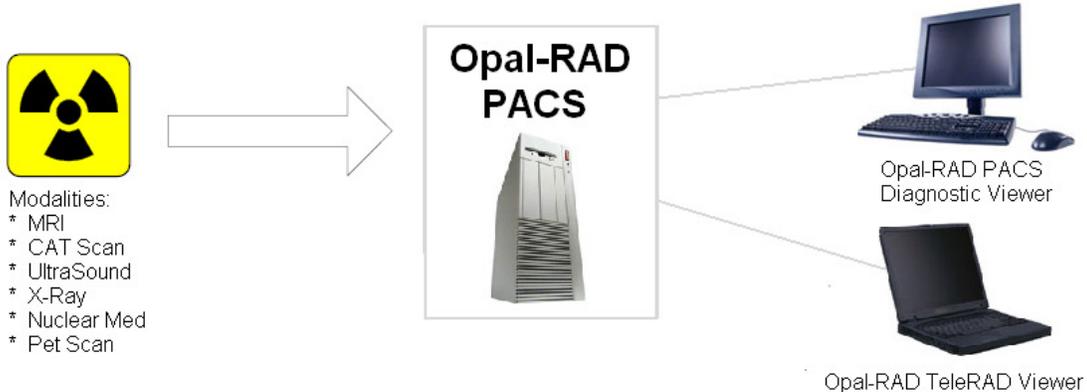


What is a PACS, Why do I need one, and How do I get One?



What is a PACS?

PACS stands for Picture Archiving and Communications System, a package of software whereby images are stored and transmitted between computers. A PACS helps to bring radiology into the digital era.



Medical images are transferred from the modality into the Opal-RAD PACS. Doctors read the exam from connected Opal-RAD Viewer workstations or on mobile TeleRAD viewer laptops for doctors on the go. Patient care is benefited by a swift and enhanced read of the images, without waiting for film to be processed, sorted, and hung.

Why do I need Viztek Inc.'s Opal-RAD PACS?

Opal-RAD PACS, developed by Viztek, Inc. in Jacksonville, Florida, provides the means to implement digital radiology. This cuts costs, streamlines the process, and enables the sharing of information between doctors at a rapid pace.

First, cutting costs...



Based on industry standards, it is considered that every exam costs an institution between \$15 and \$18. Note that this cost is not all "hard cost" (i.e., film, chemicals, etc.). This also takes into account the employee time to process, check (and at times reprocess), hang, and remove films, the storage of film (which includes the physical space needed and also the added employee time of maintaining accurate archival records), and movement of film from center to center (which occurs by hand, typically incurring courier fees).

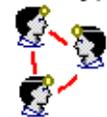
With Opal-RAD, medical images are stored electronically in the PACS system, eliminating the need for physical storage space of film. Exams are viewed on a computer screen which eliminates the need to process and hang film, while also introducing a suite of image manipulation tools (such as windowing, zoom, and annotations) not available before with plain film.

Second, streamlining the process...



With the Opal-RAD PACS, it is possible to know immediately whether the scanning procedure was a success or if factors such as Patient movement, invalid calibration, or improper technique require a repeat of the scan. With film the technologist must wait for completion of the processing before she can check for proper scanning, which requires the Patient to wait longer than necessary. It now becomes possible to increase the Patient workflow and exam throughput.

Finally, sharing information between doctors...



The realm of digital radiology allows more efficient sharing of exams by delivering the exams faster and eliminating associated courier costs. Opal-RAD is capable of transmitting exams to another site's PACS via high-speed network (or even common phone lines), ready for the remote doctor to view in minutes. Doctors on both sides can then instantly open the exam and compare impressions. The other benefit to this electronic sharing is the elimination of courier fees and long delays associated with transporting film.

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What makes all this possible?

A standard called "DICOM" (Digital Imaging and Communications in Medicine), created in 1996, dictates the format of medical images in a PACS and how such images should be handled and transferred between PACS. Opal-RAD is fully DICOM compliant, able to "talk" to, transfer exams between, and display images from any other vendor's DICOM compliant PACS. Regardless of what PACS your colleagues or business partners purchase, you can be assured that your investment in the Opal-RAD PACS will be valid for many years to come.

How do I get Opal-RAD PACS?

There are two approaches towards obtaining the Opal-RAD PACS:

1. Equip the hospital with a digital topology, and pay for the system by a set fee per exam. This is often called "per shot" or "per study" charging. The benefit of this approach is twofold: an initial outlay of cash that is only a fraction of the full system cost, plus the flexibility to discontinue use of the system in the future without having purchased the entire system up front.
2. The hospital purchases the entire system outright, making an investment that will break even within a year to a few years due to the reduction in costs that it affords. After this initial period, the system continues to bring in a profit via the reduction in costs and the increase in workflow afforded by a more efficient and streamlined process.

To discuss your Opal-RAD PACS needs please contact your local Viztek representative or the Viztek, Inc. Sales Department.

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