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Depending on ecoline to
Meet Increasing Demands
Lake Charles Memorial Health System

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Case Study

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Depending on ecoline to Meet Increasing Demands

Lake Charles Memorial Health System



Fueled by the ongoing growth of its liquefied natural gas industry, Lake Charles, Louisiana, is experiencing a rapid increase in its local population. To meet the healthcare needs of this booming community, Lake Charles Memorial Health System is making strategic investments in medical technology, particularly in the area of diagnostic imaging. The objective: serve more patients with premier quality equipment at the best cost and while being as environmentally conscious as possible.

Over the past seven years, the Lake Charles Memorial Health System has invested more than \$114 million in facility improvements, new technology, and service upgrades. Recognized for quality care and for having the largest emergency department in southwest Louisiana, the health system features acute care, women's care, long-term care, and outpatient facilities, as well as a dedicated team of nearly 2,500 employees and 300 staff physicians representing more than 60 specialties and subspecialties.

A Requirement of Reliability

"Our patient load is growing an average of 26 percent per year," says Scott Daigle, administrative director of Radiology at Lake Charles Memorial Hospital. "We're a 24/7 facility, and we're just as busy at night as we are during the day. That's why we have to have dependable equipment. And the more the population grows, the more equipment we'll need."

Tommy Broussard, CT supervisor for Memorial Hospital, describes the situation in pointed terms. "Uptime is everything. If just one of the three CT scanners we have goes down for any length of time, we're backed up for at least a day. So we need service and equipment we can count on."

"We're looking for a quality, reliable piece of equipment that meets our needs," adds Richard Martinez, MD, medical director of Radiology at Memorial Hospital. "It has to be safe, current, proven, and complete with the essential imaging features we need, plus the ability to upgrade."

Through its recent acquisitions of Siemens ecoline refurbished equipment, Memorial is achieving all those goals—at a surprisingly affordable cost.



“We have the busiest ER in town. Having a CT right in the emergency room helps accelerate our throughput. Purchasing an ecoline CT made that possible at a very good price.”

— Tommy Broussard, CT Supervisor
Lake Charles Memorial Hospital

Making the Refurbished Decision

When Memorial’s staff decided to increase its radiology capabilities, they investigated a number of possibilities. “We received a number of proposals,” Daigle recalls, “but Siemens gave us the option of their refurbished ecoline equipment. That represented a significant savings for us, which made it worth considering. We also liked the idea that it was an environmentally friendly option—adding the latest technological components while upcycling the encasement.”

However, the radiology staff was hesitant to purchase pre-owned medical equipment. The hospital had previously acquired a used system through a third party and, according to Daigle, “We had trouble with that unit. It definitely wasn’t refurbished. The third-party vendor had to replace some critical components, and there was a lot of downtime. We didn’t want that experience again.”

With that in mind, the decision-makers at Memorial weighed the refurbished option carefully. “We had faith in Siemens already, and what we learned about ecoline is you’re basically getting a new piece of equipment. It’s got the refurbished name on it, but it’s been torn apart and put back together. It’s been serviced, it has the newest software, and it’s upgradable. It has everything that the new machines have. You’re getting it at a substantial cost savings, and there is no difference in output quality for patient tests.”



An ecoline CT in the Emergency Room.

As the hospital serving the most emergency cases in the area, Memorial Hospital sought to expedite the processing of CT scans for its urgent care patients. The architect for the new emergency department suggested placing a CT scanner directly in the emergency room. By opting for the SOMATOM Definition AS 64 eco, which supports fast diagnoses and highly responsive patient care, Memorial Hospital obtained the greater efficiency and quality it needed at a significantly lower cost.



Choosing ecoline Systems for MR and CT

Once Memorial staff recognized the level of quality that Siemens builds into its refurbished equipment, the team decided to purchase not just one ecoline model, but two of them. "We were building a new emergency room and we wanted to put a CT in there," notes Daigle. "We also needed another MR to handle the increasing number of patients."

With the addition of the SOMATOM® Definition AS 64 eco CT scanner, the hospital was able to set a new standard of service. "We're doing close to 2,700 CT scans a month now," says Broussard. "I'd say we're turning out about three times the number of scans we used to, and it's taking us less time."

The MAGNETOM® Espree eco has had a similar positive impact for Memorial. "The Siemens team worked with us on developing the specs for the MR," Dr. Martinez states. "We explained to them what we wanted to accomplish, which features we wanted, and which we felt weren't necessary for our situation. So they said to us, 'Let's figure out what the hospital needs, let's customize it, and then let's price it where it works for everybody.' It was the right equipment at the right price, which made buying both ecoline models an easy decision."



“We’re very comfortable with the ecoline refurbished systems we get from Siemens. We know they’ll be of very high quality and basically as good as a new one.”

— Dr. Richard Martinez, Medical Director of Radiology
Lake Charles Memorial Hospital

The Siemens Service Advantage

Over his many years in radiology, Daigle has learned what separates one manufacturer from another. “One thing that Siemens does get that a lot of other companies don’t seem to grasp is that sales and service should be connected. You want to know that both parts of the company stand by the same promise. With Siemens, our service has been impeccable and that’s why we continue to buy. In my opinion, it’s sales that creates the first purchase, but it’s service that makes all the rest.”

Dr. Martinez appreciates the fact that Siemens doesn’t outsource its service. “With Siemens Factory Service, we know that it’s the OEM taking care of the equipment,” he points out. “The Siemens service technicians know the systems inside and out, so they know how to come in and diagnose and make any necessary adjustments on the fly, with minimal downtime for us. That’s critical because uptime is key for treating our patients quickly and efficiently. Plus, it’s not always a problem that brings them around. Sometimes, Siemens service is there just to optimize our equipment.”

Broussard notices how Siemens service goes well beyond keeping the equipment running. “As a supervisor, I like that Siemens equipment is easy to use in the first place. But, when we need onsite training, Siemens delivers it. When we need offsite training, they do that too. Siemens offers good equipment, good service, and good training, along with quality output.”

The MAGNETOM Espree eco: Flexible. Fast. Functional.

The MAGNETOM Espree eco features a wide-bore, short-bore design that accommodates the needs of multiple types of patients, including bariatrics, pediatrics, claustrophobics, and those in various states of discomfort. It delivers flexibility through a range of coil packages, the ability to scan patients in positions other than head-first, high-quality imaging, and processing speed that significantly reduces scanning time.





“We’re growing very quickly here in Lake Charles. Because of that, we have a lot of purchases coming up. In fact, we’re talking about building an entire imaging center with more CT, ultrasound, fluoroscopy, mammography, and bone density imaging. We see Siemens as being a part of that, both for new and refurbished equipment.”

– Scott Daigle, Administrative Director of Radiology
Lake Charles Memorial Hospital

Like-new Quality at a Refurbished Price

The ultimate measure of radiology equipment is the quality of its images and the consistency of its performance. In these critical areas, the doctors and technologists at Memorial rate Siemens ecoline systems as equal to brand new.

“I can’t tell the difference,” confirms Dr. Martinez. “When I’m reading the images, I usually don’t know which machine they were done on, unless somebody tells me. That’s where the rubber meets the road. For our interpretations, when we’re reviewing images on either ecoline or new Siemens equipment, they’re the same.”

Daigle notes that there is also no apparent difference in service requirements. “All equipment needs service, but none of the ecoline equipment we purchased through Siemens has been any more of a maintenance issue than the ones we bought new. They all work well and they all deliver what we need.”

The Siemens Partnership

Memorial has a long and successful history with Siemens. “We have a very good relationship with Siemens,” says Daigle. “Our integrated service agreement with them started more than 20 years ago and now covers over 100 pieces of equipment. Under that agreement, in addition to their representatives and service people coming by regularly or as needed, we have scheduled quarterly meetings where we discuss uptime data and service matters. All in all, Siemens’ service record has been exceptional and they are very attentive to our needs and the performance of their systems.”

Dr. Martinez notes that the partnership goes well beyond the terms of the contract. “Over the time that I’ve been here, we’ve developed a really good partnership with Siemens. We can go to them and say, ‘Here’s what we’re thinking about. Help us make the right choice.’ And they’ll work with us to do that. Anyone can give you the lowest bid for something that you’re not going to be happy with. Anyone can give you the highest bid for the latest piece of brand new equipment, but it might not be what you really need. The key is to listen and figure out what’s best for the situation—for quality, performance, price, and above all, the patient.”



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Since 2001, Siemens has refurbished and installed ecoline systems worldwide, delivering like-new quality and performance at budget-friendly prices. Every ecoline system is inspected and rebuilt following a strict ISO-certified process that goes beyond the basic refurbishment steps of many competitive offerings. Key differentiators include:

- Thorough system cleaning, disinfecting, and aesthetic repairs.
- Configured to customers' specific needs and budgets.
- Rebuilt with only certified Siemens parts and hardware.
- Guaranteed parts and service availability for at least five years.
- Equipped with the latest software releases.
- Tested using the same specifications as new systems.
- Same warranty and support as new systems.

ecoline systems offer the best of Siemens technology to help customers achieve their goals—for a fraction of the total cost of new systems.

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