

Customer Success Story: NIPACS - Regional PACS Migration



Profile

Sectra Ltd., (<http://www.sectra.com>), Milton Keynes, United Kingdom, provides industry-leading RIS/PACS, mammography and orthopaedic solutions. Sectra contracted with MDI Solutions to provide migration services and software to support the migration of PACS data in Northern Ireland.

Continuing with the contract award and implementation of their PACS software with NIPACS (the Northern Ireland PACS project), Sectra selected MDI solutions to migrate existing PACS data from a number of Trusts including: LVH (Cerner), Ulster (Fuji Synapse), Causeway (AGFA), Daisy Hill (Fuji Synapse), Craigavon (Siemens) and South Tyrone (AGFA).

“A PACS Migration to consolidate 8 independent operations with disparate vendor systems requires precise pre-planning considerations and a vendor who has the capability and experience to deal with all the unforeseeable issues that arise. I am quite pleased with MDI Solutions’ performance to date and their overall management of the project.”

Ivan Craig
NIPACS Project Manager

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Challenge

MDI’s migration team was tasked with migrating and validating 30+ terabytes of data for the six Trusts who make up NIPACS to Sectra’s central repository. The legacy PACS systems used unique methods for storing their radiology images and reports and MDI was required to access data to the level of the Study UID, which enables identification down to the individual image level.

Determining the number of studies that are on a legacy source PACS system is difficult for most PACS vendors. Volumes are regularly underestimated as studies are not completely accounted and assessment of compression algorithms is difficult because compression varies depending upon the object being compressed.

Sectra’s performance commitments are to support approximately 1 Million studies per year. The migration adds to the load of these studies that need to be verified in conjunction with live studies. It is critical therefore that the data transfer is accurate and complete so the migration must include data sampling and analysis to ensure proper data transfer.

Outcome

MDI assisted the Trusts in revising initial volume estimates (all were significantly under estimated) and completing study lists. Once an accurate data size was determined, MDI then performed an analysis of the ‘live’ PACS requirements to load balance for time-of-day and optimize the data migration speed. MDI also encountered several additional errors in names and birthdates than initially projected. Utilizing their proprietary software, MDI was able to update the PACS’ DICOM header with details as required to verify the study on the RIS.

During the migration project the NIPACS team identified that the migrated studies would require the newly instituted regional health number (HC&N). MDI was able to update the Unique Patient Identifier with the new regional number and they diverted studies that could not be uniquely identified to a separate data repository; where a DICOM query can be performed on demand. MDI also restored a cache in a PACS system that became corrupted, which allowed the migration to proceed on schedule.

Based on the success of the initial PACS migrations, NIPACS has added the following Trusts to the data migration project: Causeway, Ulster, Lagan Valley, Altnagelvin, Erne, Tyrone County, Mater and Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children.