OpenEMR Launches Easy Install Option for Amazon's Cloud Services

Latest release of OpenEMR offers an out of the box cloud-services option leveraging the Amazon Web Services (AWS) platform

RUTLAND, Vt. - Aug. 15, 2017 - *PRLog* -- OpenEMR, the most popular open source electronic health records (EHR) and medical practice management solution, upgraded their cloud-services capability with the latest 5.0.0.4 release. OpenEMR can now be operated as an out of the box cloud-services solution using Amazon Web Services (AWS) platform. With several simple steps, end users can get their OpenEMR on the cloud and take advantage of all the benefits that the cloud provides.

Cloud technologies have been a staple in technology and business strategies over the last decade, and the healthcare industry is no exception to this trend. Being a web platform, OpenEMR is well suited for use as a cloud-services application. To date there has been no out of the box OpenEMR cloud package that takes full advantage of everything that cloud-services has to offer. Some benefits of cloud-services include:

* Automatic scaling of computational resources. The computational resources such as servers, memory, bandwidth, and storage automatically scale depending on demand. At times of heavy OpenEMR use, for example during peak clinic hours, more resources are automatically dedicated to ensure optimal performance of OpenEMR at all times. And at times of low OpenEMR use, such as when the clinic is closed, computational resources are then automatically decreased in order to minimize costs.
* Cutting-edge network security. The security measures leverage the Amazon Web Services, which include both superior physical, network, and software security.
* Zero hardware maintenance. OpenEMR is on the cloud and uses hardware provided by Amazon Web Services, so there is no on site server hardware required.
* Easy software deployments. With several simple steps, users can have a cloud optimized solution for OpenEMR up and running on the cloud. If customizations are needed, users can test and deploy the changes with ease.
* Robust backup and recovery solutions. Automated backups, disaster recovery, and server redundancy are commonplace on the cloud and can be fine tuned to suit each clinic's specific needs.

Currently OpenEMR users run the software on custom physical servers or select a professional vendor who provides a custom cloud or managed on-site solution. "This new cloud solution provides a modern option for users looking to leverage the cloud on their own terms, with a limited maintenance burden and low cost", says Matthew Vita, an OpenEMR administrator.

"The system is a natural fit for the cloud", notes Dr. Andre Millet, a Brazilian physician and OpenEMR contributor. "Setting up an EMR for hospital use should be as easy as signing up for a Platform as a Service (PaaS) solution. We are reducing the distance between the clinician and technology, providing tools that diminish repetitive tasks and bureaucratic procedures, allowing the provider more time for applying what he or she excels at", says Millet. He believes that lowering the barriers and cost for EMR deployments will encourage more utilization, especially in modern areas of healthcare such as Telemedicine, Practice Analytics and Clinical Intelligence. During the testing phase, Millet was impressed with the ease of the initial setup and the ability to optionally change the source code that almost instantly is reflected in his private cloud, something that non-open source EMR systems can't support because the code is hidden from the user as a business strategy.

OpenEMR on the cloud simplifies OpenEMR management and provides peace of mind. "An on-premise EMR represents unpredictable, front-loaded capital expenses -- initial server purchase and deployment,

on-going warranties, parts replacement, and physical security, often compounded by untested backup and restore protocols", says Asher Densmore-Lynn, an OpenEMR contributor and cloud architect. "Platform as a Service allows predictable capital expenses spread out over the course of the solution, with the cloud's smooth scalability as workloads increase over time." He adds that institutions using the cloud see more cost savings and benefits from not having to hire in-house expertise, especially in areas such as initial systems setup, disaster recovery, and hardware scaling. "All of these issues become manageable, predictable, and testable with the cloud", Densmore-Lynn notes.

OpenEMR is ONC Certified as a Complete EHR and supports a broad feature set including patient demographics, records, appointments, prescriptions, billing, reports, clinical decision support, and lab integration. The out of the box OpenEMR cloud solution is designed to be compliant with The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and The Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act (HITECH) for users in the United States. Once live, users can work with Amazon Web Services (AWS) to sign a Business Associate Agreement (BAA) in order to be compliant with HIPAA, HITECH, and ONC Meaningful Use Stage 2.

"We want to ensure that the cost is reasonable and in proportion to an institution's EMR utilization", notes Daniel Ehrlich, an OpenEMR contributor and cloud solutions engineer. He notes that low AWS fees for US and non-US institutions are a feature of this cloud solution. However, enormous data sets or enhanced redundancy needs will have a higher, if still proportionate and predictable, cost. This cloud solution was put together by a passionate development team within the greater OpenEMR community. Although cost effectiveness was a large factor, Amazon Cloud also appealed to the team from a technology perspective with very robust and easy to use Application Programming Interfaces (API) and networking concepts that are familiar to IT professionals. This new OpenEMR cloud solution can be found at http://www.open-emr.org/wiki/index.php/OpenEMR_Downloads#... .

About OpenEMR

OpenEMR is an electronic health record (EHR) system that was originally developed by physicians starting in 2002 to help them run their practices. As an open source project, it is maintained and supported by a vibrant community of volunteers and professionals that includes several hundred contributors and is supported by more than 40 companies. OpenEMR is ONC Certified as a Complete EHR and it is recognized as the most popular open-source electronic health records and medical practice management solution in the world. OpenEMR is downloaded more than 6,000 times per month, and it is estimated that it is used by more than 100,000 medical providers serving more than 200 million patients. OpenEMR has been translated into 33 languages and is used by facilities in more than 100 countries across the globe. Open source software has changed the world for the better and OpenEMR is a leader in healthcare open source software. Costly proprietary EMRs are no longer the only option. For more information please visit http://www.open-emr.org.

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