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Alison Wells  
Manager of Client Services  
Community Medical Centers

## Community Medical Centers complements encryption with Computrace® by Absolute® Software

*With three major hospitals and several health care facilities, Community Medical Centers (Community) is the largest and most comprehensive hospital system in the San Joaquin Valley. Affiliated with the University of California San Francisco's (UCSF) medical school, the hospital network has taken a leading-edge approach to both research and technology.*

Over the past several years, Community has taken advantage of laptop computers throughout its facilities. With more laptops storing more private information, computer theft has become an increasing concern for Community.

Having experienced some laptop thefts, Community sought the help of Computrace by Absolute Software – an IT asset management, data protection and computer theft recovery solution that would complement its Microsoft data encryption system. This proved to be a good decision when two laptops were stolen from a locked hospital office. Today, the marriage of Community's encryption system and Absolute's Computrace provide a strong measure of protection for hospital computers and the health information they contain.

### Staying on the Cutting-Edge of Technology

Serving as the major provider of medical care and research in the region, Community Medical Centers is on the forefront of administrative and clinical technology. Community operates one of the largest emergency departments in California and the only combined burn and Level 1 trauma center between Sacramento and Los Angeles. The hospital system also plays host to some of the nation's most advanced specialists who utilize Community's state-of-the-art technology to support UCSF-sponsored research.

In keeping with Community's sophisticated clinical technology, hospital processes are increasingly high-tech. Once paper-based, many clinical and administrative activities are now carried out on small form factor desktop and laptop computers.

### A Frustrating Challenge: Computer Theft

As computers became more prevalent, hospital staff found that computer theft was also on the rise. "When everything was done on larger, desktop PCs, computer theft was very rare," says Alison Wells Community's Manager of Client Services. "As we began increasing the number of laptops across our organization, we saw a corresponding rise in laptop theft. I was attending a Microsoft training course where a colleague suggested that we investigate Computrace. The more we learned about the product, it became obvious that Computrace could significantly benefit our computer security strategy."

### How it Works

The Computrace application that protects Community's laptops is supported by the Computrace persistence module embedded in the firmware of the computers during the manufacturing process. Once Community installed the Computrace Agent, the persistence module was activated and the Agent began calling into the Absolute Monitoring Center each day to report information such as the computer's physical location, installed software, virus protection and encryption status – it can even report missing hardware.

**Absolute**<sup>®</sup>  
COMPUTRACE



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When a computer equipped with Computrace is reported stolen, the Computrace Agent provides forensic information to the Absolute Theft Recovery team to aid in the police investigation. With Computrace persistence technology, the Agent is capable of surviving operating system re-installations, as well as hard-drive reformat, replacements and re-imaging.

### A Test: Two Laptops Stolen From a Locked Office

When two laptops monitored by Computrace were taken from a locked Community office, Community's security staff, Wells and her team reported the theft to the police and then alerted The Absolute Theft Recovery Team. "This was our first test of Computrace in an actual theft. Their tech support was excellent and provided step by step instructions to us immediately."

Two days later, one of the stolen computers called home to the Absolute Monitoring Center and was instructed to call with its location information every 15 minutes until it was recovered. Information provided by Absolute's Theft Recovery Officer led the police to the home of the thieves where the laptop was recovered. Other stolen hospital property found at the scene included televisions and other electronics that had recently disappeared from Community facilities. According to Wells, "The police detective assigned to our case stated that Computrace was the key that led to solving the case and catching the thieves."

### Protecting Health Information With a Layered Approach to Security

As a healthcare provider, Community takes a very proactive approach to protecting the health information of patients and employees. In compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and California Senate Bill 1398, the hospital system encrypts protected health information on laptop computers, "We take many steps to protect our patient's personal and health information, including stringent policies on storing protected information on mobile computers. With our protected information encrypted, and now the ability to physically recover computers or remotely delete information from lost or stolen computers, we feel we are doing everything possible to ensure data security."

### About Absolute Computrace

Absolute Computrace by Absolute Software allows organizations to centrally track and secure their IT assets within a single cloud-based console – the Absolute Customer Center. They can easily identify computers and ultra-portable devices that have gone missing, enforce software policies, and maintain a fleet of optimally running devices. Most importantly, they can remotely invoke preemptive or reactive security measures to safeguard each device and the data it contains.

### About Absolute Software

Absolute Software is the global leader in firmware-embedded persistent endpoint security and management solutions.

We provide organizations with comprehensive visibility and control over all of their endpoints – regardless of user or location. Our customers are able to optimize productivity, reduce operating costs, prove compliance, and remotely secure all of their devices and the corporate data they contain.

<sup>1</sup> For a complete list of BIOS-supported computers visit: [www.absolute.com/products/bios-compatibility](http://www.absolute.com/products/bios-compatibility)

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