KODAK Professional Services Solves Networking Needs of Rural Hospital

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TY COBB HEALTHCARE SYSTEM, INC.

Digital imaging is a wondrous thing when all the pieces work together. But for institutions whose Information Systems resources are already strained to the limit, even a modest networking challenge can become an insurmountable roadblock.

What should you do? Call KODAK Professional Services.

"Kodak is an expert in imaging and networking services, so I felt confident that they could design and install our network quickly and efficiently—and they did," says Lee Whisnant, director of radiology services for Ty Cobb Healthcare System, Inc. in Royston, Georgia.

Lee Whisnant is director of radiology at Ty Cobb Healthcare.

Ty Cobb Healthcare, a system with three small hospitals, had purchased two Kodak DryView™ 8700 laser imagers at different times. One of the DryView imagers is located on the first floor at Cobb Memorial Hospital's ultrasound imaging area; the second is in the main radiology department and serves CT, digital fluoroscopy and a second ultrasound unit.

Whisnant decided after the fact that the two imagers should be networked so that if one goes out of service, images can be transmitted to the second printer. "The goal is to avoid downtime in our imaging modalities," he says. "If an imager goes down even for maintenance, then the modalities hooked to it are down, too. With a print network configured for fail-over printing, the whole department keeps running."

It's a simple networking issue— assuming you have the time and expertise to address it. Whisnant's staff

Shasta Hoppa, the networking specialist from KODAK Professional Services, examines the print network's main switch in the radiology department.

had neither. So Kodak's Health Imaging Account Manager Stan Howell brought in KODAK Professional Services specialist Shasta Hoppa.

Hoppa did a walk-through of the facility and proposed a simple print network. "This hospital, like other rural community hospitals, can't justify having an IT staff to support digital imaging. So we fill the gap for them," she explains.
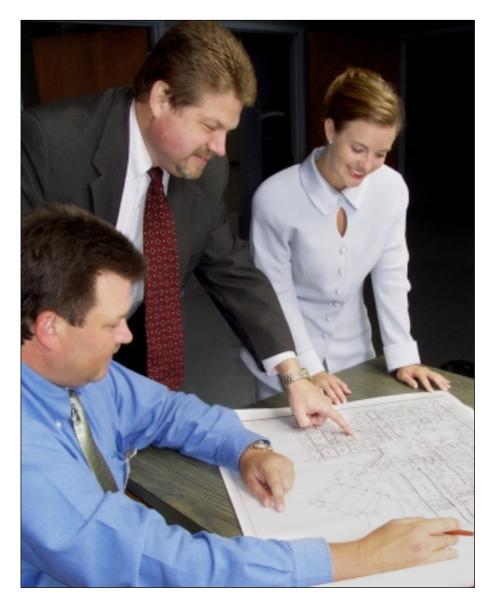
Since the hospital did not have an existing network to tap into, she configured a simple solution that doesn't even require an additional server. The system required only some custom software, cabling, a switch, and a secure network rack. Now, when one printer goes off-line, images are automatically directed to the second printer to be output. "The intelligence is built into the system," Hoppa says. "There's no need for operator involvement."

In addition, Hoppa configured the system with five extra cable drops and a switch to accommodate future growth. The extra resources also give the hospital the flexibility to move the printers from one area to another without requiring new cabling. The secure network rack takes them one step closer to being ready to implement HIPAA regulations. And, like all KODAK Professional Services

installations, the system came with one year of 24 x 7 technical support.

The project's timely completion has Whisnant thinking of the future. "This network is so affordable and efficient that I plan to install similar networks in our other two hospitals," he says.

Ty Cobb Healthcare is very pleased with the flexibility of the Kodak DryView 8700 laser imagers. "The 8700 is ideal for producing film for all modalities with 14 x 17-inch applications. It consistently produces excellent image quality and is extremely reliable," says Whisnant.

Lee Whisnant of Ty Cobb Healthcare (seated) discusses the print network with Kodak's Stan Howell and Shasta Hoppa.

Christa Sanders, RT (R)(CT), evaluates film printed on one of Ty Cobb Memorial's Kodak DryView 8700 laser imagers.

He adds that Kodak's patented Automatic Image Quality Control automatically calibrates the imager to optimize image quality, and eliminates the need for technologists to perform frequent calibrations and QC testing.

He is also pleased with its recently installed Kodak DryView 7000 film duplicating system.

"In the past, we had to duplicate one sheet of film at a time in a darkroom. If you have a stack of 10 to 15 pieces of film, that can take 30 minutes," Whisnant reports. "With the DryView duplicator, you put a stack of films in the duplicator and walk away. The duplicated film is waiting in the imager bin. I'd much rather have my technologists working with patients than standing in a darkroom duplicating film."

The DryView imagers and print network are a small but important step toward Whisnant's long-term goal of having a digital radiology department with system-wide PACS.

"I know that in the future physicians will view images on workstations throughout the facility, and that our three hospitals will be linked together with a PACS that enables us to balanced the workload among radiologists," he says. "As technology changes, we will continue to turn to Kodak for the imaging expertise we need."

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