Whitepaper Solving HIPPA, HITECH, SSAE16
Server Compliance Issues with Next Generation Datacenters

HIPPA stands for Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, and HITECH stands for Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act. Both acts have to do with how health records and data are handled. SSAE16 is similar. It’s an accounting standard created by the Auditing Standards Board (ASB) of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA). The parameters of all three have enormous implications both for healthcare and for web hosting.

Dedicated server and managed hosting services that use next generation datacenters must ensure that they can meet the requirements as outlined in the compliance requirements of each one of them.

The Basics

It is important to ensure that you are using a datacenter that will comply with the standards of HIPAA, HITECH and SSAE16. When discussing your needs with a datacenter, such as Atlantic.net, you should confirm that the datacenters conform to the standard contingency plan; data backup plan; disaster recovery plan; emergency mode operation plan; testing and revision procedures and applications; and data criticality analysis. Data servers have their own compliance requirements when it comes to managing your data, and you need to ensure that their performance standards can match up with your compliance requirements. Achieving SSAE16 Type II Certification to ensure that SSAE16 will not present a problem for the server in the current time or immediate future is important.

If you are in healthcare, you are probably familiar with the increasing demand for server and datacenter compliance. The new generation of data centers has helped to pave the way for many healthcare IT companies that needed to find a rock solid solution for their businesses' hosting solution needs. HIPAA was designed to provide better access to health insurance, reduce the occurrence of fraud and abuse, and lower the cost of obtaining health care in the USA. HITECH further reinforces the HIPAA regulations and provides some additional rules for you to follow. The data center you choose should help make the transition to become a fully compliant business, at least through your online presence. This may raise a few eyebrows and some people are even a bit nervous about whether or not their business can meet the demand in time for compliance testing. With the proper structure completed ahead of time, the hard part is done; all you need to do is plug into the tools and features we have available for you to use.

What Does Compliance Involve?

Being HIPPA, SSAE16 and HITECH compliant means going the extra mile in server colocation, delivering dedicated servers, managed server hosting, and compliance through a credible datacenter. A datacenter must be reliable, with certified and trained staff who know how to handle customer problems and inquiries. Being HIPPA, HITECH and SSAE16 compliant is vital in today’s environment, and everyone is fully aware of the legal boundaries in which healthcare organizations must operate. More efficient cooling procedures ensure that the compliance sequences are followed without a possibility for failure. Dynamic allocation of resources where they are needed helps solve many resource issues. Additionally, the resources are used in the coolest parts of the datacenter, meaning more efficient use of the resources as well. Optimizing application performance is one of the main advancements that next generation datacenters do incredibly well.
These next generation datacenters that have been brought into operation have data security as one of their incredible strong points. The new healthcare reform mandates implement even tighter security with HITECH, and service providers have vested large amounts in these regulations. Ample controls and checks/balances to help the patients and healthcare providers will be ensured for obvious reasons. The government understands that companies need to be encouraged to take things to the next level, and as a result, there are tax incentives to deploy EMR/EHR (Electronic Medical Records and Electronic Health Records). Using cloud servers, you are able to scale up and scale out according to what your business needs. Even more so, quality datacenters can keep your healthcare organization safe! Using virtualization, companies have dedicated themselves to the continued success of your business. This means they have left no stone unturned to bring you an unprecedented level of services from which you can choose. Being HIPAA compliant is partly the job of the hosting company and partly yours as well. They provide you with the services – the datacenter, the managed hosting and the tech support to ensure you have what you need to bring your healthcare business to the compliance level. They can only offer you the services that are required by the HIPAA, HITECH and SSAE16 regulations. They need your help to make sure both parties are up to speed in the quest to keep your business in complete compliance.

Cloud computing is a really big part of next generation datacenters. Virtualization technology has made it possible for everyone to have their resources delivered at the most optimum moment through more efficient handling of server resources. If you are new to cloud computing, you should know that this technology never endangers your ability to stay HIPAA, HITECH and SSAE16 compliant. Cloud computing is simply the new way of handling server requests and scaling additional resources up and out. Have you ever stopped to consider what would happen if you were tagged with a violation of the HIPAA, HITECH or SSAE16 compliance standards? It would be a catastrophic blow to your business that would land you in court! Additionally, the people affected by the violation could possibly sue for damages. Quality web hosting services are now structured around ensuring that everything in the facility is certified to the new standards of operation. Being in business for over 15 years, since 1994, has given us a chance to really perfect the art of hosting, server virtualization, data security, compliance, and the ability to provide a carrier-neutral datacenter.

Conclusions

Atlantic.Net and other serious hosting companies have been a step ahead of the compliance standards from day one. Business expertise has allowed us to keep the healthcare IT businesses that we already have under our wing and ahead of the flames. We can help your business stay in line with these compliance standards as well. All in all, server compliance issues won’t be much of a big deal once you realize what they are all about. The compliance issues would generally arise from a datacenter not having sufficient hardware or software to accommodate regulatory compliance; or the customer themselves may not be able to get the business into a state of compliance.

Either way, a next generation datacenter must be able to offer the services in demand to meet the compliance requirements in order to be compliant with the regulations themselves.

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Moazzam currently holds the position of Director of Business Development at Atlantic.Net, where he contributes to the growth of Atlantic.Net by branding and leveraging their product offerings with web and social media marketing. With over 12 years of experience in marketing and business strategy, he has successfully launched and managed products from concept to marketing to profitable campaigns.