



Growing Market Share with Advanced Equipment and Refined Workflow Processes

About Siemens Global Solutions Consulting – Utilizing expert resources and proven methodologies, Siemens Global Solutions Consulting assists customers to improve clinical, operational, and financial performance by optimizing their healthcare delivery capabilities and workflow processes.

Siemens credentials are based on a worldwide knowledge of healthcare combined with a leadership position in integrated medical and information technologies.

The Situation

Although the magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) services at Lenoir Memorial Hospital have traditionally been strong, their market share was impacted when competing imaging services began to attract increasing referrals by offering newer technology.

Committed to maintaining its reputation for quality care services, Lenoir Memorial acquired a MAGNETOM® Avanto, an advanced MRI system with a broad application range, from Siemens. Their goal was 2-fold: recapture lost market share, and grow additional share by expanding the range of clinical MRI procedures offered. Essential to this strategy, however, was ensuring that their workflow processes could support the anticipated growth.

Compass Consulting Assignment

For answers, the management of Lenoir Memorial retained the Siemens Global Solutions consulting team to conduct a Compass study. Developed by Siemens, Compass is a proprietary consulting service that assesses current-state operations and provides practical recommendations to improve performance metrics and drive both physician and patient satisfaction.

On behalf of Lenoir Memorial, Siemens was asked to:

- Review existing processes and recommend alternatives to improve both patient flow and technologist workflow
- Investigate opportunities to grow market share after determining where patients were coming from and who was referring them
- Identify growth patterns and new target markets

The Siemens Approach

A 3-part approach was utilized in the Lenoir Memorial Compass study which concluded with a formal presentation of the findings and recommended action items.

Identify project goals and metrics through in-depth interviews with key stakeholders relative to the new MRI system, including administration, radiologists, radiology management, technologists, registration, and scheduling personnel. For Lenoir Memorial, the goals included increasing MR procedure volumes, identifying and analyzing target markets and identifying new procedural offerings.

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“We were very satisfied with the study and are developing a plan to implement the findings.”
Jeff Cartwright, Radiology Manager,
Lenoir Memorial Hospital

Conduct market analysis to identify MR demand, assess growth patterns, analyze patient population patterns, and physician referral base. Key benchmark information was established, including population growth and shifts in age at the county, state, and national levels. Procedural volume and mix were compared against national and regional averages to learn in which exam areas Lenoir Memorial was above or below the national and regional averages. In this phase of the study, Siemens coordinated a focus group with referring physicians who had been referring to other imaging services. The ideas they shared helped Lenoir better understand their needs and provided insight to regaining lost referrals.

Assess workflow processes which determined the existing processes at Lenoir Memorial to be sound. This review of the workflow from scheduling to report distribution resulted in recommendations to improve flow and support future growth. For example, analyzing whether extending the hours of operation would increase patient volumes or just shift them, or if going to a 15-minute time block scheduling system instead of 45-minute blocks would create added efficiencies in studies taking 30 minutes.

Compass Study: Outcomes and Benefits

Siemens measures the success of a Compass engagement through the ultimate satisfaction of the client institution, its physicians, and patients. At Lenoir Memorial, the engagement made a positive contribution to all of these.

- **Creating a more efficient operation for Lenoir Memorial**

Although the new scheduling improvements would require time for adapting to new procedures, as would developing plans to market services to the new growth segments, the MRI procedure volume at Lenoir Memorial increased by 34% within 4 weeks after the new imaging system became operational.

- **Creating a better physician workplace**

Advanced technology coupled with workflow optimization has had a positive effect on work satisfaction. Radiology staff have reported positive feedback from the physicians and state the belief that having the latest technology for the physician does effectively contribute to establishing “greater confidence and pride in the workplace.”

- **Creating a better patient experience**

As a result of the changes implemented, patients have access to state-of-the-art MRI diagnostic imaging services close to home. “The whole experience is improved, from the time they are in the scanner to Siemens AudioComfort technology that reduces acoustic noise by up to 97%,” says Jeff Cartwright, Lenoir Radiology Manager. “We believe they will have increased confidence in the diagnostic accuracy of the equipment and therefore, their outcomes.”

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