THREE COLOCATION MYTHS HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS SHOULD LEAVE BEHIND

Exploring Security, Compliance, and Performance in Healthcare IT
According to a recent Spiceworks survey of IT professionals working in the healthcare field, the average healthcare organization stores well over 1 PB of data—and it’s a complex mix of structured and unstructured data. Respondents say 46% of their healthcare data is stored off premises, whether at a physical location the organization owns or manages, a physical location owned by a third party (colocation), a hosted/cloud location, or a hybrid cloud. And over the next three years, that number is set to increase, with respondents expecting that more than half (52%) of their healthcare data will be stored off premises.

Despite this growing use of off-premises data storage, many myths about colocation persist, particularly for healthcare IT. Have you heard any of these before?

“Colocation is not secure enough for healthcare IT.”

“Colocation won’t meet the compliance requirements we have in healthcare.”

“Colocation wouldn’t provide the performance we need.”

Drawing on the knowledge and experiences of IT pros currently working in the healthcare sector, this white paper explores—and explodes—these three common myths associated with using colocation in healthcare IT.

52%: Expected use of off-premises data storage through 2020
When healthcare IT pros are evaluating data storage solutions and services, security is obviously a key concern. According to the Spiceworks survey, nearly a third (31%) are looking for solutions that will improve the security posture of the organization. Today’s IT pros are concerned about all the usual suspects—hacking, malware (especially ransomware), DDoS attacks, and other potential causes of data breach, downtime, or both. IT pros are also concerned about the potential of losing control of security by moving data off premises.

“Colocation is not secure enough for healthcare IT.”
Security is always a big concern when moving your data off-premises, but 34% of survey respondents actually reported security and compliance issues with their on-premises data storage solutions. Colocation solutions can improve your security posture by providing more security expertise and sophisticated controls than what many IT organizations have in-house.

What keeps me up at night? Security and data breaches.”
- Healthcare IT pro

34%: Percentage of healthcare IT pros facing security/compliance issues with on-premises storage

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### IT Pro Tips

Look for a colocation facility that provides:

- Industry-leading systems security
- Physical security controls, such as:
  - Video surveillance
  - Perimeter fencing
  - Double mantrap entries
  - Access controlled by biometric scanners and card readers
  - Locking cages
  - Cabinets with multiple access control options
- 24x7 in-house security presence comprised of highly trained personnel
Nearly one-third (31%) of surveyed healthcare IT pros are rightly concerned with compliance when evaluating data storage solutions and services, including colocation solutions. They’re concerned that the solutions will not provide the level of compliance support required by the specific government, industry, and organizational regulations they must adhere to.

“Colocation won’t meet the compliance requirements we have in healthcare.”
However, once again, 34% of healthcare IT pros report that security and compliance are actually a challenge with their existing on premises data storage solution. Colocation providers can help alleviate these situations, as many providers specialize in meeting specific regulatory and industry compliance standards, including HIPAA and HITECH. The right colocation provider can effectively reduce the compliance burden for the IT organization as well as facilitate any required audit activities.

“*My biggest concerns are issues related to HIPAA.*”

- Healthcare IT pro

### IT Pro Tips

Look for a colocation provider with compliance certification for:

- **SOC 1 Type 2 and SOC 2 Type 2:** Standards issued by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA), which address corporate controls for service providers, including security and environmental compliance

- **PCI DSS:** The comprehensive set of security controls and processes created by the PCI Security Standards Council for merchants and service providers that store, process, or transmit customer payment card data

- **ISO/IEC 27001:2013:** One of the most stringent certifications for information security controls

- **HIPAA and HITECH:** Control guidance based on the requirements of the HIPAA Security Rule and the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act
Due to the critical nature of the data they deal with, performance is a top priority for healthcare IT pros. The lion’s share of surveyed IT pros—91%—say that performance and latency are either critical or very important when it comes to mission-critical internal workloads. For just over a quarter (26%) of respondents, performance and reliability are the top factors when evaluating data solutions, beating out security and compliance.

“Colocation wouldn’t provide the performance we need.”
IT pros have particular concerns around performance and uptime when it comes to colocation. But the bigger problem is that outdated on premises technology is holding many healthcare organizations back. Nearly 70% of surveyed healthcare IT pros report that availability and bandwidth issues are a top pain point with their existing on premises storage solutions. Almost half (46%) report technical challenges of other kinds.

“I lose sleep over maintaining performance levels for all users.”  
- Healthcare IT pro

Unfortunately, capital costs and space constraints make onsite infrastructure upgrades unrealistic for many healthcare organizations. Colocation providers can offer a high-performance alternative, with 100% uptime SLAs to ensure data is available at all times, and access to network and cloud providers to help build out a holistic hybrid IT solution. In addition, by saving money on space and power, organizations can funnel more funds toward new equipment for other workloads.

### IT Pro Tips

Look for a colocation provider that can deliver:

- Standard uptime SLAs
- Interconnections to major network providers
- Interconnections to major cloud providers
COLOCATION WITH CORESITE

CoreSite’s colocation offerings help IT pros in healthcare bust these myths by solving their existing security, compliance, and performance challenges. CoreSite colocation solutions provide:

- High levels of systems and facility security, including multiple layers of physical security and 24x7x365 coverage by trained security guards

- Compliance certifications for SOC 1 Type 2 and SOC 2 Type 2, PCI DSS, ISO 27001, NIST 800-53 and HIPAA for all CoreSite data centers, with compliance examinations conducted by Schellman & Company, Inc., an independent, licensed CPA firm, Qualified Security Assessor, and accredited ISO 27001 certification body

- High reliability backed by a 100% uptime SLA, as well as high bandwidth and low latency. CoreSite provides access to hundreds of network and cloud providers, and provides direct connectivity to leading cloud providers such as AWS, Microsoft Azure and Google.

CoreSite operates 20+ data centers in major communication markets across the US. Colocation with CoreSite offers economies of scale on space and power, resulting in lower total cost of ownership than in-house data center systems. You can draw additional benefit from secure, direct connections to network, cloud, and IT service providers that inhabit the same environment. With flexible scalability as well as built-in security and reliability, CoreSite enables infrastructure upgrades that produce a system focused on high performance.

CoreSite provides data center solutions to meet even the most stringent of healthcare requirements.
CONCLUSION

For many healthcare organizations, colocation is a data storage option well worth investigating. And the value of colocation only increases as data volumes grow—a situation that can otherwise strain existing on-premises data center infrastructure, bogging down performance, exhausting security resources, and hindering compliance efforts. CoreSite’s colocation offerings are flexible enough to meet the needs of a wide range of organizations, yet robust enough to meet even the most stringent requirements a healthcare organization can face.

ABOUT THE SURVEY

CoreSite commissioned Spiceworks to conduct a survey in May 2017. This survey targeted IT decision-makers, including IT directors, IT managers, and other IT staff who work in the healthcare industry, to understand current perceptions and practices around data storage. Survey results included responses from approximately 150 participants in the US who work at healthcare companies with 100 or more employees, including hospitals, healthcare systems, ambulatory companies, extended care facilities, and other healthcare organizations.