vRad Explains a New Teleradiology Model

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vRad’s cloud-based teleradiology alliance model helps radiologists stay put, perform faster services, access subspecialists more easily.

Traditionally, teleradiology has either worked as an after-hours service for radiology practices or as a competitor to them. Hospital systems and others have proven all-too-willing to consider radiology a bit of a commodity and ship readings off, hurting local providers.

vRad thinks it offers a third path, “a different practice model from what we have seen previously,” in the words of Les Mann, vice president of marketing for the company. Under vRad’s new “alliance” model, vRad acquires radiology practices, but leaves the local providers on site. “The strength of the local practice is critical…to our success in that market,” Mann declared. “It’s the combination of the radiologists on-site and in the cloud that makes the difference.”

In other words, local providers agree to be acquired by vRad in exchange for the ability vRad’s cloud-based infrastructure gives them to perform more services faster and provide more access to subspecialists than they could do alone. With access to other radiologists quickly and online, they can do more, faster.

It makes the practice and its services “the opposite of a commodity,” said Mann. Readings are more timely and efficient. The economies of scale bring improved services and lower costs. And it’s not an old-fashioned merger and acquisition strategy, like we saw with practice management companies in the early ’90s, he insisted. It’s a “willful partnership.”

Acquired providers generally are compensated based on productivity, Mann added.

vRad launched this strategy in August 2011, with acquisition of New York Radiology Alliance, and deepened it with a September 2011 acquisition of Diagnostic Imaging Inc. (a radiology practice, no relation to this Web site).

vRad will make the new teleradiology model a centerpiece of its conversations at RSNA 2011.

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