



Smart Tools in Practice

Technology allows
physicians to focus on
the patient

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Physicians should spend the majority of their day delivering quality patient care. This is why they have completed years of study and specialization. Most would probably prefer to focus their time on improving the quality of life for patients rather than dealing with administrative issues. The last thing a physician needs to be inconvenienced by is note dictation, including dictating his or her own notes, finding transcribed documents, or locating notes from referring physicians.

An Affordable, Convenient Solution

Fortunately, a new breed of company is making a difference and enabling physicians to focus on their number-one priority, the

patient. Companies such as Scribe Healthcare Technologies, Inc., Lake Forest, Illinois, and Vianeta Communications, Milpitas, California, offer Web-native technologies that are cost-effective to purchase and maintain compared to other software solutions. These integrated Internet technologies work with the existing hardware and widely used Microsoft technology that most offices use.

In the short history of transcription technology, an easy, inexpensive, predictable, quality product has not always existed. Many technologies implemented during the last 15 years involved purchasing exorbitantly priced hardware and/or software or the use of voice-recognition software that did not provide a suitable product. While speech recognition

and electronic medical records (EMR) were once predicted to make transcriptionists obsolete by the year 2000, the reality is that physicians still dictate, and transcriptionists still transcribe.

A Personal Touch

There is a bright side. After years of failed technological implementations, new technologies are adapting to the requirements of the physicians. Technology-based transcription had to take a close look at what physicians needed, how they did their work, and what the end product needed to be. Both Scribe and Vianeta are companies that have responded to these needs and provided products that fit easily into a physician's

Back End Support

What does a physician need to run these systems? While many dictation and transcription systems cost between tens and hundreds of thousands of dollars in upfront expenses, Scribe's system is Internet-based. All that is needed is an updated PC with Microsoft Windows and Office programs, a high-speed Internet connection, and access to a phone. For a low monthly licensing fee and a per-line charge for the storage of documents on Scribe's platform, physicians can use MTs they already work with or choose from offshore or domestic vendors who type on the Scribe MT platform.

Systems like these allow physicians to:

- Perform an advanced search of all documents on the platform, meaning they can search all patient files by the name of a drug, diagnosis, or treatment.
- Listen to all of their audio files, which are stored electronically.
- Keep an address book of all the referring physicians with whom they communicate, which is available online to the MTs.

An Evolving Industry

This new breed of healthcare technology company has been growing its value proposition. Scribe has begun to make its move from dictation and transcription technology to offering a complete online repository that looks like an EMR database. In 2006, Scribe announced PatientChart as an "add-on" module. PatientChart allows a practice to centralize and store all patient information, including transcribed records, images, lab results, and more. It is flexible, allowing records to be created through "smart templates."

"Scribe focuses on documentation technologies that complement the way physicians work. We plan to add a secure communica-

tion product in 2007 that will allow physicians to share information with other physicians or their patients," says John Weiss, Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Scribe. "As insurance companies begin to embrace phone and e-mail consultations, our new communication product will allow for tracking and reimbursement for these types of services."

The University of Chicago Hospitals have found Scribe's package to be tremendously supportive of their dictation and transcription process. "The customer service is excellent," says Dennis Gray, Assistant Director of Medical Records at University of Chicago Hospitals. "The training and ownership are fabulous. They are right in there with the physicians, training them and helping them use the system correctly."

The University of Chicago Hospitals are implementing an electronic signature process, and Gray says he is looking forward to experiencing its full benefits soon.

In much the same way that physicians relieve patients' pain and increase their ability to function in life, technology has evolved during recent years to ease physicians' workloads and improve their ability to function more efficiently in providing patient care. 🌟

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John Weiss is the Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Scribe Healthcare Technologies, Inc. Prior to acquiring Scribe, John was an early Internet entrepreneur, having founded several successful dotcoms like Starting Point, WebPromote, and YesMail. In his free time John enjoys spending time with family, sailboat racing, and water skiing.

existing workflow. In the typical workflow of a Web-based transcription:

- The physician picks up the phone or handheld recorder and dictates his or her notes.
- The dictation is routed to voice-recognition software or to the medical transcriptionist (MT). The record is created in Microsoft Word using the physician's preferred formatting and letterhead.
- The document is sent to a physician-accessed inbox via the Internet. On this Internet platform, the physician can edit, print, fax, e-mail, and store documents securely. Authorized persons can access the documents at home or in the office.