



Case
Study

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ecoline: A Sound Investment Strategy for a New Kind of Radiology Business

MedQuest Associates



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–Jeff Cartwright
Manager Mobile MRI, MedQuest Associates

ecoline Systems

Since 2001, Siemens Healthineers has refurbished and installed ecoline systems worldwide, delivering like-new quality and performance at budget-friendly prices. Each ecoline system is 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 OEM parts and hardware.
- Guaranteed parts and service for a five-year minimum.
- Equipped with the latest software releases.
- Tested using the same protocols as new systems.

MedQuest Associates, a leading owner, operator, and manager of diagnostic imaging facilities in the southeastern United States, is carving out a unique niche in radiology—in fact, several unique niches.

For example, MedQuest offers the perspective of operating as a for-profit subsidiary of a not-for-profit parent company. It engages in outpatient imaging center joint ventures with hospitals, while also running acute hospital radiology departments. It manages its own centers, while also providing consulting services to hospitals and centers in non-competing territories.

“We take the lessons that we’ve learned from years of operating our own imaging centers, implement them, and enable our clients to standardize those techniques through their complete network of centers,” says Doug Shepard, Director of Real Estate and Development.

A focus on quality and ROI

Every project MedQuest Associates undertakes must meet strict financial thresholds for return on investment, while delivering a standard of quality that provides a clear and distinct differentiation from the competition.

These are two of the prime reasons MedQuest chooses ecoline systems from Siemens Healthineers to play a significant role in MedQuest’s business strategy.

“When we purchase systems from Siemens Healthineers, we don’t think of it as either ecoline or new,” says Chris Murphy, Senior Director of Development for MedQuest Associates. “We know that Siemens Healthineers stands behind all their products fully, whether it’s ecoline or out of the wrapper. What’s more, if we’re doing a deal and we say that we’re putting in Siemens Healthineers equipment, that’s all we really need to say about that topic. Everybody’s satisfied.”

Bill Oberst, Chief Technologist, offers a similar perspective: “I have worked on some brand new scanners, and I’ve worked on ecoline equipment. I have not noticed any difference in a brand new machine versus the ecoline. They both perform the same to me.”

The latest technology at a lower capital cost

Because every ecoline system is rebuilt at the factory and installed with the most recent technology, they enable MedQuest to deploy in what Shepard calls a “value-based outpatient imaging situation.”

Murphy explains, "First, you have a lower capital cost. Then, because the system is upgradable, you can add-on newer configuration options that may have been outside the budget with the purchase of new equipment. That's very attractive to us."

For MedQuest, the alternative to purchasing eoline would be to buy from a third-party broker. But, in their case, this experience was unacceptable. "Third-party brokers don't own the equipment," Murphy points out. "They don't have the history with the equipment, they don't provide the upgradability, and they don't offer the same level of service and warranty coverage. Working with the OEM, in this case Siemens Healthineers, is just an obvious choice for us."

Transforming real-world experience into knowledgeable consultation

"We're leaders in creating a new category: radiology management," says Mike Villa, Chief Sales and Marketing Officer for MedQuest. "Our experience running centers and working hands-on with the equipment gives us a level of knowledge and credibility that very few consultants can match. What we offer our partners is a time-proven way to make imaging easy, affordable, and of outstanding quality. eoline systems from Siemens Healthineers are a big part of that."

Chris Murphy agrees. "Often, when we're presenting our consulting capabilities, a prospective client will say something like, 'That's all easy for you guys to say, you're not the ones writing the check.' My response to that is, 'We run our own

centers. We have written checks.' And when they ask, 'What do you buy with your own money?' I tell them we buy a lot of Siemens Healthineers systems."



The MAGNETOM Espree eco: Blending high throughput with high-quality imaging.

The need to balance exceptional patient care with exceptional productivity is central to MedQuest's success, much as it is to other imaging centers. "We try to take our time with patients," says Bill Oberst, Chief Technologist, "but we want to be efficient and productive with the schedule. The MAGNETOM Espree eco definitely helps us achieve that."

"Staying on schedule is your reputation. It's what brings people back," adds Jeff Cartwright, manager of Mobile MRI. "The scans on the Espree eco tend to move from series to series with very little inter-scan delay. That saves a lot of time, which is not only important for throughput reasons, it also means less anxiety for someone who is claustrophobic or nervous."

The MAGNETOM Espree eco also supports productivity with its integrated coils. "You're not always changing the table top between every patient," Cartwright explains. "The fact that the coils are integrated saves you time, not to mention saving you a lot of bending, lifting, plugging in, and wear and tear on the coils. It's just a huge benefit."

Oberst notes another advantage. "We have high channel coils, which deliver high-quality imaging. That's something we know we can count on with the Espree eco."



Flexible. Fast. Functional.

The MAGNETOM Espree eco features a wide-bore, ultra-short system length that accommodates the needs of multiple 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 through its gradient package, and processing speed that significantly reduces scanning time.



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Chief Technologist, MedQuest Associates



The mobile advantage

Another way MedQuest combines investment savvy with premiere patient care is through its expanding use of mobile radiology. “We currently operate 19 mobile MRIs in the Carolinas alone,” says Chris Murphy, “generating about 4,500 days of service per year. In this way, we’re able to offer outpatient imaging rates to a small market that otherwise couldn’t support both a hospital and a fully fixed outpatient imaging center, and we can provide better access for more patients.”

Jeff Cartwright, who manages mobile MRI, notes that the easy adaptability of equipment from Siemens Healthineers makes it a smart choice for mobile radiology. “When you’re in mobile, each site is going to have unique identifiers that have to be activated. With Siemens

Healthineers, it’s very simple. You go to a tab, choose the site and you’re there. They make it very easy to start up.”

Scott Thomas, mobile technologist, experiences this advantage on a regular basis. “I scan for a lot of different centers throughout the year. So being able to interface, get configured, and be ready to go in a short amount of time is really helpful. Siemens Healthineers makes it very convenient.”

Murphy sums it up: “The last six mobile MRIs we’ve purchased have all been Espreo ecos.”

A partnership built on service and strategy

For Bill Oberst, Siemens Healthineers also proves its value in service, even if it isn’t often required. “The ecoline systems, being refurbished, always

come to us in peak condition,” he says. “We actually haven’t had any major service issues at all other than routine maintenance and PMs. With the Siemens Healthineers Help Desk, we get great support from them, from building protocols to diagnosing any issue within a few minutes of it occurring.”

Murphy notes that this service goes well beyond the equipment. “When we go into a market,” he explains, “we can call our partners at Siemens Healthineers and tell them the area we’re looking at. They provide data and analytics we can use to determine that market’s viability and opportunities for growth. They are much more than an equipment company for us.”



MedQuest Associates

MedQuest Associates, owns and/or operates 45 outpatient imaging centers across Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, and the Florida panhandle. The organization also manages all the radiology operations for its parent company's hospitals, and serves as a partner for large health systems seeking to provide imaging services to patients in their local communities.



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

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