

SASKTEL COLOCATION

SASKATOON HEALTH REGION EQUIPMENT, SASKTEL INFRASTRUCTURE

On the cusp of completing the transfer of data from their own data centres to the SaskTel Data Centre in Saskatoon, Alex Morgun took some time from his busy day to reflect on the progress to date.

"It gives me comfort—I can sleep at night and know that nobody's going to get access unless they're authorized."

— Alex Morgun, Director of Information Technology
at Saskatoon Health Region



ALEX MORGUN ANSWERS QUESTIONS ABOUT SASKTEL COLOCATION SERVICE

Why did Saskatoon Health Region change from on-site data centres?

Alex: The reality is that hospitals are not built to be data centres. They are clinical space and should be providing patient care. Adding to our own data centres would mean our power would be competing with operating rooms. It would be competing with clinical space. It would be competing with secondary support services in our hospitals. And that's not a good position to be in.

Why did you choose SaskTel?

Alex: We were looking for somebody who is already engaged with us and has a proven record within the province. After our review, we had a rigid score and they were highest on the list. SaskTel was the better offer for proximity, connectivity and resiliency because we are 24/7 and any application we select requires 24/7 service. We have a vast collection of health care apps. Because they're in a secure building with proper protection, it gives me comfort—I can sleep at night and know that nobody's going to get access unless they're authorized.

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What are the initial benefits?

Alex: As we migrate our technology to newer standards in SaskTel's Colocation space, we're moving from a 25-rack into a 10-rack space, just by increasing density through the increased floor load capacity of the SaskTel Data Centre. And, as we move out, we're going to be giving back those rooms; in this case, it will be pharmacy that will be receiving that space. This extra space enables them to apply leaner approaches in ways that allow better provision of care to patients and more timely delivery of drugs.

What long-term benefits are you projecting?

Alex: When you partner with a supplier that allows you to use a smaller space, draw better power, provide optimized consumption, utilize virtualized space, acquire significant numbers for storage—all because of the capability of the data centre—it enables us to focus on provisioning our services to the clinicians. Some things that used to take months and months now take weeks and will soon take days. My goal is to achieve service delivery in less than four hours. That's what's driving our use of the data centre; that's the enabler that SaskTel is for us.

Did environmental considerations play a role in your decision?

Alex: I really appreciate their external air handlers because they have minimized my power costs, and that's beneficial to the environment because we're not over-consuming power—we don't overcool, we don't overheat. It's important to me that somebody's caring for the environment.

How important is your working relationship with SaskTel?

Alex: I have a partnership with SaskTel. Whatever they can take off my plate, whenever they can do what they do and know best, the less time I need to spend worrying about clinical devices and technologies, the better service I can provide. (Laughing) And there's no passing the buck—if I have a problem I call SaskTel and they deal with it.

Is it important to you to work with a local supplier?

Alex: People at SaskTel can easily make the correlation to what they're doing and how it benefits themselves and their families, friends and neighbours, and they do their darnedest to support us. It minimizes, if not removes, complacencies you would expect from larger corporations that would provision some of those services just for profit margins. It really changes the dynamics.

Let's start a conversation.

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