



Case Study

Expecting — and Receiving — More from a PACS Industry Leader

“We chose Planar because we already had their displays and we were really satisfied with them. We wanted that same great service and reliability for our new PACS.”

Brian Cox,
PC Support Manager
Norton Healthcare

“Expect more from a leader” is an often-heard catch phrase at Norton Healthcare. Kentucky’s largest healthcare system, Norton has more than 50 locations throughout Kentucky and Southern Indiana, including four large hospitals, eight Norton Immediate Care Centers and an outpatient imaging center.

Norton sets the standard for health care in the region and takes its leadership seriously. And if you ask them, they will tell you that leadership means patients should expect both quality care as well as technological innovation. That means having a state-of-the-art PACS (picture archiving and communications system).

So when Norton decided to implement a new PACS in 2006, it called for healthcare IT leader McKesson and medical display leader Planar Systems.

The PACS implementation was a massive project, says Brian Cox, Norton PC Support Manager. “We built it from the ground up with upgraded CR (computed radiology) equipment, and new radiology and technologist reading workstations.”

The new PACS required 33 reading stations across four hospitals, two medical centers and one dedicated imaging center. For Cox, when it came time to choose monitors for those new PACS workstations, there was only one company he wanted: Planar.

“Before we even started on the PACS implementation, we already had two or three gray-scale Planar C3i displays,” says Cox. “We had those displays for three years—we still have them in use today—and we’ve just never had a problem with them. No service calls. No worries. And the monitors were very easy to set up and install. We were really satisfied with them, and we wanted that same great service and reliability for the new PACS.”

Doing Whatever it Takes For a Successful Implementation

Planar sent a team to Norton to demonstrate Planar's diagnostic displays for Cox and Norton's radiology team. Cox requested 66 of Planar's Dome E3c three-megapixel color displays. (Thirty-three pairs for 33 workstations) "Our radiologists were happy with the quality of images on the Planar displays," said Cox. "That, plus the reliability and stability sealed the decision for us."



Planar's Dome E3c three-megapixel high-bright displays are designed to enhance visualization of 2-D color images, fusion images and 3-D reconstruction images. The Dome E3c offers the flexibility of color and DICOM-calibrated grayscale in a 3 MP display without the need to switch panels for multi-modality readings. For Norton's needs, they were a perfect fit.

But the Planar color displays were a new line, just coming on the market, and McKesson hadn't yet certified them. "McKesson, of course, has very strict standards for display certification," says Cox. "So the displays needed to be certified for the implementation."

Cox says Planar pulled out all the stops, working with McKesson to get the displays certified in time to meet the Norton PACS implementation plan. "Planar was excellent at working with McKesson and doing whatever McKesson needed," says Cox. "When it looked like the certification timing might not work out in time for our implementation, Planar provided a signed letter of agreement saying that if for any reason their workstations didn't certify, they would replace them with Planar grayscale monitors at no charge. Planar really did whatever it took to get us what we needed, and in the end, everything worked out just fine."

Going the Extra Mile...And Then Some

Another aspect of Planar's service that Cox liked was Planar's initiative during the implementation. "Just after installation, there was a code update for the monitors," says Cox. "Planar flew one of their top engineers in and he updated all of our monitors. We didn't even request it; they just did it on their own initiative."

Planar also automatically upgraded some of the Norton monitors. "Part of our contract called for three sets of Planar Dome grayscale E3 monitors," says Cox. "But when the Planar engineer got here to do the installation, he made a couple of phone calls and exchanged the Dome E3s for upgraded Dome E3c monitors, which standardized our monitors across our whole system. They did that completely on their own, without anyone from Norton asking. I can't imagine another vendor doing that."

"Planar is just not a typical vendor. They did whatever it took to make our PACS implementation happen on schedule. They've been very receptive to all our questions, ideas and issues. They say 'here's what we've got to offer' and they're never pushy about anything. I absolutely trust them to sell us only what they can deliver."

Brian Cox,
PC Support Manager
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Taking Leadership Seriously

Working with technology industry leaders like McKesson and Planar helps Norton continue to ensure their leadership in setting the standard for the best healthcare to patients in their region.

"Planar is just not a typical vendor," says Cox. "They have been very receptive to all our questions, ideas and issues. They just say 'here's what we've got to offer' and they're never pushy about anything. And they don't over promise. I absolutely trust them to sell us only what they can deliver. Bottom line, in every dealing I've had with them, they've done everything they said they would. This PACS implementation has only solidified my good opinion of them."

Would Norton buy Planar again? "You bet," says Cox. "We've actually since purchased Planar Dome 5-megapixel grayscale displays for our new digital mammography workstations."



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