Fax Management Playbook

Merge manual and digital fax for seamless & secure communications

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Fax volume is at an all-time high. Even in today's digital world, with the adoption of Electronic Medical Records and advances in tech-enabled communications, the primary method of communications in the healthcare industry remains the fax machine.

A recent National Physicians survey found that 63 percent of respondents stated fax was their primary form of communication.[1] Many providers still view fax as the most secure form of communications, and it serves as a bridge when systems do not connect. Even health systems that have transitioned to digital document transmissions must continue to utilize fax to collaborate with other systems that are less technologically advanced. While fax remains ingrained in healthcare, managing a large fleet of disparate devices can rack up high costs, bottlenecks, and security and compliance risks.

For those who have implemented digital fax or direct messaging, the bottlenecks associated with traditional fax have simply shifted. Historically, bottlenecks were found on fax machine trays. Users had to spend time sorting through pages to find important patient information. In the new digital age of enterprise fax, the bottleneck is now the group mailbox or network folder that stores all of the faxes. There are digital pages lying on digital trays.

Health systems must embrace fax culture while improving communications with a solution that merges manual and system-to-system communications.

[1] https://www.healthitoutcomes.com/doc/isn-t-it-time-to-get-rid-of-your-fax-machines-0001

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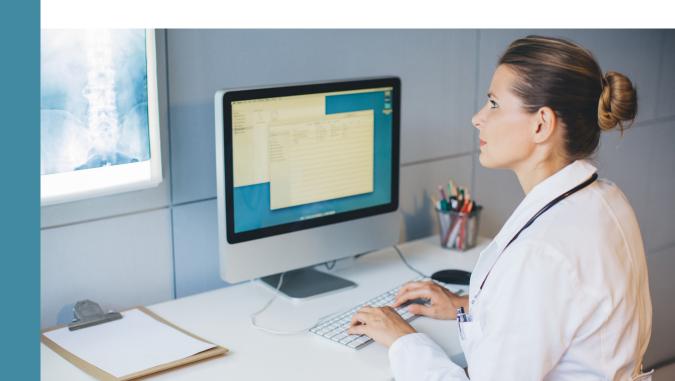Fax machines provide no audit trail.

The situation

Manual fax opens up the chance of human error, like misdialed destinations and abandoned trays, which causes privacy and security concerns. In a survey, more than 4 in 10 healthcare respondents admitted to having read a paper fax intended for someone else.[2] Many breaches go unnoticed, and health systems cannot manage what they can't measure. A disparate fleet of dozens of fax devices provides no audit trail in the case of a breach.

The solution

With Ricoh Healthcare Administrative Solution's Fax Management platform one audit log makes it much quicker and easier to determine if there's been a breach. One central location with one central administrator provides instant access to information and delivers greater insights into any potential security concerns. This allows health systems to manage privacy and security more proactively.

Healthcare organizations can also avoid security breach by moving away from manual fax mistakes like misdials and outdated speed dial destinations. Ricoh Healthcare Administrative Solution's Fax Management minimizes the risk of human error and helps the right document land in the right hands.

[2] https://www.ricoh-usa.com/news/news_release.aspx?prid=1211&alnv=pr

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Fax machines do not integrate with EMRs and other systems.

The situation

Because of interoperability challenges, many healthcare employees rely on costly manual processes to collaborate. Yet standalone fax machines can be a bottleneck and a costly manual stopgap. It costs $250 billion to process 30 billion healthcare transactions each year, of which 15 billion are faxes.[3]

The solution

Ricoh Healthcare Administrative Solution's Fax Management platform can "talk" to other systems to maximize efficiencies and help to reduce costs. While supporting interoperability goals, an integrated fax solution also makes it easier for healthcare employees to collaborate across departments – from sharing patient records to processing claims and invoices.

As an added bonus, electronic fax assists in reducing operational costs. Health systems using electronic fax can decrease the number of phone lines and limit long-distance charges. This also allows the organization to retire outdated standalone fax machines, reducing repair and maintenance costs while also trimming paper and printing expenses.

[3] https://getreferralmd.com/2012/02/medical-dental-referral-letter/

Direct messaging and digital enterprise fax solutions create workflow disruptions.

The situation

Advances in communications often disrupt existing workflows and create extra work for employees. Current direct messaging solutions require clinicians to open multiple TIFFs or PDFs to find what they need, save and rename files, and finally enter it into the direct message software and forward to the intended recipient. These extra steps can increase physician frustration while building up bottlenecks.

The solution

Enlist a Fax Management solution that fits seamlessly into existing workflows, creating no additional steps or increased workload for users. By merging new capabilities into existing habits, health systems can achieve the benefits of direct messaging – better security and compliance, improved monitoring and measurement, and access to a centralized audit trail – without inconveniencing users.

Fax isn't going anywhere anytime soon. By enhancing current device management with a centralized system and electronic fax solutions, health systems can improve security while driving down costs.

If you're interested in a consultation to help you proactively manage fax at your organization, the Ricoh Healthcare team can lead the way and offer step-by-step solutions.

To learn more, visit https://www.ricoh-usa.com/healthcare

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