Computerised medical files, state-of-the-art equipment, online patient accounts… the Clinique Pasteur in Toulouse is certainly not short on ideas to facilitate the care plan of its patients. To put these innovations in place, teams at France’s leading cardiology clinic were quick to subscribe to server virtualization with VMware. It was a winning move for the hospital, allowing it to launch countless innovative projects.

Clinique Pasteur in Toulouse at present houses 449 beds and places in conventional, outpatient and home-hospitalisation settings, and boasts a staff of about 1300 professionals, including 166 doctors. Despite its size, the Pasteur Clinic has managed to remain people-centred. The institution receives 40,000 patients a year.

The institution operates according to an unusual economic model where the doctors are shareholders.

Challenge
To make it easier for healthcare professionals and their patients to share information, the Clinique Pasteur was one of the first in France to trial electronic medical records. The initiative was a resounding success, so much so that in 2004, the then Minister of Health, Philippe Douste-Blazy announced, from the clinic itself, the launch of shared medical records (known as the DMP) throughout the country.

But over and above the DMP, the Toulouse institution is buzzing with innovative projects to optimise the work of doctors and the patient experience. New business applications, information-sharing platforms… teams at the clinic want to be at the forefront of healthcare innovation. But, how do you launch so many digital projects with an IT infrastructure limited by available floor space, availability of internal resources and budget?

The Solution
Since the dawn of the new millennium, teams at the clinic set out on a mission to find a solution capable of helping them to increase infrastructure scalability. At the time, VMware was taking its first steps in France, but the Clinique Pasteur was quick off the blocks. “We discovered VMware’s virtualization solution, vSphere, very early on and we were immediately won over. There was almost an air of magic about it and, furthermore, it was simple to implement which did wonders for our agility”, Denis Di Santo recalls.

Fired with enthusiasm, teams working for the IT Manager therefore decided to roll out the solution in a novel way. “Most of VMware’s earliest clients chose to use server virtualization for test environments. Our approach went against the grain. We wanted to use vSphere for our healthcare applications, including
“It is clear that without the virtualization of our servers, we wouldn’t have enjoyed such agility to launch all of our projects. Today, we are one of the leading medical institutions in France. We couldn’t have done that without VMware.”

DENIS DI SANTO
HEAD OF SYSTEMS, NETWORK AND TELEPHONY INFRASTRUCTURES
CLINIQUE PASTEUR

critical software”, Denis Di Santo goes on to say. It was an ambitious gamble that the Clinique Pasteur pursued over the years, culminating in the 400 virtual servers it now has today.

Going forward, the clinic is adopting technology for its workstations too, with over a hundred virtual environments using the View solution. “Our business requires production 24 hours a day, seven days a week. A clinic can’t possibly be without access to its business software even for just a few minutes. These could be vital minutes for a patient. With virtualization, we can achieve maximum infrastructure availability”, explains Denis Di Santo.

**Business Results and Benefits**

The IT Manager also sings the praises of virtualization as it has revolutionised IT management at the Clinique Pasteur in Toulouse: “The savings we’ve made in terms of space and energy thanks to server virtualization are off the scale and this in a sector where every square metre has to be devoted to patient care before all else. Nowadays, we even refuse to purchase software if the publishers don’t offer virtualization. It has become an essential requirement for our teams. There are about ten of us managing IT at the clinic. In just a few clicks, we can create new servers to support our projects”, enthuses the Infrastructure Manager.

Thanks to this new upturn in agility, the clinic can throw itself into a myriad of innovative initiatives. Medical imaging management software, a platform where patients can access their records... the clinic is creating a whole host of innovations all for the good of its patients. To give you an example, the electronic prescription software Dopa-soins was created in the minds and on the servers of the clinic before being sold on to a publisher.

It has reached such a point that the clinic now virtualizes all its applications, from video-surveillance to accounting to business software. “Nowadays, an application amounts to the same as a server where, in the past, we added several applications to a single machine to make it profitable. This new correlation is a guarantee of stability that is essential to our software stock”, explains Denis Di Santo.

**What does the future hold**

Far from resting on their laurels, teams at the clinic are teeming with ideas to facilitate their work and that of their doctors. Already the institution has started to deploy NSX on some applications. What do they hope to achieve? To segment flows in order to strengthen their security. “For us, VMware has become a necessity, an essential cog in the wheel in our IT structure. When we discovered vSphere for the first time, we were looking out for the stumbling block as the solution just seemed magical. We still haven’t found it...”, Denis Di Santo concludes.