



CoActiv Medical

Cloud-based VNA allows Mount Kisco Medical Group to meet future needs.

By John Basile, CRA, RT(R)(MR)

We didn't experience a single misstep throughout the migration of our entire DICOM archive to an offsite cloud-based vendor neutral solution—even though it contained four years' worth of studies, or about 7 terabytes. The archive has functioned flawlessly since going live more than a year ago and it interfaces seamlessly to our existing PACS.

When I keep reading about the ongoing problems many medical facilities experience with archive migration, I consider us lucky. But perhaps the difference is that we made an extremely judicious decision when selecting our migration and archive vendor CoActiv Medical, and they were a committed partner throughout the project.

As part of our search process, we examined a number of firms in depth, checked references carefully, agreed on project details in advance, and negotiated pricing. I recommend that any site considering a migration to cloud-based archiving do the same. The project came together flawlessly, and the actual transition to the new archive only took one week. Since the completion, our facility enjoys a trouble-free functioning radiology storage infrastructure that will support rapid growth long into the future.

Rapid growth

Mount Kisco Medical Group is a 250-physician, multi-specialty practice with 11 offices spread throughout the northern New York City suburbs and Upstate New York area. Our 13 staff radiologists cover virtually all imaging modalities with a volume of 3.5 TB annually. We had converted to a digital imaging environment in 2004 with a PACS from a major vendor, and by 2010, our onsite archive had run out of space.

THE EXAM-VAULT® QUAD-REDUNDANT cloud-based archive provides a high level of security and disaster protection by duplicating vital data in four geographically distributed locations. *image/courtesy CoActiv Medical*

Initially, we considered maintaining our storage system in house, but both the expense of ongoing hardware upgrades and hours of IT support were prohibitive. Early on, we decided that we wanted our chosen cloud archive provider also to provide the data migration itself. But when investigating vendors, we found that many firms offering migration could not, in fact, point to a large number of successful migration projects. They simply did not have the experience so crucial to anticipating migration difficulties and averting them in advance.

When focusing on the long-term archiving solution, we also felt CoActiv stood out for many reasons. Its EXAM-VAULT® Quad-Redundant cloud-based archive provides a high level of security and disaster protection by duplicating vital data in four geographically distributed locations. In addition, the company's vendor neutral archiving (VNA) capabilities were important to us because they provide our practice—not the PACS vendor—full image ownership. With our open standards CoActiv VNA, if we change our PACS solution in the future, we can simply unplug the current technology and plug in a new solution.

The company's fee structure based on per-exam pricing for the life of the study also proved to be extremely reasonable. Moreover, they could point to a large number of successful large-scale data migration projects, which was the decisive factor.

During the migration process, the CoActiv team was onsite from start to finish as we transferred all our images and went live exactly seven days later. Today, Mount Kisco's entire image archive of 12.5 TB resides on CoActiv's Quad-Redundant cloud. CoActiv first accessed all exams from our tapes containing older images and imported them to the offsite archive, followed by a migration of our more recent online exams. Image access was far easier than before, and we maintained ongoing access to all our images throughout the process. Our PACS database is updated on a real-time basis, and our PACS has instant access to all appropriate priors at any time.

For ongoing archive communication, CoActiv set up a permanent server at our primary practice location. A small image cache resides onsite, but all data are sent seamlessly to the CoActiv cloud for primary storage. Images can be retrieved from any of our 11 sites, or from any remote location, thanks to the sophisticated CoActiv archiving infrastructure and our existing enterprise network.

The archiving system is seamless and invisible to our staff. They are not responsible for any step in the process but always get what they need. Quite frankly, the archive is just one more piece of our IT system that is as solid as a rock and will keep us poised to meet all our future needs.

Mount Kisco's commitment to personalized health care delivery demands 24/7 image access with absolutely no downtime so that we can provide the highest level of immediate patient care. To help make that a reality, we needed a storage vendor that brought that same level of commitment and professionalism to the migration and management of our archive. We found that with CoActiv. ■

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