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# Considering Replacing Your PACS?

**STUART LONG**, Vice President of Healthcare Informatics, Philips Healthcare, discusses some of the compelling events that can impact the decision to complement or replace a poorly performing legacy PACS

**M**any institutions today are faced with the uncomfortable realization that their existing PACS is outdated and performing inadequately. Increased demand for rapid access to images combined with management of larger datasets, can severely tax a conventional system, particularly when that system is trying to satisfy a growing enterprise audience.

There are options available to make migration to a new system relatively painless.

## For institutions with legacy PACS, what are some of the events that might compel replacement?

We find users of older PACS face a number of tough issues. These systems, dependent on dedicated high-end networks, complex hardware configurations and antiquated 'jukebox' archiving technology, are fast becoming obsolete. Longer downtimes due to failing hardware, expensive upgrade or platform change requirements and delivery of large datasets outside radiology, are just a few of the challenges.

Timing is a big issue. Referring physicians are often forced to render decisions before they receive the images. Slow delivery times, over-extended network capacity and a significant increase in concurrent users may push your legacy system to the breaking point. Waiting for images wastes valuable time and costs money. And no one wants to wait.

Any of these situations should force a re-evaluation of your PACS. Even if you have one or two more years left on your existing contract, it's not too soon to investigate your alternatives.

## PACS replacement can be disruptive, complex and time consuming. How do you simplify the process?

At Philips we address PACS replacement from two angles. First, if you are tied to an existing contract, but eager to take advantage of current technology, we can help. We make it very affordable to start copying images as they are generated, archiving to both your existing PACS and to our iSite PACS. You start building a new on-site archive of images that is mirrored off-site and covered by our disaster protection guarantee.

Most importantly, while still under legacy contract, you can take advantage of iSite Enterprise and its ability to distribute diagnostic quality images and reports outside the radiology department, making all studies available to referring physicians quickly.

When your legacy contract expires, you simply add iSite Radiology. iSite Radiology is the leading open-platform, scalable radiology reading software with the ability to deploy and utilize numerous clinical and workflow applications. It completes your iSite PACS solution.

For those who must replace their PACS immediately, we install and manage every aspect of the iSite PACS solution. You get unlimited image server and archive storage space, unlimited software licenses for radiology workstations and web distribution, and unlimited modality connections, all in a cost effective package.

## Replacing a legacy PACS can be expensive with upfront costs and often little budget available.

### How does your solution address this issue?

It's a fact, that replacing a legacy PACS in the traditional manner can be quite expensive. You must consider servers, workstations and software. It's a significant capital investment. However, our approach to the whole process is uniquely different.

iSite PACS is based on a Fee-Per-Study service delivery model. This means there are minimal upfront expenditures and no future server hardware or software upgrade costs to deal with. You simply pay per study you perform – nothing else. You know exactly what it will cost per exam on a daily, monthly, and yearly basis. This future-safe business model allows your PACS to grow to any size, in a scalable fashion. It's a predictable model that does not discriminate against institutions with modest budgets.

## Are there any new modalities that are impacting legacy PACS image delivery to radiologists and/or referring physicians throughout the enterprise?

The answer is absolutely yes. It's no secret that modalities such as CT and MR are generating huge datasets. Legacy PACS just don't have the ability to move these larger datasets out among the enterprise effectively. And upgrading LAN/WAN network topology can be prohibitively expensive.

Philips solves this problem with iSyntax technology. iSyntax ensures rapid delivery of information to remote networked locations within and beyond your facility. Diagnostic-quality images arrive at workstations virtually instantaneously regardless of file size.

## CONSIDERING REPLACING YOUR PACS?



### What happens when your current PACS vendor informs you that your hardware is near 'end-of-life' or your system is moving to a new platform requiring a complete system upgrade?

Choose that moment to think carefully about your next move. Take the opportunity to survey the options available to you. Be certain your current vendor is going to provide a solid offering backed by a financially sound company position. Analyze current and prospective costs. Make sure the manufacturer will provide ongoing support and the tools to assure future growth. If your 'end-of-life' hardware upgrade requires a significant capital investment, you might want to consider an alternative.

Philips provides, maintains and grows the iSite PACS hardware. We deliver and manage the service, and guarantee performance. If you need more server horsepower and archive space, you get it. If it's not fast enough, we make it faster. We provide automatic hardware and software refreshes in our contract terms, so you're always current with the latest equipment. You pay nothing extra.

When your PACS vendor says they are providing you with a complete system upgrade, you need to ask, "Is that solution the best in the industry? Is it providing the best service to my radiologists and referring physicians? Does it permit me to grow my solution to scale with my business needs?"

### One compelling event could be a natural disaster, forcing a complete rebuilding of your PACS. **Please talk about better ways to address disaster recovery as opposed to shelf management of tapes.**

Rebuilding a PACS from archived tapes or DVDs is a very time consuming undertaking. Ideally, every time an image is archived locally, it is also archived to a secure off-site location. This helps assure disaster recovery.

Philips provides both local and off-site image archiving (in Dallas or San Jose) as part of our service delivery model. And if your hospital were to experience a disaster that wipes out everything, we guarantee fast redeployment.

We'll work with you to develop a fully integrated Disaster Recovery Plan so that in the case of a natural disaster, a plan is in place to quickly bring the entire distribution system back on-line. And with our continuous remote hardware and software proactive system check service, we monitor your system 24/7/365 to identify and rapidly respond to any issues that could potentially impact performance.

### You've discussed quite a few compelling events that might force consideration to replace a legacy PACS. **What we'd like to know is who drives the initiative to move forward?**

PACS efficiency affects the productivity and profitability of the hospital. So really, anyone who's involved in using or administering a PACS helps drive change.

Let's start with the radiology administrators. They're rated on the productivity of their department, the more examinations the better. They don't want

complaints from radiologists and referring physicians. A solution that runs smoothly, without much attention reflects well and reduces headaches.

Radiologists want to read as many cases as possible in a timely manner. They want access to all images and patient histories all the time, without waiting. And they want use of the best clinical and workflow applications available on the market.

Radiology Technologists want to be able to move the images very quickly through the system, review them for quality assurance and move on to the next case.

Outside the radiology department, Referring Physicians rely increasingly on PACS for immediate image access. Delivering diagnostic quality images and reports to them in a timely manner drives patient flow into the hospital, generating more radiology procedures. They are becoming more vocal when things go wrong.

The CIO is tasked with managing all IT applications. They want a PACS solution that runs itself. And that's what's different about iSite PACS. Philips manages all aspects of iSite PACS from hardware to software and support. With this proactive service the CIO can attend to other issues.

Finally, for the CFO, the person responsible for the dollars allotted, iSite PACS is a great option because it's a predictable model. The fixed Fee-per-Study means no end-of-life issues, and no hidden hardware, software, archive space, or storage costs.

What if an institution realizes their PACS needs to be replaced; however they are committed by contract to their vendor for one or two additional years.

### **How does your strategy address moving to a new solution while completing the contract obligation?**

We at Philips encourage you to take advantage of our phased approach to PACS replacement while maintaining your current contract.

Consider the fact that although you might be obligated to two more years with your current vendor, we can start building a repository of images with iVault during that time, preparing for the ultimate goal of complete migration at contract expiration. Using our PACS replacement strategy you can continue with your current PACS vendor through contract term and build your next generation iSite PACS with archived images, reports, and off-site backups, along with disaster recovery.

At the same time, we'll implement iSite Enterprise and reinvigorate your remote image distribution capabilities. You get both components while you continue to use your legacy PACS within the radiology department. **FH**

This cost effective, phased approach will prepare you for the end-of-contract switch to iSite Radiology and position you to take full advantage of one of the most innovative PACS solutions the industry has to offer.

For more information or to schedule a meeting with a PACS specialist, call 877-318-1808 or visit [www.philips.com/pacs](http://www.philips.com/pacs)

**STUART LONG**, Vice President of Marketing for Philips Healthcare Informatics, oversees all North America marketing relating to Radiology, Cardiology, Clinical Applications, Marketing Operations and Marketing Communications. He has 18 years experience in healthcare radiology with experience at Kodak Health Imaging, Fuji Medical Systems, AMICAS, and Agfa Healthcare.



## Set your sights on a better PACS solution.

Do you have a vision of where you want to take your PACS system? Looking for an easier way to get there? Then talk to Philips. Even if you're locked into a contract, our unique phased replacement strategy takes you seamlessly from where you are to where you want to be, with iSite PACS. Experience the freedom of prompt image retrieval, guaranteed uptime, and state-of-the-art imaging—starting today. Simply inspired by you. Call 877-318-1808 or visit [www.philips.com/pacs](http://www.philips.com/pacs)

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