

Panasonic Scanners Bring Medical Record Portability Into 21st Century

KV-S2046C units replace microfilm cameras for more productivity, accuracy and speed

Task: Medical record acquisition, storage, and transportation between doctors, insurance companies, attorneys, therapists and related professionals,

Challenge: Conversion from microfilm photography of patient records to collecting records via digital scanner.

Solution: Deployment of 80 Panasonic KV-S2046 full-color duplex scanners to field agents.

Decision-Making Factor: BACTES conducted head-to-head lab tests of scanners from every major manufacturer. After the KV-S2046C won the lab competition, it got rave reviews from agents in a 90-day field test.

Impact: Substantial cost savings, more than 20 percent increase in agent productivity, elimination of repeat calls on clients, records transmitted to requestors in two-thirds less time.

User Summation: "Some scanners did well on some things, but not as well on others. The Panasonic KV-S2046C did very well on everything. It did everything we put in front of it. The bundled image-capturing software was fantastic, the color dropout capability was excellent ... it seems to have a lot magic in it," BACTES CIO Ray Johnston.

BACTES Turns To Panasonic To Meet Demand For Medical-Record Portability KV-S2046C Scanners Up Productivity, Accuracy, and Speed While Cutting Costs

Never before has the issue of medical-record portability reached such a critical mass.

At the same time that HMOs and other insurance carriers were demanding that primary-care "gate keepers" take on a new role as a hub for routing patients to specialists and medical-testing facilities, HIPAA and other privacy laws were enmeshing the release and transportation of medical records from one care provider to another in unprecedented amounts of red tape.

For BACTES, a major enabler of medical record storage and transportation between doctors, insurance companies, attorneys, therapists and related professionals, their analog model -- sending agents to medical offices to photograph records with microfilm cameras -- could no longer keep up with the times.

"We could never tell what the agents had until the film had been sent back to the office and processed," said Ray Johnston, BACTES' Chief Information Officer. "Sometimes the exposure would be off and part of the document was illegible, sometimes part of the document had been cut off. We used to have to do a tremendous amount of reshooting, which tied up agents and cost a fortune."

Though BACTES managers knew they needed a better methodology for collecting copies of medical records at the source, they did not rush blindly into the digital age.

"The first thing we decided to do was to set up our own standards for scanners," Johnston said. "Once we completed the review to determine the features we needed, we started looking at various brands.

"We created standard test documents and started evaluating models, eliminating scanners for such things as paper-handling errors, pick-up color changes, poor reproduction of handwriting, inability to handle a mixed batch of paper sizes ... things like that.

"Some scanners did well on some things, but not as well on others," Johnston said. "The Panasonic KV-S2046C did very well on everything, it did everything we put in front of it. The bundled image-capturing software was fantastic, the color dropout capability was excellent ... it seems to have a lot of magic in it."

Having found Panasonic scanners superior to the competition in what could be termed "laboratory tests," BACTES asked ten of its agents to field test the KV-S2046C for 90 days.

"They came back and said it was fantastic," Johnston said.

With 80 KV-S2046Cs scanners now in daily service, BACTES has found that Panasonic scanners lead the field in more than cost-effectiveness and performance.

"We have been incredibly happy with the training support we've gotten from Panasonic and with their advanced-replacement program," says Johnston. "They put all our field people in a database and when an agent calls in, they immediately know who it is and work with the agent on a one to one basis to resolve whatever the issue is. It's one of the industry's greatest hotlines."

BACTES switch to Panasonic has been a victory for the company, which is saving thousands of dollars a month in film, processing, and mailing costs; its agents, whose productivity has increased an equivalent of almost two hours a day; and its clients, who are no longer having to disrupt office routines to produce records for reshoots

Most of all, the decision to go Panasonic is a major victory for the tens of thousands of medical patients whose records now arrive at their intended destinations with unprecedented speed and precision.

###

ABOUT PANASONIC

In the United States, Panasonic Digital Document Company, a unit of Panasonic Corporation of North America, markets a broad line of digital imaging systems, computer peripherals and office system products designed specifically for business use. Products available include fax and Internet fax machines, digital copiers, network multifunction devices, document management systems, scanners, electronic whiteboards, color laser printers and impact printers. Headquartered in Secaucus, NJ, Panasonic Corporation of North America is the principal North American subsidiary of Matsushita Electric Industrial Co., Ltd. (NYSE: MC) of Osaka, Japan. For more information, visit <http://www.panasonic.com/office>.

All brand names are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of their respective companies.