

Electronic Rota Management

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Large department – difficult to juggle number of locations, staff and changes

Sites 2

Separate theatre locations/suites 8

Consultants 47

Staff grades 11

Trust grades 12

Trainees 26

Written rota always out of date by the time it's published – secretaries' full time job just to answer calls about who is where. Each weekly rota has about 100 versions!

PROCESS

Reviewed available products

Selected rotastar, Xentec Ltd

Modified/improved with the developers towards a more generic modelling

MAIN FEATURES

On-call rosters include time off, hours etc., rules-based time off

Job plans – up to 4 separate weekly patterns

Leave management

Reporting of activity, trainee sessions, leave etc.

On-line rota – no printed paperwork at all, no multiple versions

IMPLEMENTATION

Use available technology at minimal cost

Client/server

Virtual machines

Terminal services

Avoids having to install on desktops

Central control of logins/access

Allows other programs to be run, such as logbook software

Win2k server / win2k+xp clients – terminal services license free

ADVANTAGES

Secretaries can manage most changes and problems

Completely avoids duplicated cover and omissions

Manage staff, leave

Leave booking all done by the staff themselves – can't blame the secretaries

On-call actively managed

Junior time off/hours, etc. managed automatically

COSTS

Program £7500

Server x 2 £2000-£15000

SAVINGS

Secretarial time and effort – full-time secretary would be needed
1 consultant rota session/week @ £7500 per year

TECHNICAL STUFF

Program detail:

Currently Microsoft Access backend, with custom programmed interface

Due to be changed to sql server backend for better multi-user performance and database robustness

Server OS:

Running on server 2000, server 2003, etc. 32bit versions

Terminal server licensing issues:

Win2k terminal services has to have terminal services licensing enabled (via the internet, free) and win2k and winXP have a free terminal services client license built-in – you just need a standard win2k server license for about £350

Server 2003 requires a CAL for each user and a TS license for each user – much more expensive

Virtualization:

Why virtual? Portability, easy to rebuild and restart a copy of the server without having a complex reinstall to different hardware – can even run the virtual server on a laptop on top of xp once vmware is installed on a computer

Can have separate servers running for different purposes to allow separation of services and ease of maintenance

Processor and memory is shared between virtual servers, so on average you can run several virtual servers on 1 real server

Vmware server is free, but runs on an existing OS such as windows or linux, but this makes it much slower

Vmware esxi 3.5 is a hypervisor – it runs on the bare metal as a simple no-interface host OS and is administered remotely – it is 64bit and can use as much memory as you can load onto a motherboard. Virtual machines run at full speed, as though natively installed, but with all the advantages of portability etc.

The list of supported hardware is small, and is mostly main-name stuff found on server machines, but will run on intel motherboards with some specific network cards – I use and intel 965 chipset board (£65) with 8gigs ddr2 ram (£120) with Broadcom pci-e 1gbit Ethernet card (£12) and sata hard drive, but it can also use proper raid5 hardware such as the Dell Perc 5, a caching 8 port sata controller for speed and data security.