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Paul Desmarais/Staff photo

Marisa Barbieri, left, Norwalk Hospital's senior software designer, will be working with Norwalk-based FileOn to streamline the routing of patient records. Mark Shah, FileOn president, is part of the team that has developed customized software for the hospital.

Just what the doctor ordered

*Norwalk Hospital's
new bar-code system
aids in patient care*

By Richard Lee
Assistant Business Editor

Patient files will soon be entering the fast lane at Norwalk Hospital.

The 328-bed community hospital has signed an agreement with FileOn, a Norwalk-based provider of document management services, to streamline the facility's routing of patient records and access by appropriate staff.

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"The FileOn eLibrary will provide the ability to scan, bar code and route paperwork from the time a patient arrives at the admitting desk in the emergency department through the time a patient is discharged," said Ron Bleiberg, vice president of products and services for FileOn.

FileOn has developed customized software that will read bar coded records and electronically file them so they can be retrieved online by physicians, nurses and

other health-care providers, said Marisa Barbieri, the hospital's senior software designer, who has worked with FileOn.

"It will be going live in June," Barbieri said, noting that the system will first be used in the emergency department.

The system will eventually allow instant access to patient documents anywhere they are needed in the hospital. For example, bar-coded documents on a patient in the emergency department can be scanned, and if the patient is admitted, the records are available immediately on a floor before the patient arrives.

"The system will enable doctors in different areas of the hospital to simultane-

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Hospital

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early view and consult on patient information in order to determine the proper treatment. This will speed up the current process of having the paperwork mailed with the patient at real times," FileOn President Mark Shah said.

The FileOn technology helps the hospital comply with federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act standards, and at the same time will help the hospital use resources efficiently, he said.

"The FileOn eLibrary will enable Norwalk Hospital to reduce current costs and at the same time enhance patient care," Shah said.

It also will streamline the billing process because physicians will be able to sign off on a case anywhere they have Internet access, he said.

A member of the National Health Information Business Communication Council, Barlett said she introduced a bar-code system for documents at the hospital two years ago. FileOn was contracted to advance the technology. "We have a lot of faith in FileOn. We're on the forefront of this," Barlett said, adding that only 3 percent of the nation's hospitals use bedside barcode technology.

FileOn was selected from several vendors, said Christian Randon, hospital chief information officer and a vice president.

The hospital was impressed by FileOn's programming diversity, software design and willingness to work with the facility's staff, Randon said, stressing that security of a patient's records is crucial. "We asked them to locate the servers on-site rather than at FileOn's office on Golden Hill Street. We're concerned about HIPAA and security," Randon said.

As the federal government

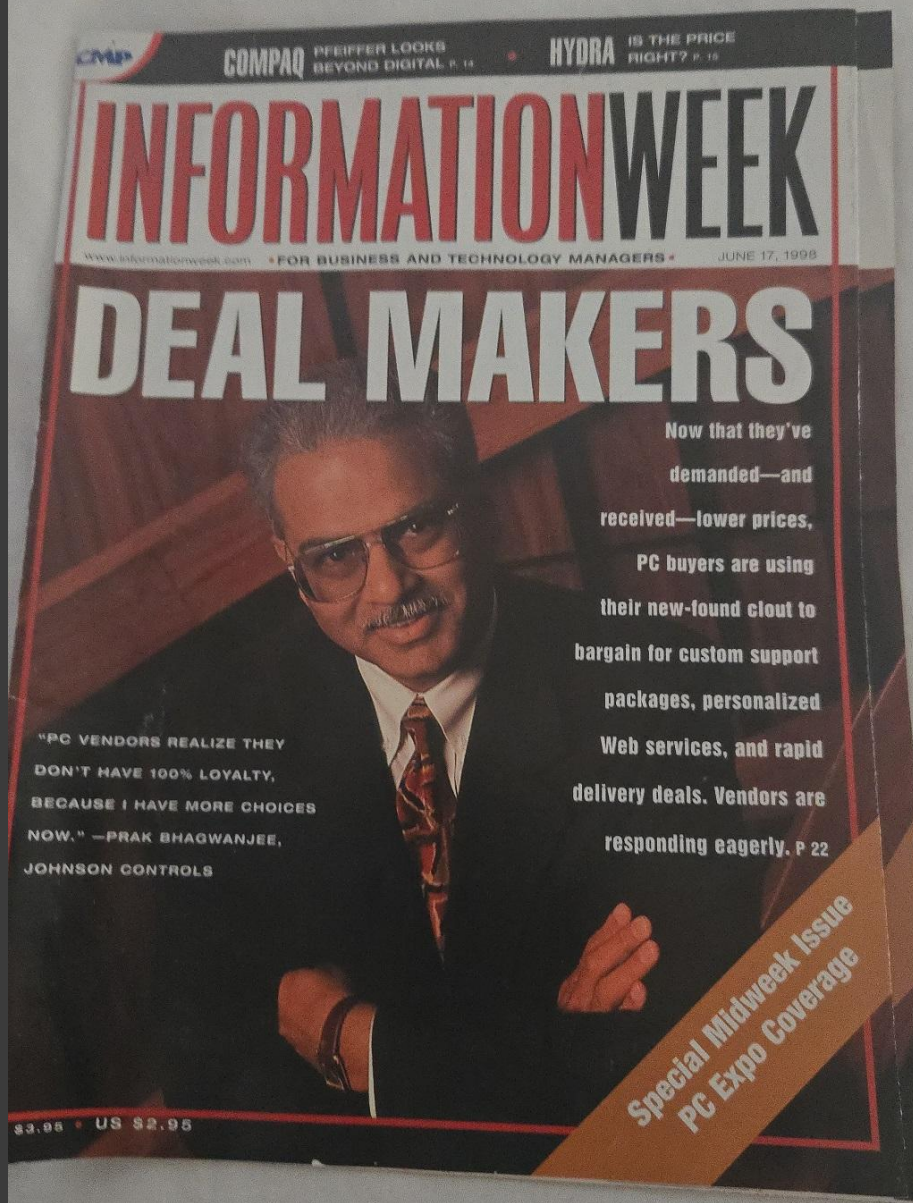
promotes more efficient and safer health care, hospitals are seeking ways to streamline operations, said Missy Kramer, senior adviser at the the office of Dr. David Brailer, national coordinator, health education technology at the Office of Health and Human Services in Washington D.C.

"There are a lot of companies that have sprouted up to fill the niche. Norwalk Hospital is following suit with a lot of others who see this on the national agenda," Kramer said.

FileOn

Note: Name updated to reflect current professional identity.

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Compaq Maps Future

Pfeiffer addresses extranets, NT, and the Digital brand

Get smarter: Compaq's extranet services show the Net's power to deliver knowledge, says CEO Pfeiffer.

By Mary Hayes

Compaq this week divulged new details of its plan to become a major enterprise player, placing the Internet and its Windows NT server business at the cornerstone of its strategy. Company officials disclosed plans for an Internet-based service to help companies implement enterprise applications on NT systems, and outlined a road map for new high-end NT servers using clustering technology from Compaq's Digital Equipment acquisition.

At PC Expo, Compaq said it will begin offering its activeAnswers extranet on July 7. The extranet will feature customized, secure Web sites for companies planning to implement or currently deploying packaged enterprise applications. With ERP applications from vendors such as Baan, PeopleSoft, and SAP gaining in market share, officials at Compaq say they're convinced that customers will want to purchase Windows NT servers from companies that can provide support and services for such software. "These [the activeAnswers] services demonstrate the Internet's power not only as a tool to provide information but to deliver an even more important commodity: knowledge," Compaq CEO Eckhard Pfeiffer said in his keynote address at the show.

Using activeAnswers, companies will subscribe to custom Web sites that disseminate "best practices" information for deploying enterprise applications. Areas within these sites will be tailored to provide information to specific people involved in these deployments, such as IT operations analysts, engineers, and end users. "This is where Compaq can change the competitive landscape," Pfeiffer said. "I foresee a day when enterprise apps will work almost as plug-and-play modules."

Life After Digital

Compaq says that in the aftermath of the Digital acquisition, it will position itself as a provider of standard technologies, not only with its activeAnswers solution but also by trying to make Digital's Alpha chip a standard. The company will position forthcoming Alpha-based NT servers as high-end alternatives to Intel's Merced, and also work with Samsung to develop and sell Alpha processor technology to other systems manufacturers.

But Mark Shah senior manager of IS for MasterCard International Inc., notes that it might be hard to position the Alpha chip as a standard. "Companies buy servers for at least five years," he says. "If companies purchase systems recently, they're not going to migrate

to Alpha right away. I don't know if Compaq can capture enough market share by mid-2000, when [Intel's] Merced ships."

Compaq plans to eliminate the Digital brand on future NT servers, beginning with systems due out later this year based on Intel's Xeon chip, according to Mary McDowell, VP and general manager of Compaq's server division. Compaq will funnel high-end clustering technologies from Digital and Tandem into the Xeon- and Alpha-based NT line for both scalable and failover servers. By year's end, it will offer eight-way Xeon-based systems in four-node configurations. In the meantime, Compaq says it will support some models of the currently shipping Digital Intel-based NT systems for up to nine months.

Moving down the product chain, Pfeiffer says Compaq will also do away with the Digital brand on desktop PCs. But as he's previously indicated, Compaq will hold onto Digital's Unix technologies, in addition to the Alpha processor. "Compaq will continue to invest in high-performance 64-bit platforms because they represent the future of computing," Pfeiffer said. Despite Compaq's commitment to Windows NT, "This is not the only computing platform, and will not be for some time to come."

—with Jeff Sweat and Martin J. Garvey

Note: Name updated to reflect current professional identity.





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