



CONNECTING WITH COMPRESSUS

JANINE M. BRODA, Vice President and General Manager of Medical Imaging Solutions at Compressus, talks about the dire need to connect disparate systems to achieve interoperability, and how Compressus' solution is doing the job.

Interoperability seems to be the buzz word in healthcare IT these days. Why is the pressure to achieve Interoperability so prevalent now when people have been talking about connecting systems for years?

We've been talking about connecting systems together for years; however, interfacing and interoperability are two dramatically different concepts, interfacing or integration simply focuses on the capability of two systems, such as radiology information system (IRS) and picture archiving and communication system (PACS). To exchange messages based on either the DICOM or HL7 Standard. On the other hand, interoperability is the ability of two or more systems to exchange information where all systems can receive and understand the data as it was sent by the originating system. At a time when the demand for imaging services outpaces the radiologist workforce, only true interoperability address issues for patient safety, the need for optimal work flow, physician productivity and physician utilization.

Can you tell us Compressus' MEDxConnect technology is different? Why will Compressus achieve true interoperability when so many others have not?

First of all, MEDxConnect is not a health information system (HIS), RIS or PACS System. The MEDxConnect system acts as a communications hub, enabling various PACS, HIS, RIS and other data information systems to connect and communicate across the enterprise. Utilizing HL7 DICOM and other standards, the system helps control the flow of images, reports, messages, standard patient demographics and other important data for diagnosis and treatment planning of a patient between otherwise independent and disparate systems. As a result, doctors are able to work more efficiently, and it helps prevent mistakes, ensuring patient safety.

The MEDxConnect solution enables users to automatically prefetch all types of patient information, including historical and demographic data, prior reports and images, and physicians' notes from disparate information and imaging systems – irrespective of vendor – and distribute it to the appropriate physicians in real-time. The result is a robust and cost-effective solution that provides a seamless connection workflow, allowing full leveraging of physician subspecialty expertise, regardless of where across the network the physician may be located.

How has the desire to regionalize medicine through regional health information organizations (RHIOs), the shortage of physicians and the increase in the number of studies increase the pressure for better connectivity?

By definition a RHIO consists of cooperation institutions with the objective of improving the quality, safety and efficiency of health care delivery. The need for a system that connects and they automates all of the diagnostic processes is an absolute requirement if the goals of the RHIO are to be achieved. Physicians cannot be everywhere in an enterprise or RHIO. The need to get the right information including studies and historical data, to the right diagnostic physician is critical. As the demand of imaging services increases, brought on by increases in the number and size of studies, the ability to virtually connect the physician with the source of these studies is increasingly critical.

What impact can true interoperability have on the market?

There are many challenges facing the digital imaging market. Radiology group practices are merging there are increasing numbers of nighthawk and dayhawk services nationally and internationally, and the number and size of imaging studies are growing dramatically – all of these factors increase the need for seamless connectivity. True interoperability transforms technology from a gate limiter to a powerful efficient toll that enables physicians to provide consistent, efficient care with fewer manual steps and reduce chance of mistakes. A complete virtual view of all patient information no matter where the log in, increase physician utilization, increase productivity, address issues related to patient safety by ensuring access to all pertinent information and reduces costs by decreasing turnaround time to availability of diagnostic information to the referring physician.

What do you see as the next critical step in achieving true interoperability?

The client step is to make healthcare enterprises aware that there is a cost-effective solution to make them efficient and automated; in a word, interoperable. As healthcare organizations begin to realize how achieving true interoperability greatly improves the efficiency will increase. Interoperability will include the primary care physician and all specialties along the entire continuum of care. The next diagnostic specialties outside of diagnostic imaging with the same seamless connectivity to these systems as well. The potential is to create a healthcare enterprise that is totally electronic with a system like MEDxConnect as the centerpiece for all interoperability for all clinical and data applications.



JANINE M. BRODA, Vice President and General Manager of Medical Imaging Solutions at Compressus. She has more than 25 years of experience with the healthcare industry, as well as expertise in sales, marketing and customer service. She has managed major software and hardware acquisitions for large HMOs and GPOs, the military, and government agencies.