

Medical practice management and electronic medical records (EMR) software is so fundamental to the day-to-day operations of a medical office that it can largely determine the success of a practice.

Practice management (patient billing) and EMR software drastically impacts revenue (profit), office efficiency and employee turnover, but most importantly patient satisfaction. Until 2007 client/server (in the office) held the predominant place in the practice management and EMR market. Now, Web-native systems are outpacing server-based systems by providing increased data security, anywhere, anytime access and superior office efficiency.

The computerization of the medical industry continues to change the day-to-day operations of a medical office so significantly, that it has become necessary for medical offices to update their technology to remain profitable. Many of the coming federal mandates and requirements will require constant monitoring and updates to practice management and workflow.

Software as a Service (SaaS)

Most practices today have to purchase and maintain their own enterprise-class equipment such as firewalls, servers, switches and security tools. Add the cost of keeping all the operating systems current (Microsoft has dozens of updates every month) and on-going network support makes the SaaS model a very compelling option for small to medium practices. A truly Web-native or SaaS application can be accessed by logging into the system via the Internet on a simple computer. There is nothing to buy, license or install.

Business Continuity

HIPAA requires that medical offices backup and verify their medical records on a daily basis. Studies indicate that over 60% of in-office servers are not properly backed-up or tested regularly. Medical data stored on a computer can be lost to natural disasters, broken water pipes, theft, power surges or even disgruntled employees. Web-native applications offer continuous backup technology; backing up and validating your data every hour to a redundant, out of state locations that will ensure your data will always be available and safe.

The average A/R balance for a mid-sized medical practice in the US is over \$ 167,000 per physician. Insurance claims and patient payments is the lifeblood of a medical practice's financial viability. Archaic software systems add to an office's outstanding balance and inefficient billing processes from older software systems actually hinder the frequency of claim submission and increase the chance that claims will be submitted incorrectly. Web-native systems offer real-time claims submission, claims scrubbers that minimize rejected claims and efficient tools that submit claims daily instead of weekly.

Additionally, online claims processing enables an office to maintain claims management functions and contact with payers even in the event of a disaster or office mishap. Data stored on in-office servers could be lost or compromised.

Security

Server-based systems typically lack physical and electronic security that protects office data from natural disasters, data-theft or office mishaps. Most Web-native servers are located in world-class maximum security data centers that include many levels of security, biometric access and respond to national terror threat levels. This type of location also provides enterprise-class firewall and data intrusion detection systems that ensure secure data transfers get data to payers.

Redundant datacenters, robust electronics, and the impenetrable physical security used by Web-native practice management and EMR solutions are financially out of reach for most medical offices to reproduce on their own.

Cost

Client/server or Web-enabled software systems typically require multiple support agreements, upfront licensing fees and the purchase of enterprise-quality hardware, storage and backup equipment. On top of the cost of equipment, the office is then required to install the hardware, maintain and upgrade the software and train employees to use it effectively. With Web-native solutions all you need is a basic computer with access to the Internet. This level of availability also provides secure access to office data anytime, anywhere via the Web. Unlimited live technical support, online comprehensive training combined with weekly live training sessions and regular software updates are included with SaaS models. According to Information Week, June 2, 2003 the total cost of accessing Web-native applications can be 75 percent less than client/server software.

MRC Solution – LeonardoMD

MRC chose **LeonardoMD** Web-native software solution to offer a headache-free source for data privacy and security; continuously updated to maintain HIPAA compliance. Web-native practice management software allows physician offices and MRC access to management software simultaneously with everyone having access to current information. MRC and LeonardoMD are confident that the Internet and the SaaS model provides a superior method for practice management and EMR software; the SaaS model renders the client/server and Web-enabled business models antiquated and inadequate in today's world.