



Technology Innovations

@ Shields Health Care

By Claudia Dolphin

When Tom and Mary Shields founded Shields Health Care Group in 1972, the state of medical and information technology was primitive by today's standards. Computers were just beginning to be used commercially, there were no wireless networks, and the internet as we know it today was yet to be imagined. Having a keen sense of awareness for important innovations throughout the years, the Shields Health Care Group has a finger perpetually kept on the pulse of technological advancements, bringing them quickly to the communities in which they serve. In doing so, they have become the region's leader in diagnostic imaging and treatment. It is an exciting time, says Patricia Whelan, Chief Information Officer (CIO). "Several IT innovations will launch over the next year which have broad, beneficial applications to the larger audience of patients and doctors."

One example is the creation of a new corporate entity called "Virtual Radware", which is designed to assist both doctors and patients with the storage and management of electronic medical records (EMR). The object is to keep both the patient and the doctor better informed. For the physician community, Virtual Radware is a cloud computing company, which hosts the EMR information at its own data center and uses the internet as a means of access. For a subscription fee, the participating physician needs only to go online. Secure entry comes from whatever location they happen to be in. Data can be sent to physicians fast; almost instant transmission of reports

and images instead of slow fax reports or phone calls. To use Virtual Radware, there is no need for the physician to make a hefty capital purchase of additional equipment, nor is there a requirement of having to hire on site IT administration staff. Virtual Radware enhances the physician's ability to provide high quality cost effective patient care, quickly and efficiently.

The EMR is constructed so that images, test results, and patient history, among other things, are available in one place. Using HL7 programming, the industry standard for EMR, it is integrated with other systems so that data collection is seamless. For example, if a blood test was ordered in addition to an MRI for a cancer suspicion, the results would be retrieved and stored together, even though the blood test was performed somewhere else. This method of record keeping ensures that the EMR is truly comprehensive. In addition to EMR solutions, Shields new cloud computing company will also offer digital imaging, voice recognition and custom programming solutions.

This past July, Shields announced another innovation that will transform the way that medical data is managed with a product called Scan Band. Scan Band is the first portable, wearable medical ID bracelet which Patricia Whelan helped customize. The Scan Band is a small, brightly colored wrist bracelet which efficiently stores 1 GB of medical data. This fashionable looking band provides a portable electronic tool for storing and transporting critical medical information from one place



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to another. The Scan Band doesn't just store radiological images but also reports, test results, medication lists and any other related medical information, all of which could prove vital in a medical emergency. The Scan Band can be connected to a computer almost anywhere so that relevant info and images can be downloaded in seconds. The wearer has a password and is thus able to select the information that they want to have stored and also to control who has access to this data.

The Scan Bands are proving popular with a wide range of customers from athletes to patients with chronic conditions. It can serve as a high tech medical alert bracelet that lets the patient's vital medical information be told in the event that the patient is incapacitated. The idea is to be able to transport medical information effortlessly. Similar products will be available in the near future that will allow patients to include additional information such as a health care proxy in the data worn around their wrists. For patients who want to upload their own medical information (such as a living will or advanced medical directive), the company will also offer a blank Scan Band. The future is full of possibilities for this product.

By investing its time and energy in new technology like Virtual Radware and Scan Band, Shields Health Care Group will continue to forge ahead as the region's leader in the diagnostic imaging world. Setting their sights on becoming the largest cloud computing company in New England within a year, by providing physician practice software solutions, is no surprise. As they have since their inception, Shields Health Care Group continues on its mission to be the clear choice offering the most innovative technology available delivered with the highest degree of quality and patient care.



Shields MRI has several locations on the South Shore and southeastern Massachusetts including Boston – Granite Avenue, Boston – Western Avenue, Weymouth, Brockton, and Yarmouth. For more information, please visit the Shields website: www.shields.com or call 1-617-376-7400. 