

RCI: Leveraging FlyDoc to bring visibility, speed and efficiency to medical document delivery processes



As Iowa's largest radiology group, with over 70 years of experience, Radiology Consultants of Iowa (RCI) provides insight and expertise to physicians and patients across Eastern Iowa. Our board-certified radiologists have a broad scope of subspecialties, giving you access to the most advanced knowledge and techniques under one roof.

Whether you're visiting our Imaging Center for a routine exam, consulting our Vein & Interventional Clinic for a more advanced procedure, or are a patient at a hospital affiliate, you and your doctor can count on RCI for high-quality radiology services and compassionate care.

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What is FlyDoc?

FlyDoc is an on-demand service offered by Esker that enables organizations to send invoices and other business documents via email, fax or postal mail directly from user desktops and existing applications.

FlyDoc benefits:

- Save time and money
- More flexible than a mail house
- Speed up invoicing time
- Mail from desktop applications

Radiology Consultants of Iowa (RCI) is a professional radiology company that also offers technical services to its hospital partners, including digital image storage and management. To provide better service to its partners, RCI leveraged the Esker FlyDoc service to achieve faster, more reliable document delivery and improved customer service.

Addressing the issues

In working with smaller, rural hospital partners who still relied on paper, RCI developed its own electronic application for entering radiology orders to share with them. While successful, the app lacked some of the sophisticated features found in commercial radiology information systems (RIS) such as "report distribution," which ensures that after a report is completed, filed and signed by a doctor it is distributed via fax to the ordering physician office.

"Previously, the doctors would dictate the report and print the document to the department," said Joe Moore, Chief Information Officer at Radiology Consultants of Iowa. "However, the hospital would then have to manually fax the report to all the physicians — a huge time-waster to partners who were using our RIS product."

Searching for a solution

The initial goal for RCI quickly became finding an integrated solution to improve its RIS product by offering automated fax reports to ordering physicians. The key was doing so without requiring a huge overhaul of the existing infrastructure or a major investment in new overhead.

As a name he'd heard before with a strong reputation in automated fax solutions, Esker soon jumped to the top of Moore's list. "Originally, I was looking for traditional fax software," said Moore, "but when I found the Esker FlyDoc service the whole game changed. I didn't need to investigate any further."

“We were able to implement the Web API component of FlyDoc and fax-enable our RIS app without all the associated headaches and costs that go along with adding all the extra software.”

Joe Moore ▪ Chief Information Officer ▪ Radiology Consultants of Iowa

Maximizing document delivery with FlyDoc

Phase 1 — Automated fax distribution

Since RCI had developed the original application itself, the plan was to subsequently implement its own fax server, modem and analog lines. The discovery of FlyDoc had changed all that. "We were able to implement the Web API component of FlyDoc and fax-enable our RIS app without all the associated headaches and costs that go along with adding all the extra software," said Moore.

Phase 2 — Desktop faxing

In addition to solving the automated fax distribution issue, RCI saw an opportunity in “desktop faxing” as a solution for dealing with unusual workflow processes with local clinics that didn’t have the capabilities to do imaging like a hospital or radiology practice. RCI leveraged the fax service, but instead of using it through the Web API, utilized the desktop fax capability of FlyDoc.

“This was a much smaller initiative,” said Moore, “but still helped us solve a problem in an effective way without having to deal with the responsibility of adding servers, phone lines and fax machines.”

We feel fortunate that RCI introduced us to what Esker can do. We look forward to expanding our relationship and business initiatives to other sites.

Tim Ninke ■ Partner with RCI ■ elnformatics

Phase 3 — SMTP to fax

Later, RCI pursued a larger initiative to modernize its billing system to support current and foreseeable future challenges by replacing its existing system with MedInformatix, an electronic charting application developed by elnformatics™.

“Once we decided on MedInformatix, we were still faced with how to distribute reports at our Imaging Center,” said Moore. “We could’ve gone traditional via fax machines, but decided to explore the opportunity of fax-enabling MedInformatix the same way we were able to enable our home-grown RIS.”

Moore approached elnformatics about using FlyDoc to automatically send SMTP to fax with TLS encryption.

Now, FlyDoc can pull out the appropriate name and fax number and immediately apply it to the right fields with all the right information. “We couldn’t be happier with the service,” added Moore. “Faxes move incredibly fast and accurately when they hit the FlyDoc system.”

elnformatics was equally impressed. “We feel fortunate that RCI introduced us to what Esker can do,” said Tim Ninke, RCI partner at elnformatics. “We look forward to expanding our relationship and business initiatives to other sites.”

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Joe Moore ■ Chief Information Officer ■ Radiology Consultants of Iowa

Realizing the benefits

For RCI, FlyDoc has proved to be a prime example of using a cloud-based service to improve the core of its business.

“It’s easy to do and there’s little risk involved,” said Moore. “Now, we’re sending information in and out and that’s the end of it — nothing is done unnecessarily. The fact that none of us have to even think about fax upgrades and maintenance, frees us up to do things that are more important, and ultimately, allows us to provide a much better service.”

FlyDoc has helped Radiology Consultants of Iowa:

- Eliminate tedious manual steps in its faxing process
- Provide better service to its outreach hospital partners and improve relationships with ordering physicians
- Seamlessly automate its fax distribution process without overhauling the existing application or buying software
- Fax-enabled MedInformatix e-billing system with SMTP to fax for faster, more accurate document delivery
- Alleviate concerns over the HIPPA compliance for transferring documents over public network
- Be more responsive and flexible as the healthcare business continuously changes

Security / HIPPA compliance

Although the Esker FlyDoc service is cloud-based, it presents several options for sending and receiving faxes securely and supporting a HIPPA compliant environment. Secure Web services leveraging HTTPS and SMTP to fax with TLS encryption are two of the secure protocols supported by Esker. “Esker is certainly capable of having the conversation about security,” said Moore. “As long as you can set up TLS security with your mail systems, there are no HIPPA compliance issues.”

Tech support

Regarding the Esker technical support team, Moore added, “Esker’s willingness to work with not only us but the physicians, brought a level of knowledge within faxing that no one else had. Having a great relationship with our ordering physicians is crucial.”

What’s ahead?

Because FlyDoc doesn’t lock RCI into capital investment, the flexibility to evolve can be achieved more easily. “Should fax no longer be a necessity, my use of FlyDoc allows me to simply unplug and forget it,” said Moore. “I have much more freedom as to how I respond to future business changes.”

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