

Improving Control over Archive Migration and Consolidation

Bringing expertise in-house enables an IT services provider to improve customer delivery and reduce costs

When Nuvodia first started managing healthcare informatics and IT services for customers, it used a third party to help them manage PACS archive migration projects. This arrangement made it difficult for Nuvodia to control the archive migration and consolidation process for their clients. To address this issue, the Washington-based technology services company decided to bring the expertise and software tools required to migrate, scrub, and map DICOM data files in-house.

A Decision that Brought Control

This decision brought Nuvodia to Laurel Bridge Software, who allowed them to license the necessary software for their own use. “Now that we fully control all aspects of the migration project, we’re much clearer with our timing, the functionality we can commit to, and our pricing,” said Jeff Kelly, Nuvodia’s CIO. Since licensing the Exodus™ Migration and Consolidation Controller from Laurel Bridge, Nuvodia is able to better manage, execute, and address the migration

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needs of their customers even if they are complex archive consolidation projects that involve transformation of DICOM header data. Nuvodia is now able to identify problems earlier, making for a smoother migration experience. “We might come across a set of images that can’t be moved or we might find problems with DICOM tags,” Kelly said. They can quickly discuss it with the client, speaking more knowledgably about what they’re seeing, and they can explain what can be done to meet the client’s needs.

Customized options and reassurance

Data migration is a daunting concept to many of their clients, with some concerned that they could

lose patient data the way they might have lost contacts when getting a new phone. “We have found that the combination of our people and Laurel Bridge’s data orchestration tools puts our clients at ease.”, says Kelly. “Not only did we bring software tools in-house we also now have a larger bench of people with expertise in the area of archive migration and consolidation.” Nuvodia’s

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typical customers are community hospitals, specialty clinics and independent radiology practices; the added resources are very helpful as many of these customers have small IT departments.

Flexible Access to Historical Data

These healthcare organizations understand that access to historical image data is paramount to providing good patient care. Nuvodia also understands and values this and is able to show customers that they understand the importance of clinical quality, explain why data won’t be corrupted in the migration process, and describe how it will be accurately associated with the right patient in the new system. In addition to data accuracy, Nuvodia also appreciates the importance of being flexible. Sometimes facilities need to change IT management services quickly, particularly when a migration is going poorly; in these cases, Nuvodia is now able to quickly step in and implement a customized migration that meets their needs. “When we bring on a new customer, we’re able to offer them several options depending on the speed at which they want to change,” said Kelly. If their current contract is ending soon and there’s no time for a full migration, Nuvodia can set up an on-demand streaming migration, whereby historical data is repopulated newest to oldest using an ad hoc query trigger, such as a worklist, order, or other scheduling document.

A Personalized Approach: Peace of Mind

Just as Nuvodia personalizes the migration for each customer, it understands that even though smaller facilities and community hospitals typically have lower annual imaging volumes, they may often be more difficult to transition. A facility's small staff size often means the imaging IT staff isn't able to optimize how information is organized in the PACS because it simply doesn't have the resources that larger organizations may have. "Nuvodia can show them we have the expertise and insights needed to help them through this process because we have done it before. We find this really puts them at ease," said Kelly.

Data migration is getting more complex

No matter how many studies a medical imaging organization has in their archive or how organized they are, data migration has gotten more complex in recent years. This is typically caused by the ever-increasing size of the imaging archives and the evolving workflow needs of the organization. Many facilities are also on their second or third PACS. "Even a facility that does 40,000 studies a year has likely been running on PACS for 10+ years and might have an archive with 400,000-600,000 studies in it," Kelly said. Understandably, customers want to improve their imaging workflow and align data differences from past migrations or disparate archives as they move to the new consolidated archive.

Mergers & Acquisitions Bring Complexity

Recent mergers and acquisitions activities are also increasing the complexity of archive migration and consolidation projects. "Migration has historically been a bad word, and was only performed when changing PACS systems," said Brad Buhrman, a senior business analyst at Nuvodia. Increasingly, in an effort to benefit the delivery of care and reduce costs, archive consolidation efforts bring outside patient data into an existing environment. Unfortunately, outside patient data from another health system often has different DICOM data coding schemes and a range of unforeseen problems that must be dealt with during an archive consolidation project. One thing that Buhrman tells customers is that migrations rarely go according to plan. Expecting data anomalies in the database is important, being able to adapt to and address those anomalies with your migration tools is even more important.

More efficient, more responsive, and more effective

Nuvodia has found that bringing archive migration and consolidation expertise in-house by adopting the Laurel Bridge data-orchestration and workflow tools has made them more efficient, more responsive, and more effective. An additional benefit is they have been able to bring their cost of delivering these services down, which is good for them and their clients. As healthcare IT services providers, Nuvodia often sees that an imaging facility's growth strategy demands methods and tools to quickly and accurately import new patient study data into their environment. Licensing the Laurel Bridge tools and being responsive to shifting needs is important to them and to their customers, and migrations happen now with increasing frequency. The flexibility and robustness of the Laurel Bridge tool set now enables Nuvodia to clearly and competently address their customer's data migration and consolidation needs in a timely way.

About Laurel Bridge Software

Laurel Bridge Software provides enterprise imaging workflow solutions that solve complex, mission-critical imaging workflows that often arise when multiple business entities and their disparate clinical imaging systems must be unified. Our solutions reliably ensure new and historical DICOM imaging studies, HL7 messages, and non-DICOM objects are available to the clinical staff, at the point-of-care.

Laurel Bridge's imaging workflow solutions are implemented at thousands of healthcare facilities, teleradiology service providers, and radiology group practices in more than 35 countries, directly and through integration partners.

More Information: info@laurelbridge.com