



Enhancing Patient Service and Increasing Billing Efficiency using ECM Solutions

Advocate BroMenn Medical Center integrates Open Text Fax Server and Microsoft SharePoint Server for digital, automated order processing

Industry

Healthcare

Customer



Open Text Partner



Business Challenges

- Patient dissatisfaction
- Delayed procedures
- Reduced staff productivity
- Denied insurance claims

Business Solution

Open Text Fax Server integrated with Microsoft SharePoint Server 2007; Open Text Fax Server Connector for SharePoint 2.0; Risetime Medical Fax Management Solution for SharePoint; Microsoft Silverlight

Business Benefits

- Enhanced patient service
- Improved billing efficiencies for financial stability
- Improved employee productivity

Advocate BroMenn Medical Center is a full-service, 221-bed hospital serving central Illinois for more than a century. It is staffed by more than 1,800 employees, 350 physicians and 800 volunteers.

Paperwork, fax machines, filing cabinets

“Every day we work to provide the best care we can to patients,” says Adam Young, Field Project Lead with the Information Systems Department of Advocate BroMenn Medical Center.

However, efficiency can be elusive when hospitals contend with outdated, manual processes. For example, incoming physician orders for radiology, cardiology, and surgical procedures previously arrived on fax machines. The Radiology Department alone receives up to 110 orders per day requesting MRIs, CT scans, ultrasounds, or x-rays. The paper orders, sometimes easy to misplace, were stored in an overstuffed double filing cabinet.

“When a patient reported to have an x-ray, we would have to find the order and enter information into the system at that time,” Young explains. Data entry and follow-up at the point of service caused delays. “Patients do not want to sit and wait in a hospital. It also didn’t leave time for our employees to complete eligibility. We could perform the procedure and later find out insurance wouldn’t pay for it. That is a mess nobody wants.”

Digital collaboration

BroMenn sped order processing through a pilot pre-certification program in the Radiology Department. The hospital further enhanced the system by working with Risetime, a Chicago-based solutions provider, to digitize and automate the management of physician orders with ECM solutions from Open Text and Microsoft. “Many of our clients select Open Text products because they are extremely reliable, partnered with Microsoft, and easily integrate with Microsoft SharePoint,” says Tonya Nicolaou, product manager with Risetime.

Paper-based pre-certification

A key measure of billing efficiency is “Discharged Not Final Billed,” or DNFB, the time between a patient’s discharge and final claim drop. BroMenn decreased DNFB by implementing a Radiology pre-certification pilot program. While it proved a qualified success, returning a 60 percent reduction in DNFB days, BroMenn recognized the need to replace labor-intensive processes. Orders continued to be received via fax machines then scanned into a medical information management application.





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Adam Young,
Field Project Lead

Paperless, automated order management

BroMenn found building blocks for an integrated, paperless order system already in use at the hospital. Open Text Fax Server (formerly RightFax), though in limited initial use, had been installed to reduce manual faxing. Employees had more time and experience with Microsoft SharePoint Server 2007, the content management system that enables users, including physicians, to collaborate in a web-based environment. Risetime, an Open Text Premier Partner and Microsoft Gold Certified Partner, recognized the opportunity to integrate the technologies for electronic, automated order processing using Open Text Fax Server Connector for SharePoint. The integrated solution, Medical Fax Management for SharePoint, allows BroMenn to efficiently manage physician orders and leverage existing IT investments.

Physician offices fax orders into unchanged department fax numbers, making the new solution transparent and allowing for a seamless transition. Orders are received electronically into Fax Server and moved automatically into SharePoint where users with appropriate security permissions have fast, secure access to images via the familiar web page. Young says, “To keep that same look and feel and use knowledge gained, we thought, ‘How can we not do this?’” He adds: “The piece of this that really shines is that we can take faxes received anywhere in the organization and aggregate them in a single location complete with auto-forwarding features. Faxes are not lost now. The information is digital and always available.”

Nicolaou notes: “By moving faxes from Open Text Fax Server to Microsoft SharePoint, BroMenn configured the Risetime solution and workflow to ensure consistent and secure handling of physician orders. Additionally, BroMenn took advantage of out-of-the-box

features of the Microsoft SharePoint platform to streamline existing processes and communications within the hospital.”

In combination with configuring out-of-the-box functionality, Risetime installed its custom product to make order pre-screening easier within the Microsoft SharePoint platform:

- Image Split—Separates multiple page faxes into the appropriate number of physician orders
- Viewer—Provides a side-by-side view of the fax image and the data entry fields within SharePoint
- Medical Fax Management Workflow—Creates multiple copies of fax images, and forwards images to the appropriate locations
- Purge—Enables configurable records retention policy for orders

Improved service, efficiencies

Results achieved with Risetime’s Medical Fax Management Solution support BroMenn’s overall mission for exceptional patient care and best healthcare practices. “What we’ve done with electronic orders and automated processes has made patients’ time with us more productive,” Young says. “We’re now able to provide the services patients need in a more efficient manner and with less hassle on the backend when the bill comes.” In fact, BroMenn is in the process of expanding the pre-screening order process to other areas of the hospital, including cardiology, surgical care, and lab.

Young offers advice to other hospitals dealing with paper-based, manual order processing. “If you don’t have a way to manage orders electronically now, Open Text Fax Server integrated with Microsoft SharePoint is one of the best ways to do it.”



Enhanced patient service

For scheduled exams, patients walk up and the technician is ready to go, Young says. He adds, "With our improved process, all work is completed to ensure the order is correct and in our medical system. Electronic faxing and online collaboration allow us to take care of those things on the front end before the patient arrives."

Improved billing efficiencies for financial stability

Previously, BroMenn had bills out longer than preferred, according to Young. "At the same time, we were often billing for things that weren't appropriate for the insurance provider. Now, we know through pre-certification that a provider will pay for the care. That's a big deal." Young describes softer cost-savings rather than hard dollar amounts. "We're not losing faxes; we're not running around at the last minute with patient waiting; and, we know the insurance company is going to pay. In fact, we've already received a portion of the payment from the patient."

Employee productivity

When fully implemented, the improved order process will benefit close to 150 BroMenn employees and, transparently, hundreds of physician offices. Faxes are available 24/7 via a simple search interface to all BroMenn departments within a couple minutes of transmission. Then, "instead of sending orders back to physician offices weeks later for completion, we're returning the files within 45 minutes," Young says. "The office worker is still there and recalls the case for fast turnaround."



Since 1984, Risetime has been serving the needs of organizations looking for a partner to provide business and technology solutions and services. Both an Open Text Premier Partner and Microsoft Gold Certified Partner, Risetime focuses on a wide range of IT consulting services as well as business process management, content management, and web solutions. www.risetime.com

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