



GATEWAY TO HEALTH

Gateway all-in-one desktops and servers help safeguard the health of citizens in Jefferson County, Ala.

David Erikson, director, management information systems, Jefferson County Department of Health.

Even if the mission of the Jefferson County Department of Health (JCDH) was merely to run seven medical clinics throughout its 1,141 square miles of jurisdiction, the task would be imposing.

But the 652-employee agency does that and much more, including inspecting the region's nearly 3,800 eating facilities — everything from chic eateries to Little League snack shacks — several times each year.

The department also inspects public swimming pools, air pollution emitters and even x-ray machines multiple times annually while managing dozens of much-needed home health-care workers, maintaining county health records, and offering community immunizations, disease control programs and public health awareness campaigns.

JCDH provides nearly 25 percent of all immunizations in Alabama — perhaps not surprising given that Jefferson County is the state's largest county. Jefferson County serves 675,000 citizens, including residents of the city of Birmingham and 35 other municipalities.

JCDH employees fulfill their vitally important and dauntingly multifaceted public health mission amazingly well with the help of hundreds of Gateway desktop PCs, dozens of Gateway servers, and one particularly useful 42-inch Gateway Plasma Display.

Despite JCDH employees' hard work and their importance in the community, the group is humble and philosophical about the impressive department.

"We're just a large health department like you might find in any big city or county," said David Erikson, management information systems director

for JCDH. "We have a lot of things to do in the community, and we work hard to see they get done."

PREPARING WITH PLASMA

Because the community depends so heavily on JCDH, officials are extremely cognizant of the importance of keeping personnel well trained. The motivation to offer the best and latest in staff preparedness and education prompted the department two years ago to purchase a stylish and functional 42-inch Gateway Plasma Display.

Mounted on the wall of one of the JCDH's training facilities, the clear and bright Gateway Plasma Display provides a startling contrast to the group's old projector screen that had to be lugged into the room and set up on a table.

"We were looking for a plasma display that could be mounted on our training room wall," explained Erikson. "We found Gateway offered the best plasma display at the best price."

The wide flat screen of the Gateway Plasma Display offers the perfect way for department officials to provide large and small groups of staff with all-important training on everything from biological terrorism and weapons of mass destruction threats to environmental health issues and inspection standards.

Further, the Gateway Plasma Display's advanced digital image processing as well as picture-in-picture and picture-on-picture capabilities offer a range of options for producing compelling and informative presentations.

JCDH's Gateway Plasma Display connects to a satellite television system that allows the department

CUSTOMER PROFILE

AGENCY:

Jefferson County, Ala., Department of Health

MISSION:

Preserve, protect and enhance the general health and environment of the community by providing health assessment information, leadership in public health policy, quality

assurance for health services, disease prevention and enforcement of health regulations.

OBJECTIVE:

Implement cutting-edge computer hardware that also saves space. Enable data processing, Web use, advanced information systems, and general business processes by deploying robust and reliable servers.

GATEWAY SOLUTION:

JCDH deployed 800 Gateway Profile all-in-one desktop PCs in staff offices and seven county health clinics. The compact Profiles conserve space for physicians and office workers in close quarters, and allow for easy maintenance and deployment. A variety of Gateway servers — 46 in all — power vital applications such as JCDH's electronic medical records system.

“Because of space issues in examination rooms and doctors' offices, we were really looking for a smaller, more compact unit, and Profiles really fit the bill.”

— **David Erikson**,
director, management information
systems, Jefferson County
Department of Health.

“We're very happy with our Gateway products. They work great for us and really allow us to do what we need to do.”

— **David Erikson**,
director, management information
systems, Jefferson County
Department of Health.

Gateway
Professional

800-211-4952
www.gateway.com/gov

Gateway and the Black-and-White Spot Design are trademarks or registered trademarks of Gateway, Inc. in the U.S. and other countries.

to easily receive broadcasts issued by the state health office. Yet the monitor's multi-use capabilities also effortlessly exhibit PowerPoint presentations and Web-based training programs.

SLEEK SOLUTION

The use of Gateway's cutting-edge Plasma Display for training purposes is not surprising given officials' understanding of the important role technology plays in furthering the department's mission.

In fact, utilizing technology to its fullest advantage four years ago prompted Erikson's 19-member IT staff to implement an electronic records management system at each of the organization's seven health clinics. Creating a virtually paperless environment required installation of desktop computers for every examination room, doctor's office, clerk's desk and cashier's station. And space was at a premium in the busy clinics.

Enter sleek, space-saving Gateway Profile all-in-one computers.

“Because of space issues in examination rooms and doctors' offices, we were really looking for a smaller, more compact unit, and Profiles really fit the bill,” said Erikson. “They're a small footprint, flat screen, quiet, very space saving, and everybody likes them.”

Staff members at the JCDH now use 800 Profile 3, 4 and 5 systems. Doctors access patient information, enter medical diagnoses and even “write” prescriptions via Gateway Profile computers in each examination room.

To keep the PCs running at optimal levels, Erikson's MIS team members have become Gateway authorized service providers.

“Basically that means Gateway pays us for fixing things that are under warranty,” explained Erikson. “Gateway gives us easy access to parts, and we have a high level of technical support dedicated to our account. They're really great to work with.”

The organization replaces a quarter of its PC fleet each year to ensure that desktop technology remains up to date. Retired units are donated to local schools.

DECADE OF SERVICE

JCDH has worked with Gateway for more than a decade. Though department purchases of \$7,500 or more must go through a bidding process, Gateway technology has proven so reliable and affordable that JCDH has used Gateway desktops and servers almost exclusively since 1990.

The agency uses 46 Gateway tower and rack-mount servers of various models — ranging from entry-level to high-density and high-availability models. Gateway servers run the department's Domain Naming System, Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol, electronic medical records

system, home care medical records system, and time and attendance systems. JCDH also uses Gateway technology for its Web servers, print servers, file servers, Oracle database servers, SQL servers and more.

“There was one period of time — a few months — when another vendor got the bid,” explained Erikson. “But when their computers got here, about 10 percent of them were ‘dead on arrival,’ so we cancelled that contract right quick and went back to Gateway.”

UNPREDICTED PLUS

Time and again, sticking with Gateway has proven beneficial to JCDH. In the case of the Profile all-in-one systems, Erikson said workers are especially impressed with the quality of the flat-panel display. And entire Profile units now fit into space once occupied by bulky traditional monitors.

Gateway Profiles provide other advantages as well.

“One of the benefits that we didn't think about upfront was the effect the Profiles would have on our technical support people,” Erikson said.

Prior to purchasing the Profile all-in-ones, Erikson said many technical support workers experienced back problems triggered by lugging heavy 15- and 17-inch monitors.

“Now we've got these all-in-one units that are small and can be carried close to the body,” Erikson added. “The Profile 5 basically has a handle on it, and you can just grab it and carry it like a suitcase.”

BEST BIDS

“We're very happy with our Gateway products,” he said. “They work great for us and really allow us to do what we need to do.”

In order to consistently and efficiently meet the department's hardware needs, JCDH officials have put together an unusual type of long-lasting bid for equipment.

“Right now our Gateway bid is simply a percentage off their list price,” explained Erikson. “That means we don't have to re-bid on new models.”

The “percentage off” bid structure often allows Erikson to “go on the Web, configure machines the way I want them, take the discount I've been quoted on the bid and send in a purchase order.”

The change makes life much easier at a large department where constant technological improvements and changing departmental needs meant JCDH officials were “bidding themselves crazy,” according to Erikson.

JCDH's relationship with Gateway, coupled with the department's expertise and ingenuity, provides the citizens of Jefferson County with a distinctly efficient and responsive public health system. And that, of course, is what the JCDH is all about.