

# Performance Strategies

for Healthcare Leaders



Keep Pace with Advanced Medical Imaging Technology & Services

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## Justifying the Need for a Replacement PACS — Advanced Technology with a Powerful ROI



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Most hospitals already have a [picture archiving and communication system \(PACS\)](#). And most hospital leaders are satisfied with the results they've reaped from implementing these systems and transitioning from analog to digital imaging workflow. After all, replacing film imaging with digital imaging leads to considerable cost savings, which are relatively easy to measure.

But effective leaders are always looking for improvements beyond the first "quick wins" of an initial transition from analog to digital. And, as a result, many are asking: Is there more? The answer is a resounding "yes." Although the first round of benefits from PACS deployment are easy to realize and typically result just from the transition from film to digital imaging, healthcare organizations can still reap substantial benefits by upgrading to an advanced PACS.

Simply consider how these systems go beyond first-generation PACS and offer the advanced features that make it possible to:

- Conform to the industry's new standards
- Handle large volume data sets
- Accommodate images from multi-modalities — CT, mammography, PET/CT
- Interact with other information systems such as hospital information systems (HIS), radiology information systems (RIS) and electronic health records (EHRs)
- Integrate with third-party applications, including nuclear medicine and orthopedics
- Increase physician satisfaction by providing radiologists and referring clinicians with quicker access to more comprehensive images
- Visualize data from "thin slice" scanners with interactive control of slice thickness and other parameters
- Streamline the interaction with complex clinical workflows

Although these features are nice to have, healthcare leaders need to make sure that replacement PACS pass the ultimate litmus test: Will the additional benefits justify the investment? The good news is that this powerful technology can provide the return on investment by making it possible to:

- Improve physician and technologist productivity without adding staff or relying on overtime
- Enhance diagnostic capabilities due to better access to more complete information, including information from mammography, 3D, nuclear medicine, PET/CT fusion and orthopedics
- Reduce costs by sharing images and thereby reduce the need to produce duplicate imaging studies to diagnose the same condition

The key to achieving these more elusive benefits, however, is partnering with a vendor that not only provides the right feature-rich technology but also the ability to re-engineer customer processes during the implementation stage.

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## Justifying the Need for a Replacement PACS (Cont.)

When going from film to an initial PACS, organizations have the luxury of turning on systems (and removing film) department by department. But organizations that are already using a PACS need to maintain “business as usual” while improving their departmental workflow. Physicians expect continuous access to patient image history so the switch to the new system must be quick and painless. If there is a lag in the transition to the new PACS, the organization will be left supporting two systems — a costly and cumbersome proposition.

As such, healthcare providers should look for vendors that will work with them to:

- Identify where potential improvements can be made
- Conduct a workflow evaluation
- Develop a structured implementation plan
- Train staff members using a “train the trainer” model
- Provide around-the-clock support to ease the transition
- Keep up with rapidly evolving trends, both in the clinical fields of diagnostic imaging and in the yet to fully evolve aspects of government funding and requirements

The right partner can help reduce the “time to value” for a replacement PACS. As a result, organizations can leverage the power of an advanced PACS to more immediately improve communications, streamline workflow and ultimately improve patient care. The key is to make the “transition” once. Organizations can do that by selecting a vendor that is both a viable long-term player in the industry and a partner that will provide continued improvement as diagnostic workflow continues to evolve.

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## Justifying the Need for a Replacement PACS (Cont.)

### It's All About PACS — Helping You Prepare for a PACS Decision

Are you deciding whether to move to a digital imaging environment or upgrade to a more advanced PACS solution? The Web site, [www.allaboutpacs.com](http://www.allaboutpacs.com) can help. The site provides educational information, including interactive workflows to help you compare the advantages of today's latest PACS solutions:

- > Film-based workflow vs. a digital PACS workflow, which reduces turnaround time and eliminates administrative steps
- > A multi-modality-based PACS workflow vs. a healthcare IT-based workflow, which benefits multiple departments in your organization

The site also examines in detail the clinical, operational and financial benefits of an advanced PACS system. You can review [stories](#) and [videos](#) of organizations that have been successful in improving medical imaging performance.

A [medical imaging blog](#) on the site (also available via e-mail or RSS feed) offers perspectives from imaging experts and healthcare organizations on successful approaches they've used in implementing and managing a PACS. For those who use social media, they can follow [McKesson Health IT](#) on Twitter.

If you want more information, there are [podcasts and Webinars](#) available on various topics related to medical imaging. Those who want to learn about specific solutions can [schedule a demo](#).

## Related Solutions

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