

Replacement PACS Initiative Using IntegradWeb PACS Enables Dramatic Changes in Imaging Services

A thriving community hospital replaces legacy PACS with IntegradWeb PACS, quickly overcoming the shortcomings of the prior system, achieving a remarkable improvement in imaging services, efficiency and physician satisfaction.

Referrals Increase with Replacement PACS

Healthcare facilities that purchased PACS several years ago hoped adopting the technology early would keep them on the leading edge of image and information management well into the new millennium. The first systems on the market, however, were expensive, facility-based, and hardware and support intensive. They served the needs of imaging departments, but sending images and reports to referring physicians or accessing data off-site could be awkward at best.

As is the case with most modern technology, the next generation of PACS quickly eclipsed predecessors in speed, accessibility, functionality and ease of use. On New York's Long Island, many later adopters selected Dynamic Imaging's IntegradWeb® PACS as their first PACS. Meanwhile, the three-year-old legacy, client/server PACS at John T. Mather Memorial Hospital ("Mather") in Port Jefferson, New York, had become unreliable. Radiologists and referring physicians—many of them already IntegradWeb PACS users—clamored for a better system, especially as they had experienced the benefits of IntegradWeb PACS at other institutions. The staff at Mather found replacing its dated PACS with IntegradWeb PACS to be quick, painless and profitable.

The Problem: A Cumbersome Legacy PACS

Mather is an accredited 248-bed, nonprofit community hospital performing over 125,000 annual exams, providing a wide spectrum of high-quality healthcare services to Suffolk County residents. It treats some 12,000 inpatients annually, and its Fortunato Breast Health Center provides diagnostic services to more than 15,000 women each year.

The hospital's mission statement includes a pledge to provide technologically advanced, state-of-the-art health care. But physicians had become frustrated with Mather's slow, crash-prone PACS.



John T. Mather Memorial Hospital
Port Jefferson, New York



Image courtesy of Mather Hospital

Annual Studies: 125,000+
Beds: 248
Annual Inpatients: 12,000

Prior PACS	Legacy, Client/Server PACS
Replaced By	Web-based, Dynamic Imaging IntegradWeb PACS

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RIS/PACS Administrator,
Imaging Department
Mather Hospital

"We were at a crossroads," said RIS/PACS administrator Jeanine Genco. "We had to purchase more storage space, but we didn't want to make a large investment in a system that was not satisfying the imaging department." The hospital also had just negotiated a contract with a new physicians' group—Radiology Consulting of Long Island—which used IntegradWeb PACS at three other area institutions.

Genco had two criteria for a replacement PACS: it had to be intuitive and it had to be fast.

The Solution: IntegradWeb PACS

Matthew Rifkin, M.D., is the new chairman of radiology at Mather and president of Radiology Consulting of Long Island. His group serves three Catholic Health Services of Long Island (CHSLI) hospitals. He helped CHSLI's Good Samaritan Hospital Medical Center in West Islip select PACS in 2004.

"We looked at every one around, and I felt IntegradWeb PACS was probably the most advanced and versatile," he said. Over the next eighteen months, Dr. Rifkin's practice began reading imaging studies at two other CHSLI hospitals that also adopted Dynamic Imaging's PACS. "Each time we put it in, the installation got quicker and quicker." Today, all five CHSLI hospitals use IntegradWeb PACS, performing hundreds of thousands of annual exams across their nearly 1,700-bed integrated delivery network.

The Mather experience marked the first time Dr. Rifkin had observed the replacement of a PACS. However, this trend is increasing as ambulatory and acute care institutions seek to gain efficiencies and competitive advantage in the face of financial strain caused by the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005. Of PACS installations today, upwards of 25 percent are replacement PACS initiatives. Institutions quickly realize PACS becomes a mission critical system once it goes live, and for legacy implementations, inherent system deficiencies can be tolerated for only so long until significant negative consequences begin impacting morale, workflow, recruitment, referrals and ultimately, patient care.

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"We went live on December 20, 2006. It was just six weeks from contract signing to go-live," Genco said. "That's almost unprecedented."

Many physicians already knew how to use IntegradWeb PACS and hospital staff picked up on the system quickly. "It used to take hours to get them to understand how to retrieve new and prior images and load them into the formats they needed," Genco said. "With the new PACS, we show them how to point and click and they are good to go in less than fifteen minutes." Full integration of IntegradWeb PACS with the hospital's RIS also optimized technologist workflow. They no longer must transfer images or merge data manually between RIS and PACS.

The anticipated challenging task of migrating data from the old PACS to the new one also went more smoothly and quickly than expected. Dynamic Imaging began the process in November shortly after signing the contract and finished in April without data integrity risks.

Satisfied Physicians

Replacing its PACS cost marginally more than Mather would have spent to incrementally upgrade its legacy PACS. The hospital upgraded existing workstations, but added a more robust core server platform that enabled an all online archive and support of more imaging modalities. Genco expects to recoup the investment quickly through increased referrals.

"We are certainly going to generate more revenue from user satisfaction," she said. "We were down constantly. We lost a lot of revenue that way."

Mather urgently needed to go-live with IntegradWeb PACS because of problems with its old system, so the hospital wanted to make a big impact with their marketing program to promote the benefits of the new PACS to



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a physician base that was experienced, yet frustrated with the prior PACS. Dynamic Imaging customized its innovative Boost marketing program for Mather by tailoring promotional and educational materials for their experienced PACS users, recognizing their baseline knowledge and focusing on the key improvements IntegradWeb PACS would deliver to referring physicians and their patients. Mather's comprehensive Boost package included a sample press release for the media, referring physician collateral pieces, quick-start guides, sample key image print pages, sample radiology reports, and silk-screened auto-launching CDs branded with the Mather logo all within professional Boost boxes also branded with the Mather logo.

Radiologists and referring physicians appreciate the new system's Web-based, anywhere access functionality. Off-site access provided by the old PACS functioned differently than the version they used in the hospital most notably in performance, reliability and feature/function. With IntegradWeb PACS, they view the same study layout and tools no matter where they log on, all tied to their personal, secure user login. Users also can easily customize query searches themselves, creating their own personal, active worklists with the most up to date patient and study information available. That process used to require significant IT administrator involvement with the old PACS, freeing up staff now to help users get the most from their PACS.

"We provide final reads 24-7. Every one of my doctors has a PACS workstation at home," Dr. Rifkin said. "Referring physicians love it because it's easy for them to use."

For more information about Dynamic Imaging IntegradWeb PACS, please visit www.dynamic-imaging.com. For more information regarding Replacement PACS, please visit www.pacsrehab.com.