

All from One Source

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The Diagnosticum Ingolstadt is a bright, spacious, and modern radiology center.

All from One Source

At the new Medical Center at Ingolstadt Hospital, all specializations, from dentistry to ophthalmology, can be found under one roof. It is also home to the Diagnosticum, a state-of-the-art radiology practice equipped with the latest systems from Siemens. The flexible financing options offered by Siemens Finance & Leasing helped make these purchases possible.

By Felix Sparkuhle

Before moving into the new Medical Center in 2009, the Diagnosticum had two locations in Ingolstadt, Germany – in the old Medical Center and in Ingolstadt Hospital itself. “This was associated with tremendous logistical and financial costs. At that time, we also expanded our team of physicians from six radiologists to eight and were already looking for premises for our practice for this reason,” recalls Rudolf Conrad, MD, Managing Partner at the Diagnosticum. Once hospital management had notified the partners at the Diagnosticum of the plans for the construction project, it didn’t take long for the practice’s physicians to decide in favor of a site in the new complex and thus, in favor of intensifying the cooperation that already existed between their practice and the hospital. It was clear to the radiologists that, in the context of the relocation and upgrading of their equipment, new medical equipment should be purchased as well. Their interest turned to products from Siemens Healthcare. Plans were made to use the 3 Tesla (3T) magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) system MAGNETOM® Verio and the fully digital X-ray system AXIOM® Aristos MX in the future. Not long afterward, however, the question came up as to how to finance the systems. After all, the costly move and the new equipment had already caused significant financial strain.

“Pay as You Earn” – Situational Financing

In this difficult financial situation, a flexible, customized solution was needed. And that is just what Siemens Finance & Leasing (SF&L), the German leasing subsidiary of Siemens Financial Services, put together for the partners in the Diagnosticum in the form of a situational, demand-based financing package. No down-payment was required, and a three-month start-up period with no installment payments helped the radiology practice conserve liquidity during the relocation and the initial phase in the new site. Another three months of particularly low installment payments followed. Based on the “Tech-X-Change” and “med-



Dr. Rudolf Conrad is one of three partners of the practice.

prodynamic” financing models, Siemens was able to put a progressive installment payment structure into place, following the “pay-as-you-earn” principle. “In addition to the technical and quality factors, the financing service was definitely an important positive aspect that helped us choose Siemens. And our regular bank was also happy to not have to provide us with even more financing, especially because they had a hard time assessing the risk involved in these kinds of investments,” Conrad says. In addition to a digital full-field X-ray system with substantially lower radiation exposure for patients, Conrad and his colleagues are now one of the first teams of physicians in the region to have a 3T MRI system.

Completely New Options

Although the premises of the Diagnosticum are located between a pharmacy and a dialysis ward, the installation of the high-field unit from Siemens was possible without problem. The new MRI system at the radiology practice supplements the examination methods at Ingolstadt Hospital and opens up completely new options for the radiologists – and their patients. “For instance, when

it comes to stroke diagnosis, we have gotten faster and, with new features for measuring perfusion, we are now even more precise. This is crucially important when it comes to treatment. When we acquire angiograms with the 3T MRI system, even without the use of contrast agents, we are able to achieve images at a level of sharpness and detail that we have never been able to achieve before. We often also examine patients’ hands, and these high-resolution systems help us obtain sharp, detailed images of the many small bones and ligaments,” Conrad explains.

When it comes to preventive examinations, cutting-edge Siemens’ medical technology is also enabling the physicians in Ingolstadt to break new ground. Starting this year, the physicians at the Diagnosticum will also be offering magnetic resonance spectroscopy (MRS) of the prostate. The Prostate Center at Ingolstadt Hospital has already indicated an interest in cooperating closely with the Diagnosticum in this area. And that means outstanding preventive cancer care for men – in line with the practice’s motto, “Committed to the patient.” The physicians have officially been committed to this motto for five years now, and



Latest digital X-ray equipment ...



... and the 3 Tesla MRI are the highlights of the practice.

it is backed by a certificate in quality management from the German TÜV testing and validation agency.

Enhanced Patient Comfort and More Efficient Workflows

In addition to new diagnostic possibilities, the purchases also have positive impact on patient comfort and a helpful effect on workflow.

The cramped, narrow bores of many MRI systems used to cause a problem for many patients, especially those with claustrophobia. With a diameter of 70 centimeters (27.6 inches), MAGNETOM Verio opens up MRI for a wider range of patients. And if the system, which is relatively short, is also installed in a spacious examination room such as that at the Diagnosticum, patients have a more pleasant experience. Conrad confirms that since the Diagnosticum purchased MAGNETOM Verio, it has had no further issues with claustrophobic patients fearing MRI scans. It also facilitates scanning children, because the large opening lets parents hold a child's hand during the imaging process. And the wide gantry even lets physicians treat obese patients, up to a body weight of 250 kilograms (approximately 550 pounds), with ease.

Furthermore, the shorter scan times offered by MAGNETOM Verio make it possible to scan more patients in the same timeframe. At the Diagnosticum, physicians plan to use the time freed up by the new unit to improve their service by establishing open periods so that they can react more flexibly to emergencies. As for workflow, the usability of the IT systems was another crucial factor for Conrad and his team. The physicians have been working with Siemens systems in their practices since 1992. The latest purchases for the Ingolstadt facility also feature the current *syngo*® software, which is already familiar to the staff. "When we moved, it was not just the flexible financing service, but also the established IT systems that helped us to save on costs. A new user interface would have required retraining all 16 of our radiology assistants. In this way, we were able to upgrade our equipment without tremendous expense or risk."

Felix Sparkuhle has a degree in political science with political economics. He works for Siemens Corporate Communications and Government Affairs.

Summary

Challenge:

- Cutting-edge technology is an important unique selling point when competing with other providers
- Time and cost pressures in radiology
- Pressure to modernize equipment

Solution:

- SF&L financing makes it possible to use the latest in Siemens technology
- Flexible installment payment structures
- Pay as you earn

Result:

- Latest technology
- Enhanced image quality, better detail
- Liquidity secured during the start-up phase
- Shorter waiting times for patients
- Greater flexibility in appointment management
- High levels of patient comfort

Further Information

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