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ABOUT THIS CASE STUDY:
Our client is a mid-sized hospital and regional healthcare provider network in the US. We have happily accommodated their request to anonymize all names & places.
Hospitals and regional healthcare networks in the US store terabytes of sensitive data on their servers. This includes information about employees, patients, projects, and other business-related content. But as businesses grow, it can be difficult to keep track of where this data lives and who has access to it.

That was the challenge faced by the Network Admin of a mid-sized hospital and regional healthcare provider network (anonymous by request):

For this organization, rapid growth mandated the use of shared drives to facilitate collaboration across multiple locations. But remote connectivity posed risks. Improper file sharing was creating security vulnerabilities and increasing this hospital’s attack surface.

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ENSURING DATA PRIVACY DURING RAPID BUSINESS GROWTH

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As a business operating within the healthcare industry, keeping track of sensitive data was especially important.

It was their responsibility to ensure data privacy for all Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and Protected Health Information (PHI), both of which are protected under HIPAA.

But this organization had data spread out across on-premises servers, saved on employees’ computers, archived in email folders, and housed in the cloud. **A lack of visibility and control was putting over 2,500 employees at risk and jeopardizing HIPAA compliance.**

“Employees knew they shouldn’t do things like save PHI to personal computers or create folders with Global Group Access, but not everyone was adhering to those standards.”

They purchased Varonis to help identify, protect, retrieve, and discover highly sensitive data in their network.

“When I started at the hospital, we had 4 servers and 50 desktops. Now, we have over 300 servers and 2,500 desktops.”
The regional healthcare network purchased five critical Varonis products. Having classification, auditing, remediation, and entitlement capabilities all in one dashboard enabled them to get in control of their unstructured data.

**DatAdvantage** for Windows and SharePoint is the pillar that supports all of their on-premises data stores. It gives visibility into where data lives, who has permission to access it, and who is actually accessing it.

**Data Classification Engine** automatically scans and classifies their data stores for sensitive information, including PHI, PII, financial records, and other HIPAA-regulated data.

“Gaining visibility into PHI improperly stored in shared drives or users accessing data that they probably don’t need is eye-opening. No other solution we tried gave us all of that information behind a single pane of glass.”

**DatAlert** provides continuous monitoring and alerting for their on-prem data stores. According to the Network Admin, having a behavior-based threat detection system gives them tremendous peace of mind.

“We have alerts set up that warn us when a user is added to a security group, if a folder is shared incorrectly, or if a large amount of files are modified within a small time frame. Basically, Varonis warns us about anything that doesn’t look like typical user activity.”

**Data Transport Engine** helps ensure that sensitive data stays secure and that it is properly moved, archived, quarantined, or deleted based on predetermined parameters.
“Data Transport Engine has helped us automatically organize data and it allows us to say definitively that we know where data lives. Cleaning up stale data used to be a very long and manual and process, but not anymore.”

Finally, DatAnswers is an elevated search function that simplifies compliance and e-discovery. It helps the Network Admin fulfill data subject access requests (DSAR) by making it easy to pinpoint files containing PII, PHI, and other HIPAA data.

“I call DatAnswers the ‘search engine’ of Varonis. When a user doesn’t know exactly where they put a sensitive file, we use DatAnswers to track it down. We also use DatAnswers for all of our legal team’s searches. I appreciate the ease and functionality of being able to do that through a web browser.”

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The organization’s Network Admin has seen firsthand how quickly the cybersecurity industry has evolved. They’ve witnessed other healthcare organizations fined millions of dollars for failing to protect user privacy and meet HIPAA compliance standards.

They’re thankful that they have a solution like Varonis keeping a watchful eye on their unstructured data environments.

“To be honest, I don’t know how we would meet regulatory requirements without Varonis. The tools that Windows gives you natively aren’t enough—system and application event logs don’t get into the weeds of who is doing what in your file shares the way Varonis does.”

For an organization in the healthcare industry, having visibility and control capable of scaling with their business growth has been essential. Despite a 7,400% increase in active servers to manage, they feel like they now have more control over their unstructured data than ever before.

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According to the Network Admin, having Varonis in their corner, and knowing that Varonis’ team is always proactively working to improve their products, gives them confidence.
Don’t leave HIPAA data, including PII and PHI, vulnerable to insider and outsider threats.

Varonis helps you hunt down and secure personal information across your on-prem servers, cloud environments, and shared drives.

“Varonis performs a ‘health check’ every quarter. The constant contact—them asking how we’re doing, what we need, and how they can help—that’s huge. I really appreciate that Varonis is always willing to help and find ways to serve us better.”

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