instantly if a branch office was down. It worked fantastically.”

The unified option became particularly important for Apria when a key location flooded during Hurricane Sandy taking down the company’s network. They asked

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location. For example, when Sandy knocked out telephone service to Apria’s Middletown, N.Y. branch, the system forwarded calls to the nearest well-staffed hub in Cromwell, Connecticut.

To date, Evolve IP has installed more than 6,000 phones deployed including 3,500 call center agents across 200 locations. Evolve IP will continue to install across Apria’s locations and expand beyond branches into corporate locations and back-office operations, promoting the sharing of calls across the enterprise.

Evolve IP for assistance and overnight the company provided hosted access via its unified architecture allowing operations to continue as normal.

“Hurricane Sandy forced four of our offices to close for almost two weeks,” added Jeannine Delivron, Apria’s New York Area Operations Manager. “But we didn’t miss a beat. You can’t quantify the value Evolve IP’s services brought to our organization. It dramatically increased our service levels and simultaneously allowed us to focus on other issues. We even helped out our

## Benefits

- Significant cost-savings
- Simplification
- Improved customer experience
- Disaster Recovery capabilities

competitors whose power and phone lines were out since we were one of the few organizations still operating without disruption.”

In addition to voice services, Apria ended up relying on Evolve IP for data services as well, when a few of its carriers central offices were slammed by the storm. Without

 **Learn more about the Evolve IP solution for Apria Healthcare in this [Information Week article](#).**

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access to its data and business applications, the affected branch would have no efficient way to input and route orders even though Evolve IP's network still provided voice. What could have been a disaster was averted entirely. Evolve IP leveraged a failover connection to Apria's data center through its award-winning cloud network. Evolve IP overnighed a new router, sent a technician on site to perform the installation and had Apria reconnected to its business applications in less than 24 hours.

“Evolve IP stepped up to become an integral part of the New York team when we needed help the most. They are literally a lifesaver for us and our patients,” said Delivron.

## About Evolve IP:

Evolve IP is The Cloud Services Company™. Designed from the beginning to provide organizations with a unified option for cloud services, Evolve IP enables decision-makers to migrate all or select IT technologies to its award-winning cloud platform. Evolve IP's combination of security, stability, scalability and lower total cost of ownership is fundamentally superior to outdated legacy systems and other cloud offerings. Today, tens of thousands of customers across the globe depend daily on Evolve IP for cloud services like virtual servers, virtual desktops, disaster recovery, unified communications, contact centers, and more. Visit [www.EvolveIP.net](http://www.EvolveIP.net) or <http://blog.EvolveIP.net>.