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Imaging Center Gets Remote Connectivity and Rapid Delivery

http://www.imageeconomics.com/issues/articles/2008-04_06.asp#4

When diagnostic imaging service provider River Radiology, based in New York's Hudson Valley, made the decision in November 2006 to expand its MRI capabilities to patients at a hospital 2 miles away, time was a key factor in finding the connectivity solution that linked the two facilities.

More specifically, the imaging center considered not only the uptime of scans, but also the amount of time it would take a system to be installed in time for a January 1 launch date.

Unimpressed by limited and costly options that barely met bandwidth requirements, River Radiology ultimately discovered that an AR60 gigabit wireless system from BridgeWave Communications would solve its high-speed network needs and, even better, be ready to run by the deadline. "Connectivity between the two sites is completely transparent; you can't tell if an image originated 200 feet down the hall or 2 miles across town," said Alice Omichi, IT systems and PACS administrator for River Radiology. "With BridgeWave, we have ample network capacity for at least the next decade, reinforcing River Radiology's ability to deliver diagnostic services and imaging reports in a timely manner while providing extremely responsive, top-quality patient care."

Despite unfavorable weather conditions, wireless network solutions provider Webjogger, of Tivoli, NY, braved the snow and worked diligently to install an antenna on the hospital's roof. They also traversed the hospital's complicated infrastructure to put in internal fiber runs in the building. The radio was installed in a single afternoon, and since implementation 13 months ago, Omichi is happy to say that there has been zero downtime.

The narrow antenna beam width on BridgeWave's GigE wireless link offers enhanced security and interference immunity. Moreover, the AR60, which has exclusive AdaptRateT capability, momentarily switches transmission from GigE to 100 Mbps data rates during episodes of intense downpours in order to maintain "five nines" network uptime. The ultralow latency on the BridgeWave high-capacity, secure link allowed River Radiology to add VoIP services between the two imaging centers.

Due to its speed and reliability, and the ability to exhibit a degree of control over the system without waiting for a phone company to repair the situation, the BridgeWave solution has found satisfied customers and a happy home in River Radiology. The center, which offers a complete range of radiologic services such as bone densitometry, CT, digital mammography, MRI, nuclear medicine, ultrasound, and x-rays, has been able to consistently deliver and receive its all-digital PACS files speedily and securely, Omichi said.

"Our turnaround time for the radiologist to read it or referring physicians to get results is cut by more than 50% than if we had a conventional method of doing this," Omichi said.