

Success Story

Mobile X-Ray



A CASE STUDY

Quality Mobile X-Ray on the Road to Enhanced Profits and Patient Care



Orex CR images are sent wirelessly to the reading group — directly from the vehicle.

Mobile x-ray is really going places, says Paul D. Smith, vice president of Quality Mobile X-Ray, Inc. in Winston-Salem, NC. Advanced digital x-ray technology, remote communications and strong reimbursements, he believes, set the stage for an extremely profitable business. Since converting from analog x-ray to an ultra-fast, compact Orex computed radiography (CR) system with advanced wireless image transfer, Smith has seen his business accelerate dramatically with new patients and greater profits.

"In the mobile marketplace, the race is to the swiftest," he explains. "Our innovative Orex CR significantly boosts the number of exams we can complete in a day, in part by eliminating the need to return to our office to develop films. Faster turnaround means greater profits and a higher level of patient care. The right CR technology — high-quality, fast, reliable, compact and durable — is at the heart of our success."

An Excellent Opportunity

A sophisticated and experienced entrepreneur, Smith started looking at purchasing Quality Mobile X-Ray in early 2004. At that time, Quality's vans relied on slow, inconvenient analog technology and the company was not turning a profit. Under the old service delivery model, after arriving onsite and taking a number of films, vans returned to the main office, where the films were developed, run through a film digitizer and finally sent over analog phone lines to a radiology reading service. And to make matters worse, if any images did not pass Q/C, the van had to return to the site to re-image the same patients, and the process started all over again. Additionally, there was the film storage problem — the large climate-controlled space Quality was forced to maintain for film filing was another drain on profits.

A Better Way to X-Ray

Undaunted, Smith purchased the company and immediately set out to develop fast-paced digital x-ray delivery based on the latest technologies. Working with Blue Ridge X-Ray, an imaging specialty distributor located in North Carolina, he looked at a range of digital x-ray acquisition devices.

"We felt Orex's advanced CR technology was a terrific fit for our business," says Smith, pointing out that the unit offered outstanding image quality and at the same time was extremely affordable compared to competing CR manufacturers. Orex technology also was durable, protecting his investment and ensuring reliability in even the most stressful mobile conditions. "We knew the US military had stress-tested Orex and deployed over 220 units in Iraq, Afghanistan and other mobile applications," he says. "You couldn't ask for better testimony to its ability to perform in a challenging environment."

WIRELESS
TRANSMISSION

COMPACT SIZE

RUGGED DESIGN



The Orex CR processes digital images taken on board or at the bedside.

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Orex – A Complete Digital System

A complete digital imaging system, Orex CR combines a filmless laser scanner, erasable phosphor plates & cassettes and a diagnostic workstation with DICOM software. Its compact size and 88 pound weight were an important benefit that supported Quality's business model of using Honda Elements rather than more costly vans to drive from site to site. The Orex CR product line includes scanners with 20, 41, 60 and 75 plates-per-hour speed to meet a full range of imaging needs and budgets. For Paul Smith, Orex CR was the clear technology choice.



The Orex CR system — ready to roll in a Quality Mobile X-Ray vehicle.

Wireless – The Way of the Future

The first wireless mobile x-ray business in the state of North Carolina, Quality's six mobile units service 100 area nursing homes and 50 assisted living facilities with rapid, accurate diagnosis. On board the mobile units, Orex CRs send out high-resolution diagnostic images over wireless networks to achieve an ultra-fast two-hour exam turnaround time, from arrival onsite until the initial response from the radiology group. "It's a win-win situation for everyone involved," says Smith. "What used to take over eight hours now takes only two. Transporting patients to the hospital alone generally takes two hours, and at that point the imaging process would just be starting without our mobile service."

A Streamlined Process

When Quality's van pulls up to a facility, patients are either brought on board for imaging or a mobile x-ray unit is brought to the bedside. While still onsite, the single technologist staffing the van enters the patient data into a laptop computer, scans the cassettes with the Orex CR and uses the image review software for an immediate Q/C check. "Onsite Q/C by itself dramatically boosts efficiency," comments Smith. "If needed, we can re-image the patient in a matter of minutes. Alternatively, the van would have to come back later in the day, wasting time and delaying care."

Once images have been checked, the technologist uses Orex's DICOM 3.0 software to transmit images wirelessly to Quality X-ray's main office to be archived, and burns images to a CD to accompany patients if they need to be sent to the hospital. Then the Quality mobile unit is on its way to the next site, keeping a timely, efficient schedule. "Clients know just when to expect us and patients can be ready," says Smith. "This high level of service has been fantastic for referral business."

After secure archiving at the office, images are automatically sent digitally to Quality's contracted radiology group. Shortly thereafter, the group faxes the office a "wet read" if findings are negative or calls the elder care facility personally if the findings are positive so patients can be transported to the local hospital. Later, Quality faxes over a final radiology report as soon as it is received from the radiologists.

Orex – A Model for Modern Mobile Success

With a carefully developed plan for strategic growth, Quality plans to add three to four more vans next year as it begins expansion throughout the entire state. According to Smith, Quality X-Ray is currently forging agreements with other businesses for the operation of independently owned vans delivering x-ray services under the Quality Mobile X-Ray umbrella. "All our vans, whether owned and operated in-house or independently, will operate with the same technology model, using Orex's equipment," confirms Smith. After all, you can't argue with success.



Orex Computed Radiography Inc.
2000 Commonwealth Ave, Suite 200
Auburndale, MA 02466
Toll free: 888 844 7775
Tel: 617 244 9000
Fax: 617 244 9020
salesusa@orex-cr.com