

Intelerad Solutions Enable Transformational Change for Independent Reading Group



Valley Radiology Delivers Superior Service & Patient Care Using IntelePACS®, InteleConnect® & Various Intelerad Modules

The ability to maintain a competitive edge in the field of radiology is difficult for small to medium-sized reading groups that are struggling to maintain their independence. A North Carolina group, however, successfully sought and achieved a winning strategy to overcome this challenge.

About Valley Radiology

Valley Radiology of Fayetteville, North Carolina has been providing exceptional radiology services to patients throughout the region for more than half a century. Today, with an annual volume of approximately 500,000 studies, Valley Radiology has more than two dozen radiologists working across three health systems, spanning imaging centers, clinics, and hospitals.

Intelerad Instrumental for Maintaining Independence

Dr. Harry Ameredes, Valley Radiology President, credits the longtime relationship with Intelerad Medical Systems™ for enabling the practice to remain an independent player in an environment that is becoming increasingly dominated by large national radiology reading corporations.

“Particularly for a group our size, we want to stay independent,” Ameredes said. “The trend in radiology has been, in what people in the industry are calling corporatization – large corporations buying up smaller radiology practices.”

Independence allows Valley Radiology to preserve its paramount focus on providing unmatched service and patient care.

Sustainability Required Single Reading Environment

It can be very challenging, and often impossible, for smaller radiology practices to compete in this era of corporatization. For more than a decade, Intelerad’s superior technology, comprehensive product line, and unmatched support have been key to securing and strengthening Valley Radiology as an independent reading group.

In 2008, the group was facing mounting challenges. Supporting diverse reading environments across various hospitals, imaging centers, clinics, and other locations served by the practice had become too inefficient and complex.

New System Must Handle Complexity & Growing Volume

“In our situation, prior to adopting Intelera, we were reading from three different hospital systems, three different RIS/PACS systems, and three different voice recognition systems,” said Ameredes. “We were doing our best to stay independent, stay profitable, and continue to provide high-quality care, but it just was not sustainable.”

Compounding those struggles were the high volume and complexity of studies coming in. “We were seeing cases come across with thousands of images each, that we were expected to read from multiple facilities in a timely manner,” Ameredes said. “Getting those results turned around quickly was a huge challenge.”

Comprehensive Vetting & Selection Process

“We went out looking for something that would pull everything together under one umbrella so that we could have better insight into what was going on and have control over all of it,” said Ted Best, Senior Systems Engineer for Valley Radiology. “That’s the path that led us to select Intelera as our PACS vendor more than a decade ago.”

The quest for a single reading environment started when Dr. Ameredes reviewed the just-published 2007/2008 KLAS report for ambulatory PACS and instructed his team to do an evaluation of about 15 different systems. During a comprehensive cross-comparison and analysis of price, functionality, and feature set, the list was winnowed. At the end of the two-year

process, there was only one system that met the practice’s rigorous vetting criteria – InteleraPACS®.

Additional Intelera Solutions Increase Advantage

Today, as a result of the success with InteleraPACS, Valley Radiology has expanded its adoption of Intelera solutions to enhance and extend its superior service offerings. The practice is able to provide its referring physicians and clinicians secure, centralized, real-time access to patient orders, images, and reports via Intelera’s clinical portal, InteleraConnect® EV.

Additional Intelera modules for specialized services have also been deployed. Valley Radiology uses Intelera Breast Imaging™, which integrates mammography and tomosynthesis reading into existing workflows, with powerful tools, using existing hardware. This boosts radiologist productivity, while avoiding costly investment in specialized workstations.

Also in use is Intelera Image Fusion™, a suite of powerful, interactive visualization tools that enable instant image registration, segmentation and side-by-side PET and CT study comparisons for quantitative tracking across different modalities.

On the operational side, Valley Radiology has deployed Intelera Analytics™, which offers automated dashboards and tailored reports that leverage metrics sourced in real-time, directly from InteleraPACS. This data provides instant and comprehensive operational insight to inform business optimizations, leading to more productivity and quality gains.

Dramatic, Far-Reaching Benefits

At Valley Radiology, the selection of Intelera as a technology partner has had far-reaching impact and dramatic benefit – for the practice and the radiologists, as well as the referrers, facilities, and the patients they serve.

The ability to read from a single environment across a diverse set of systems and facilities, using the powerful productivity tools in InteleraPACS and its modules, makes everyone happy. “The turnaround of reports, which had previously been measured in days, dropped to just hours. And the quality of life for our radiologists has taken an incalculable jump for the better,” Best said.

New Levels of Patient Care

The master patient index across all the facilities for which the practice reads has been another factor contributing to the huge leap in patient care that Intelera solutions have enabled. In addition, the billing process has been improved and streamlined, with better ability to address and resolve discrepancies.

“Adopting Intelera solutions has affected every single piece of the practice in this really huge, positive way,” said Best. “The change is so dramatic.”

Lasting Partnership Yields Continuous Benefit

Another major value of the 2008 vendor choice is the fact that Intelera has grown right alongside Valley Radiology, incorporating new capabilities and adding new products as the industry and the technology evolve. “Having the same supportive technology partner throughout the history of making these instrumental changes is huge,” Best said.

As Valley Radiology continues to strengthen its position as an independent provider of superior radiology services, despite the current trend toward conglomerates, the role that Intelera’s technology has played is never far from Best’s mind. “That was the most exhaustive vendor selection process I’ve ever been through, but it was worth it,” he said. “We are extremely happy with our decision and our ongoing relationship.”

About Intelera

Intelera is a leader in enterprise workflows, specializing in diagnostic viewing, reporting, and collaboration solutions for hospitals, imaging centers and reading groups. Renowned for their innovative features and functionality, Intelera solutions, such as InteleraViewer™ and InteleraOne™ XE, increase productivity and streamline workflow by overcoming technical barriers in distributed and complex environments. Highly scalable, flexible and robust, Intelera’s solutions offer high performance and industry leading customer service and support. For more information, visit www.intelera.com.