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Wes Watson

UCSF Medical Center Neurology Clinic

Case Study

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Neurology clinic gains control over charts.

Client Profile**Headquarters:** San Francisco, CA**Industry:** Healthcare

UCSF Medical Center is one of the leading five hospitals in the nation in neurology and neurosurgery, including the treatment of brain tumors, epilepsy and stroke. The neurology clinic handles over 200 patient appointments each day. They began using FileTrail in September 2003 to manage patient charts.

FileTrail Implementation: 2003**FileTrail Products Implemented**

- **FileTrail Professional** - Complete file tracking and records management automation..
- **FTColorLabel** - On-demand printing of color-coded folder labels.
- **FTMobile™** - The software allows files to be checked-in, checked-out, transferred and boxed without being tethered to a workstation.
- **FTSynchronize™** - Loads and updates data from upstream resources to keep FileTrail data synchronized and up-to-date with authoritative systems.

Background

Keeping close track of patient records is vital for the neurology clinic at the University of California, San Francisco Medical Center (UCSF). The vast file room of the clinic houses the charts of about 15,000 neurology and epilepsy patients who are counting on the expertise and efficiency of UCSF as one of the nation's top teaching hospitals.

UCSF Medical Center is one of the leading five hospitals in the nation in neurology and neurosurgery, including the treatment of brain tumors, epilepsy and stroke. The center also has the largest brain tumor treatment program in the United States and has one of California's largest cerebrovascular surgery programs. In Northern California, it has the only comprehensive memory disorders center.

Monitoring the enormous amount of patient-related data for the neurology clinic requires nerves of steel plus an ultra-efficient file management and tracking system. That's why the clinic implemented FileTrail in September of 2003.

“Our staff, including several of our neurosurgeons, sat through presentations of tracking software from our existing system vendors and several other companies we found on the internet,” said Wes Watson. “We were most impressed with FileTrail because they have focused on chart tracking and have built in so many ways to save time and help locate charts.”

Streamlined Processes

On average, the neurology clinic processes about 200 to 250 files through FileTrail every day. Using FileTrail has drastically streamlined the process of managing and tracking patients' files.

“Labeling charts is much simpler, faster and uniform,” Watson said.

Every file is bar coded with a unique number and entered into the database for easy and instant tracking. Whenever a chart is checked out of the file room, it leaves a digital trail straight back to the user. This makes it much easier for the clinic to comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996, particularly the provision relating to guaranteeing the security and privacy of health information.

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Application Highlights

- Integration utilizes existing patient and appointment information, eliminating redundant data entry.
- Staff may log in from any authorized workstation without installing software on their computer.
- Security provides administrators with precise control over who has rights to view, add or edit data.
- Remote access allows physicians to monitor their schedules and chart location from both office and home.

Key Results

- **Save Labor:** FileTrail saves labor by eliminating lost files and automating manual tasks.
- **Prevent Duplication:** FileTrail prevents duplication of files by making it easy to see what exists and by issuing a warning if users try to create a duplicate file.
- **Easy Configuration:** FileTrail's configuration tools allow collection of the exact information needed to describe charts and accommodate future changes .
- **Increased Efficiency:** New charts are created quickly using a single strip label containing text, color codes and a bar code.

Customer Insight

We have been pleasantly surprised at how much faster we can retrieve and re-file with the new numeric system. The incidence of mis-files were so much worse under the old alphabetic system.

We used to spend hours locating charts and preparing for the next days' appointments. With FileTrail, we do the same work in minutes.

About FileTrail

FileTrail, Inc., is the leading provider of browser-based records management solutions. Companies of all sizes turn to FileTrail to streamline processes with the latest technology and most configurable software. Headquartered in San Jose, California, FileTrail has been providing solutions for records management since 2001.

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Before FileTrail

Before the clinic began using FileTrail, all charts were labeled with the first three letters of the patient's last name. It was a standard approach to filing records, but it didn't provide the ability to efficiently locate charts.

When physicians finished with the charts on a given day, they were supposed to return them to the file room. When that failed to happen, there was no record of where the chart was located in the hospital. Locating missing charts was haphazard and time-consuming.

"It was a matter of emailing or calling around, and we would narrow it down and find the chart," Watson explained. "It might take a day or two to find a missing chart."

Expanded Use

FileTrail not only creates a systematic way to keep track of patient files, but offers broad capability for other applications. For example, the neurology clinic also uses the system for Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI). With the enhanced capability provided by FileTrail, keeping track of the results for \$3,000-plus MRIs is more fail-safe and easier.

"Transitioning to FileTrail was a good move for the clinic," Watson said. "The system is not only user-friendly and convenient, but gives everyone a more organized and effective way to handle files."

Integration Eliminates Data Entry

FileTrail helps physicians and staff more effectively manage charts and prepare for patient visits by leveraging patient and appointment data from the clinic's IDX system. New patient and appointment data arrives every afternoon, triggering the printing of color-coded strip labels for new patients, helping staff efficiently prepare new charts.

Appointment data is used in preparation for the next day. Staff pull the charts that are needed for the next day using FileTrail's pull list, a list of charts sorted the same way that the charts are filed in the file room. The delivery list acts as a delivery manifest with a separate page for each physician, listing the charts that have been pulled for them.

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Positive Side-Effects

An interesting benefit of this automation is derived from FileTrail's Web technology. Prior to FileTrail, physicians had to go to the file room to find a patient's telephone number or other information. With FileTrail, physicians can access the information from their office, any PC in the clinic, or even from home.

Contact FileTrail Today!

For more information about the benefits of automating with FileTrail, contact your local FileTrail representative at:

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