

The background features a large, stylized Siemens logo, which is a circular emblem with four blue arrows pointing outwards from the center. The logo is set against a dark blue background with diagonal stripes. In the top left corner, the word "SIEMENS" is written in a bold, teal, sans-serif font. A white rectangular box is positioned behind the logo, and a dark blue rectangular box is located in the middle right area of the page.

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# PACS migration made easy

Christophsbad medical center in Germany on the advantages of updating their picture archiving and communication system



**Professor Bernd Tomandl, MD**  
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Göppingen

**“We could access our archive during the entire migration process, so there was no downtime.”**

**A German hospital met the challenge of ever expanding data by updating their picture archiving and communication system, offering improved image reading and extra features.**

Advanced imaging systems make a substantial contribution to the growing volume of information in hospital settings. Increasingly high-resolution slice imaging methods in radiology combine with other factors, such as moving pictures from devices including ultrasound units and endoscopes, to produce larger and larger datasets. Nowadays, 2,000 or more images can be produced in a single computed tomography or magnetic resonance imaging scan. The result? The hardware and software needed to store, manage, visualize, and transfer the data are increasingly reaching their limits.

**Migration is a challenge**

This means that many medical centers are faced with the issue that their PACS (picture archiving and communication system) no longer meets current requirements, let alone being ready to deal with future challenges. And yet, hospitals are often reluctant to modernize in this area. After all, the PACS is a central component in reading images – downtime during migration can cause significant disruptions in processes throughout the entire facility.



Professor Bernd Tomandl, MD, has been Head of the Radiology and Neuroradiology Clinic since 2011.



**Steffen Zeiss**  
Head of IT,  
Christophsbad Medical Center,  
Göppingen

**“The stability and performance of our old PACS were no longer sufficient for a number of reasons ...”**

### **A best practice example from Germany**

The Radiology and Neuroradiology Clinic is one of six clinics that work across sectors at Christophsbad Medical Center in Göppingen, which was founded in 1852 as a private “hospital and nursing facility for the emotionally disturbed and patients suffering nervous diseases.” With 752 beds and approximately 1,100 employees, the medical center serves the district of Göppingen, in the state of Baden-Württemberg, providing psychiatric, psychosomatic, and neurological care. The Radiology Clinic is equipped with advanced fully digital technology and offers both conventional X-ray diagnostic services and specialized neuroradiology interventions, including minimally invasive procedures.

### **Importing data during operation**

In mid-2012, Christophsbad Medical Center decided to replace its existing PACS solution. “The stability and performance of our old PACS were no longer sufficient for a number of reasons, for example because our hardware had reached its limits in light of the rising volumes of data,” reports Steffen Zeiss, Head of IT at the Medical Center. Downtime and problems with quickly providing previous scans adversely affected the processes involved in image reading and were increasingly responsible for delays.



## The process of modernization

With this in mind, it was decided that the hardware platform for the PACS would be replaced, and that this would also be used as an opportunity to modernize the PACS itself in order to use the new hardware to its full potential. Based on years of good experience with Siemens, the medical center planned to stay with their PACS provider and so they chose *syngo.plaza* from Siemens.

The shift took just one week. The first step was to install the new PACS on the recently purchased hardware. At the same time, the first user training sessions also took place in order to support a speedy transition.

## Merging data

The subsequent import of old data – normally the greatest challenge with any PACS migration – went quickly and smoothly. Within just a few days, 40,000 previous scans had been transferred from the old system, which was still in operation. “For us in radiology, the system switch took place in just one day, and it didn’t cause any major issues,” reports Professor Bernd Tomandl, MD, who has been Head of the Radiology and Neuroradiology Clinic since 2011. “We were able to access previous scans from our archive during the entire migration process, so there was no downtime,” he continues.



## Greater productivity

“Aside from minor hiccups at the outset caused by conflicts with our virus scanner, the system ran with absolute stability right from the very first day,” says Zeiss, evidently pleased. For his part, what Tomandl appreciates in particular about his new PACS is its close integration with the radiology information system (RIS) from Siemens, a tool he uses daily in his work. “I control the PACS right from my RIS; it even works via speech recognition. During the image reading process, I see all of the information I need from the electronic patient record right away.”

## Enhanced functions

The radiologists can also determine in great detail which views and tools the system should display automatically during certain types of scans and which previous scans are to be opened without any further action by operators. Functions enabling synchronous browsing of various images, comparison of selected areas, and 3D visualization make the image reading process easier and enhance productivity.



The Christophsbad Medical Center in Göppingen, Germany, was founded in 1852.

## Tailored solutions

When Tomandl is asked what other centers should keep in mind when migrating, it doesn't take him long to answer: "syngo.plaza is very flexible and can be tailored in great detail to individual wishes. But the many different setting options can also quickly become overwhelming to a user. We felt the same way at the start. But Siemens didn't leave us on our own – two application specialists set up the PACS for us in an extremely short time so that it was enjoyable to work with. That's why I definitely recommend having someone within the facility who is very familiar with the system and the processes to help with customizing the system once it is installed."

The statements by Siemens' customers described herein are based on results that were achieved in the customer's unique setting. Since there is no "typical" hospital and many variables exist (e.g., hospital size, case mix, level of IT adoption) there can be no guarantee that other customers will achieve the same results.

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