

Affiliated Helps Large Radiology Practice Improve Communication and Efficiency through Integrated CRM and IT Infrastructure

Introduction

The 27 members of the Columbus Radiology practice, working in multiple locations, communicated to 2,000 physicians and hospitals independently, with no organizational brand. After implementing Windows Small Business Server and Microsoft Dynamics CRM, the radiologists - in all their locations - gained unified, easy, quick access to all internal and external communications, a consistent brand, and new efficiencies in communicating with physicians.

Challenge

Columbus Radiology, with 27 members, serves three major central-Ohio hospitals, a number of imaging centers and more than 2,000 referring physicians. Physicians in the group examine radiological studies and report around the clock, 365 days a year, from multiple locations, from numerous departments within hospitals and from more than a dozen remote imaging centers.

Communicating results for several hundred thousand patient studies a year demands extensive contact among radiologists, referring physicians, medical facilities and imaging-center patients. The doctors of Columbus Radiology, however, interacted independently on a one-to-one basis to carry out these communications, with e-mail addresses reflecting a variety of domains, no consistent messaging and no follow-up documents on agreed decisions. In short, the physicians had no organizational presence or brand. The practice members had no way to communicate effectively as a unit, either internally or with their external colleagues and customers.

Another barrier to effectiveness was the fact that the radiologists managed many of their clinical functions manually or with simple spreadsheets. The group was failing to take advantage of potential efficiencies.

Also, the practice maintained no efficient method to alert physicians to continuing-education requirements or license expiration dates. The physician or an assistant simply would need to remember the critical dates.

The executive management team of the practice set out a number of steps for improvement, seeking a business solution that would:

- Improve both patient care and physician quality of life
- Provide a unified solution to give each radiologist independence while representing the practice as a cohesive, organized unit in all its communications
- Offer easy implementation and support while reducing or eliminating manual, inefficient processes
- Provide a cost-effective way to grow the technology so that the practice did not have to re-engineer its IT system every time it added an application, customer or location.

Solution

The executive management team brought its requirements to Columbus-based Affiliated Resource Group, a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner. Affiliated recommended combining the capabilities of Microsoft Windows Small Business Server (SBS) with Microsoft Dynamics CRM 3.0.

To create a solid infrastructure and furnish collaboration and business applications, Affiliated implemented SBS throughout the practice for more than 50 users. In addition to providing easy access to office applications, SBS incorporates Microsoft Exchange Server as a messaging platform, with the capability of accessing e-mail, calendars and contacts from remote locations and through mobile devices. This mobility solution would allow the radiologists to commu-

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*- Dan Loch
COO, Columbus Radiology*



ColumbusRadiology

Website: www.columbusradiology.com
Customer Size: 50+ Employees
Location: Columbus, Ohio
Industry: Healthcare

Solution Implemented

Microsoft Small Business Server
Microsoft SharePoint

Columbus Radiology was founded in Central Ohio in 1946 and has grown to be a leading provider of professional interpretation services. Their physicians are board certified and fellowship trained in Musculoskeletal, Neuroradiology, Mammography, Body Imaging, Interventional Radiology and Nuclear Medicine. Referring physicians in virtually every specialty - orthopedics, neurology, oncology, podiatry, surgery, family practice - count on Columbus Radiology to help with their diagnosis.

nicate internally and externally as a single cohesive unit from wherever they were working. Moreover, for the first time, they would be able to use technology to check calendars, schedule meetings, invite meeting participants and receive automated meeting reminders.

After establishing this technology foundation, Affiliated implemented Microsoft SharePoint Services 3.0, which also is incorporated in the SBS software. SharePoint would provide all employees access to policies and procedures, workflow documents, location diagrams and information, basic staff scheduling and a range of HR-related self-service functions for employees. SharePoint also would be used to track and manage continuing education requirements for the medical staff, with all the information in one place for the first time, making it easy to track online.

To supplement the new capabilities derived from Small Business Server, Affiliated implemented Microsoft Dynamics CRM 3.0 as a way to track information about patients and referring physicians. The practice would gain a competitive advantage by employing CRM to contact referring physicians directly and communicate the results of a patient study, as well as to track communications with physicians. By using CRM to access referring doctors via the method of communication that they preferred, radiologists could help ensure faster and more effective patient care.

Benefits

The Microsoft solutions have helped unify Columbus Radiology by providing consistent access to communications from all locations through a single secure server. Employees now can access HR information and services 24/7, and the management of continuing education credits has become much easier than before. CRM has provided the practice added value and better care.

Through SBS, Exchange and mobility solutions, all radiologists and staff have easy, quick, consistent access to internal and external communications from any location at any time with a common domain name and consistent e-mail branding.

Medical staff use Microsoft Dynamics CRM to help them carry out customized communications with all referring physicians, storing each of those doctor's preferred method of communication (e-mail, fax, phone, etc.) as well as the type of information they generally want reported and then sending test results in the preferred manner for each physician. Moreover, with updates made to one centralized version of a document, all staff in all the group's locations can access the same information at the same time.



Dr. Franco Policaro, Nuclear Medicine

Wherever employees are located, they have around-the-clock access to policies, procedures and HR services through the SharePoint site.

Radiologists and administrative staff have saved countless hours tracking continuing education credits, now that they are organized in one location on the Small Business Server and are accessible through SharePoint. SharePoint automatically prompts individuals in advance of due dates to remind them of credentials and licensing tasks.

Referring physicians are providing faster and more efficient patient care because the group's CRM solution allows radiologists to share results of patient studies more rapidly with referring physicians.

"Working with Affiliated we learned the true asset that technology can be to our business. The more timely and customized communications we now have with our customers has given us a competitive advantage in a competitive market," said Dan Loch, COO, Columbus Radiology.

For more information about this project and others like it, please contact email us at info@aresgrp.com or call us at 614.889.6555.

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