

Executive Brief

Cut costs, not quality

Enterprise imaging answers the call

“Do more with less” has been a mantra in the healthcare industry for quite some time now. However, the imperative to reduce costs involves more than simply managing with fewer resources. Given current federal mandates, it’s also about successfully operating in an environment where patient reimbursements are no longer predictable. In fact, expenses in the not-for-profit and public sectors are growing faster than usual. Expense growth hit a high of 7.2% in fiscal 2016, a measure that typically hovers around 5 or 6%.¹

According to one recent study, radiologists spend almost 44% of their time on non-interpretive tasks.²

In this environment, significant investments in new technologies are often met with skepticism. But, the case for an enterprise-wide imaging solution is an easy one to make given the opportunities it would create to cut costs by:

#1: Investing less up-front

With an enterprise system, healthcare organizations no longer need to invest in numerous departmental archiving solutions. As such, capital investment, licensing, hardware and maintenance costs can be reduced.

#2: Reducing resources

There is a growing need for healthcare organizations to adopt centralized medical image archives that can efficiently store and make it instantly accessible across departments and partner hospitals. As a result, staff can focus on other value-added tasks.

#3: Making the most of EHRs

With an enterprise-wide system, all DICOM and non-DICOM images can be stored with rich integration to the EHR, creating a patient record that empowers physicians to make more informed decisions.

#4: Improving physician efficiency

According to one recent study, radiologists spend almost [44%](#) of their time on non-interpretive tasks.² With a single enterprise imaging solution, physicians can access studies easily and efficiently, freeing up more time to see additional patients and creating more top-line revenue for their health care systems.

#5: Streamlining the patient experience

When images are accessed from an enterprise imaging system, physicians and care teams can meet their patients' needs in a more timely manner. The "cost" of receiving care is reduced as patients spend less time waiting for appointments and exams, and more time doing what matters to them.

#6: Improving patient satisfaction

When patients have a better care experience, satisfaction levels are likely to increase. This can lead to higher HCAHPS scores and, ultimately, higher levels of reimbursement — which translates directly to the bottom line.

#7: Eliminating the use of portable media

The cost of burning images to a CD can be substantial. Added to the cost of media and time it takes to burn the images is the intangible cost to patients who have to wait for their care teams to load and read the study. With an enterprise imaging system, there is no need to supply patients with their medical images.

#8: Reducing security costs

Organizations operating several PACS or departmental imaging solutions may purchase and maintain security solutions for each. With an enterprise imaging system in place, these expenses can be reduced by limiting access to those individuals who need it to perform their jobs.

To learn how Watson Health's IBM iConnect® Enterprise Archive can bring greater efficiency to your organization, visit ibm.com/watson-health/learn/interoperability-in-healthcare

About Watson Health Imaging

Watson Health Imaging, a segment of IBM Watson Health, is a leading provider of innovative artificial intelligence, enterprise imaging and interoperability solutions that seek to advance healthcare. Its Merge branded enterprise imaging solutions facilitate the management, sharing and storage of billions of patient medical images.

With solutions that have been used by providers for more than 25 years, Watson Health Imaging is helping to reduce costs, improve efficiencies and enhance the quality of healthcare worldwide.

References

1. Reprinted with permission from Crain Communications, Inc., Copyright 2017
2. [Reducing Interruptions in the Reading Room: Standardized CT/MRI Contrast Orders. Journal of the American College of Radiology. 2015.](#)

© Copyright IBM Watson Health 2020
IBM Watson Health
75 Binney Street
Cambridge, MA 02142
Produced in the United States of America
February 2018

IBM, the IBM logo and ibm.com are trademarks of IBM Corporation in the United States, other countries or both. Merge and its respective logo are trademarks of Merge in the United States, other countries or both. All other company or product names are registered trademarks or trademarks of their respective companies. A current list of IBM trademarks is available on the Web at "Copyright and trademark information" at ibm.com/legal/copytrade.shtml

This document is current as of the initial date of publication and may be changed by IBM at any time. Not all offerings are available in every country in which IBM operates.

The information in this document is provided "as is" without any warranty, express or implied, including without any warranties of merchantability, fitness for a particular purpose and any warranty or condition of non-infringement. IBM products are warranted according to the terms and conditions of the agreements under which they are provided. The client is responsible for ensuring compliance with all applicable laws and regulations applicable to it. IBM does not provide legal advice or represent or warrant that its services or products will ensure that the client is in compliance with any law or regulation. Statement of Good Security Practices: IT system security involves protecting systems and information through prevention, detection and response to improper access from within and outside your enterprise. Improper access can result in information being altered, destroyed, misappropriated or misused or can result in damage to or misuse of your systems, including for use in attacks on others. No IT system or product should be considered completely secure and no single product, service or security measure can be completely effective in preventing improper use or access. IBM systems, products and services are designed to be part of a lawful, comprehensive security approach, which will necessarily involve additional operational procedures, and may require other systems, products or services to be most effective. IBM does not warrant that any systems, product or services are immune from, or will make your enterprise immune from, the malicious or illegal conduct of any party

ECM-15827 Rev 4.0