

A MODERN PAN-EUROPEAN HEALTHCARE SERVICE ACTOR

TMC, the teleradiology partner to public healthcare

Telemedicine Clinic, TMC, is an international diagnostic group with headquarters based in Barcelona, Spain. TMC was set up in 2002 to meet the increasing demand for medical expertise in many European regions, where a scarcity of medical specialists has caused problems in the delivery of healthcare services.

TMC's objective is to support public hospitals by establishing a more efficient way of centralising and sharing specialist competence and as a result offer cost-effective sub-specialist diagnostic services and training solutions to public care providers that experience difficulties in upholding specialist competence by themselves. Today, the medical team provides radiology reports to more than 60 European hospitals.

The main center of TMC is located in a top-modern high-rise building by the Mediterranean sea, right next to one of the many teaching hospitals in Barcelona. The spacious office, adapted to radiology review conditions, is the workplace of some 25 reading radiologists. With additional specialists working in countries such as Sweden, UK and Germany, more than 80 sub specialist radiologists review examinations and deliver radiology reports through the TMC service centre. Out of hours reporting is done from the TMC centre in Sydney.

The challenge

For TMC, with its center in Spain and reading radiologists working from other parts of Europe and Australia, collaborating across the wide geographical area provides a substantial challenge. Working with studies acquired from

MRI, CT and other modalities providing large data volumes also takes its toll.

Teleradiology enables radiology departments in hospitals to connect with, and expand, the performance of their radiology services without having to employ extra locum or additional permanent radiologists. In order to meet the requirements in the organization, TMC needed to provide their radiologists with the most efficient tools available.

The solution

In 2007, Telemedicine Clinic decided to replace their current PACS provider with Sectra. With TMC's extremely distributed organization, key PACS issues include system stability regardless of network capacity and the ability to address network latency.

"We work in an extremely distributed reading environment with examination often containing large data volumes. To handle this, we recently replaced our old PACS provider with Sectra," says Dr. Hans Billing, MD, MRI expert and responsible for ensuring medical quality of diagnostic services at TMC. "The modern, intuitive user interface combined with dynamic data reduction, local cache and progressive transfer makes for an effective workflow. Sectra's new IDS7 workstation has made it possible for us to take on larger examination volumes than before."

TMC facts

- 150 PACS users
- 100,000 examinations yearly
- More than 80 radiologists in 9 countries
- More than 60 customer hospitals in 2008

“Sectra’s remote reading solution goes hand in hand with TMC’s goal to share specialist competence through cost-effective services.”

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The result

With servers located in Spain and a global network of reading radiologists, Sectra PACS’ remote reading solution is an excellent match for the needs of Telemedicine Clinic.

With the new generation workstation, optimized for handling variations in network quality and performing efficiently over high-latency networks, the radiologists can use their IDS7 workstations efficiently, regardless of location. The worklist subscription, enabled by employing local image cache, is extensively used throughout the TMC network. Dr. Hans Billing continues: “The Sectra engineers have really figured out how to take advantage of the way radiologists work, and how to best utilize available networks. Caching images locally through IDS7 turned out to be over 30% more efficient than our previous system”.

All in all, the hospital customers of Telemedicine Clinic now can receive radiology reports within hours for examinations which would have a turnaround time counted in days at the hospitals served.

Designed for maximum uptime, the PACS is always online. “Sectra PACS is available 24/7 just like the TMC staff. The system designed for maximum uptime combined with the time difference allows me to deliver my reports before the day even begins in Europe”, says Hampus Eklöf radiologist Sydney.

“Sectra’s remote reading solution goes hand in hand with TMC’s goal to share specialist competence through cost-effective services”, says Dr. Hans Billing.

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