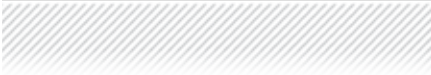


# The Complete Merge Solution

*Regional Medical Imaging, P.C. | Flint, MI*



## + CUSTOMER PROFILE

With five locations, Regional Medical Imaging (RMI), located in Flint, Michigan, has served Mid-Michigan for over 20 years with Board Certified Radiologists and a certified and registered staff whose goal is to continue to meet the fast changing world of imaging and technology.

## CUSTOMER CHALLENGE

RMI wanted to increase productivity by optimizing workflow.

## SUCCESS WITH MERGE

All scheduling is done electronically, all exams and associated paperwork are a click away via Merge PACS™ and Merge Documents™, and RMI continues to enjoy excellent revenue cycle management as a result of Merge Financials™.

## BENEFITS

Global scheduling module informs staffing decisions

Improved service to patients and referring physicians

Robust document management system

Quicker turnaround on account receivables

Maximum reading productivity for staff radiologists, regardless of imaging location

Facing reimbursement cuts in 2007, Regional Medical Imaging (RMI) would have to be nimble. In order to survive and thrive, RMI chose a single-vendor relationship with Merge that would increase productivity throughout the entire network.

## Challenge

Every night at 5 o'clock, Jill Fielder, RIS administrator at RMI, had to scramble to schedule all the exams for the next day — and she did this across five facilities spread throughout Flint, Michigan, and the surrounding area.

Since their imaging IT solutions did not provide a global view of their workflow, RMI faced an unbalanced workload between sites and required a radiologist to be present at each location, regardless of reading volume. Each site maintained its own scheduling books, which required a flurry of phone calls between locations to set up appointments and ensure proper staffing.

Patient film jackets and other patient paperwork had to be moved manually between locations on a case-by-case basis — and, if these materials were not attached to the film jacket, they were not reviewed. Stat exams required an RMI employee to drive a case to another office immediately.

With the acquisition of large volume output modalities such as MR and Multi-Slice CT, the need for an overall centralized digital solution became a necessity if RMI was going to reach their growth objectives. RMI's success was a Catch-22. The more studies they did, the harder it was to manage their workflow, which created inefficiencies in their practice.

Impending reimbursement cuts in 2007, which would dig into the practice's bottom line by an average of 30 percent, forced RMI to make a change.

## Solution

Because of the competitive environment, Randy Hicks, MD, MBA, radiologist and owner of RMI, wanted to focus on growth opportunities with their top 200 referring physicians. As with many ambulatory imaging centers, these 200 doctors represented the top 10 percent of RMI's referring physicians, who in turn brought in about 80 to 90 percent of RMI's business.

In order to distinguish RMI from its competitors, Dr. Hicks sought to provide referring physicians with same-day imaging availability to patients — despite a schedule that was typically booked.



# Practice boosts ambulatory productivity to beat DRA cuts.

+ *"Our referring physicians love us. We can give them any data they want — and they will not refer patients anywhere else."*

Randy Hicks, MD,  
MBA Radiologist & Owner,  
Regional Medical Imaging

RMI could only accomplish this aggressive goal by increasing productivity throughout the entire network, while maintaining cost reduction initiatives already in place.

To realize this goal — and to eliminate integration issues between disparate software providers — RMI decided to partner with a single vendor and brought Merge on board.

## Benefits

- Global scheduling via Merge RIS informs staffing decisions;
- Patients' insurance cards and photo identification are scanned into Merge Documents™ and are available everywhere immediately;
- During the exam, the technologist scans lab reports or other materials into Merge Documents in order to complete the patient dossier;
- The complete digital patient folder has dramatically improved billing accuracy, as well as the receivable days outstanding;
- Merge's RealTime Worklist offers maximum reading productivity to the 10 staff radiologists, regardless of the physical imaging location;
- Merge's Forever Priors, all archived images online at all times, eliminates the need to do pre-fetching and send studies around the network;
- Because of Merge PACS™ useful administrative tools, new modalities and workstations are easily added to the network by the System Administrator;
- All system support is done remotely and problems are easily resolved over the phone, which represents a huge cost savings.

## End-To-End Solution

"Our referring physicians love us," says Dr. Hicks. "We can give them any data they want — and they will not refer patients anywhere else."

Since the Merge system-wide implementation, which helped RMI achieve its goal of delivering same-day reports, the facility has received rave reviews from their referring physicians. RMI can also run up-to-the-minute reports to get a real time snapshot of workflow.

Most importantly, RMI predicts that it will effectively offset any negative DRA impact as a result of realized productivity gains from the Merge technology solution. "It would be difficult to manage 100 employees without Merge," says Jill Fielder.

Ten FTE reductions have been realized, which allows for cost savings and redeployment of personnel. At the same time, overall productivity has increased by 20 percent as a direct result of the centralized scheduling and reading models.

## The Merge Innovation

As a result of its single-vendor relationship with Merge, RMI now finds itself in a strategically sound position to head off DRA reimbursement cuts. RMI realizes superior integration between products, which leads to tremendous efficiencies throughout the entire operation. Merge gains a partner deeply committed to the market it serves and an ambulatory setting to test new products and services. As your facility transitions from a manual, film-based image workflow process to a digital environment, there are many things to consider and do to prepare for the positive change that comes with your PACS solution. Listed below are common actions that PACS and IT administrators can do to help ensure an efficient implementation.

200 East Randolph Street  
24th Floor  
Chicago, IL 60601  
877.446.3743 x3  
[www.merge.com](http://www.merge.com)

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