A Real View: In life, in work — and in radiology — the power of your network is the key to growth and success

Each of us knows the importance of personal and professional networking. Those who do it best focus on using the size and reach of their networks to deliver and receive value. The same applies to the Nuance PowerShare Network, which connects more than 6,000 facilities exchanging over a million imaging studies each month. It is an interoperable image-sharing platform delivering benefits from #DitchTheDisk through EMR integration, teleradiology and AI-powered, workflow-integrated diagnostic and decision support tools. The ultimate value of PowerShare is its demonstrated ability to improve patient experiences and outcomes.

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We all recognize the value and importance of networking in our personal and professional lives because of the connections we can make to gain access to useful information and resources. While networking seems to come more easily or naturally to some, it actually takes purposeful, continuous effort to build and maintain a robust network. Those who are most successful with networking generate value beyond the number and quality of their connections by amplifying and extending the capabilities of other network members.

You can say the same thing about the Nuance PowerShare Network. PowerShare connects more than 6,000 facilities in the United States that use its speed and scalability to exchange over a million imaging studies each month. It gives clinicians and patients secure access to imaging and completes the clinical record with deep EMR integration. Nuance establishes and maintains the connections quickly and at scale, enabling providers to overcome the multiple problems that ineffective image-sharing creates in patient experiences (duplicate imaging,
delayed diagnosis and treatment) and in operating inefficiencies (CD burning, unusable CDs, maintaining VPNs and security agreements).

Healthcare providers of all sizes have made the PowerShare Network the largest and fastest-growing radiology image-sharing network in the United States. They join it for a variety of reasons, including its ability to deliver immediate, practical clinical and operational value, and its capacity to address strategic imperatives including cost reduction, outcomes-based reimbursements, interoperability, and deployment of new AI-powered diagnostic tools.

The turnkey scale and nearly ubiquitous reach of the PowerShare Network itself is one of the most important practical reasons. The fact that it offers the largest number of connected locations tells users that it’s where they need and want to be. As more facilities come online, others naturally follow their lead.

Another factor is the commitment that customers see from Nuance in supporting and expanding PowerShare connectivity and capability. That begins with a dedicated team of PowerShare Outreach experts that addresses each customer’s priorities even before they go live on the network. For example, the Outreach team directly supports initiatives like the American College of Radiology’s #DitchTheDisk effort. The team asks each new client to identify which facilities or clinicians often send or request CDs, then adds those facilities to the PowerShare Network at no charge. Post go-live, each customer continues with their PowerShare Outreach expert to ensure their continued connectivity expansion and success throughout their PowerShare Network subscription.

The goal is not just enabling connections between different PACS and EMR systems but creating a seamless, integrated environment for the entire care team including radiologists and “image intensivists,” or clinicians who depend on seamless access to imaging. That’s made possible through a combination of network speed, connectivity, and usability. Instantaneous and mobile connectivity enable care teams to receive and review images from another facility even before the patient arrives. Usability comes from the integration of the PowerShare Network with the EMR, one-click PACS access, a zero-footprint diagnostic viewer, the ability to update patient information and auto-generate orders, plus image and report sharing. All of that saves time, reduces unnecessary imaging, and can save lives.

Improved patient experiences and outcomes can translate directly into operational efficiencies that address healthcare cost reduction and value-based care. A recent analysis by Deloitte of Medicare providers found that “having central physicians to help coordinate the flow of information/care is strongly associated with lower costs.” Their study reported that tighter networks decreased average episode-of-care cost for hip fracture by almost 15 percent and for coronary artery disease by 26 percent.

The PowerShare Network infrastructure also is essential for strategic interoperability initiatives. The network serves as a platform for supporting both image-enabling Health Information Exchange (HIEs) and Stage 7 of the HIMSS Digital Imaging Adoption Model efforts, including the requirements for image, report and clinical note exchange between
providers, and for electronic patient access to imaging.

The PowerShare Network further enables the next-generation PowerScribe One radiology reporting platform and access to the AI Marketplace, giving radiologists one-stop, workflow-integrated access to the largest storefront of AI algorithms and a feedback loop for developers to improve the quality of those algorithms.

Having a large, scalable, ubiquitous image-sharing network for exchanging images is important for responding to changing priorities and the shift to value-based care. But the ultimate value of the PowerShare Network is in its demonstrated ability to improve patient experiences and outcomes. We'll give you some truly meaningful real-world examples of how the PowerShare Network does that in a coming blog post.

A Real View is a Q&A blog series with Karen Holzberger, Vice President and General Manager of Nuance Healthcare's Diagnostic Division. The Real View cuts through the hype and gets to what’s real, here, and now. The blog series features interviews and insights from health IT movers and shakers and uncovers disruptive technologies that solve challenges, optimize workflow, and increase efficiencies to improve patient care.

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About Karen Holzberger

Karen Holzberger is the senior vice president and general manager of Nuance’s Healthcare’s diagnostic solutions business. Karen joined Nuance in 2014 with more than 15 years of experience in the Healthcare industry. Prior to Nuance, she was the vice president and general manager of Global Radiology Workflow at GE Healthcare where she managed service, implementation, product management and development for mission critical healthcare IT software. Karen attended Stevens Institute of Technology where she earned a B.S in Mechanical Engineering.

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