The statements by Siemens' customers described herein are based on results that were achieved in the customer's unique setting. Since there is no "typical" hospital and many variables exist (e.g., hospital size, case mix, level of IT adoption) there can be no guarantee that other customers will achieve the same results.

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The information in this document contains general technical descriptions of specifications and options as well as standard and optional features which do not always have to be present in individual cases.

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Case Study

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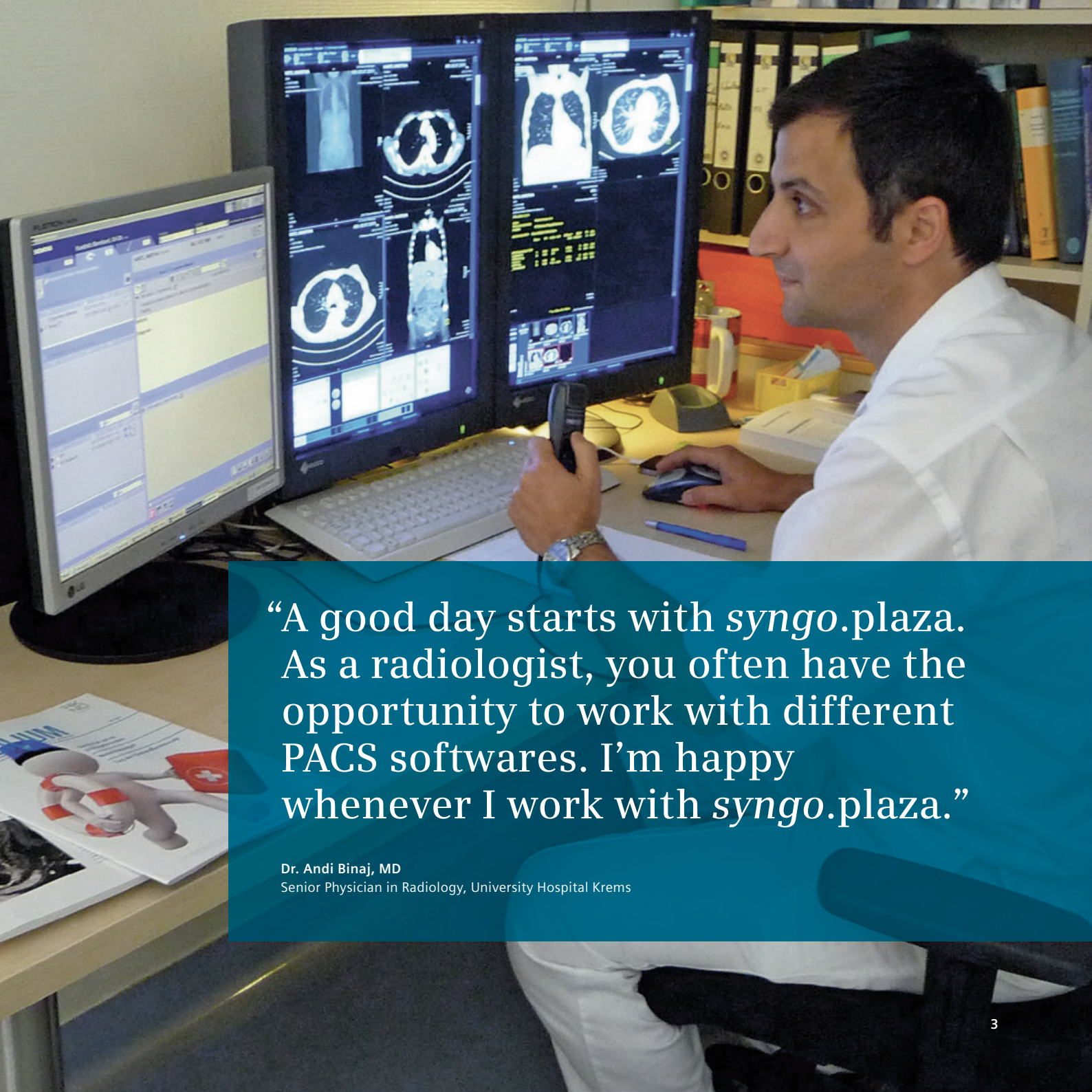
Smooth migration: software conversion during operation

The implementation of *syngo*.plaza at University Hospital Krems

The implementation of *syngo*.plaza at University Hospital Krems demonstrates how careful planning can make PACS migration look – and feel – very easy.

More rapid and accurate diagnosis, online image archives, and reliable operation – in Krems, Austria, all parties are exceptionally satisfied with their transition to the new PACS.

In the Lower Austrian city of Krems, the hospital's maintenance contract for its Picture Archiving and Communication System (PACS) hardware was soon to expire, presenting a prime opportunity. To ensure that the medical care at University Hospital would continue to meet high expectations, it was decided to replace the old PACS completely. However, digital image management is the "information aorta" of a modern, networked hospital. Any interference in the existing workflows poses huge risks – in the worst case, it can bring Radiology to a complete standstill. For this reason, the stance in Krems was clear from the start: Yes, we want a system conversion, but only if it's planned far in advance, with a reliable partner.



“A good day starts with *syngo*.plaza. As a radiologist, you often have the opportunity to work with different PACS softwares. I’m happy whenever I work with *syngo*.plaza.”

Dr. Andi Binaj, MD
Senior Physician in Radiology, University Hospital Krems

A shared history

The 467-bed hospital and Siemens are old acquaintances. Years ago, Siemens Project Manager Thomas Lechner accompanied the implementation of *syngo* Imaging – more recently, he supported the conversion to *syngo*.plaza. The hospital "only" transitioned to new software, not to a new provider – but digitally, very little remained the same. "Virtual machines are the future," is how Bernd Schaffer, IT Coordinator at University Hospital, describes one of the main requirements. Virtualized server software runs largely independent of the underlying hardware, facilitates redundant operation and, if necessary, can easily be moved to other computers. A second key requirement stated by the hospital's IT department: No new hardware for the PACS. Because *syngo*.plaza is highly scalable and easy to virtualize, it fully meets both requirements. *syngo*.plaza scored additional points when the system was connected to the long-term archive of the Klinikverbund der niederösterreichischen Landeskliniken. With its extensive support of online storage and DICOM standards, the new PACS overcomes the obstacles that, in the past, had made cooperation with the network's 25 hospitals difficult.

The University Hospital in Krems, Austria, was founded in 1852.

Careful planning for smooth migration

The fairly quick decision to change to a new PACS was followed by detailed preparations: Physicians from various specialties, technicians, and referrers joined the entire project team from Siemens for workshops. Together, they found ways to meet very specific requirement. On the hospital side, participants demonstrated extraordinary openness for new workflows and new user interfaces. With enthusiasm and motivation running high, a step-by-step transition was quickly discarded in favor of an overnight, hospital-wide “live” conversion. With a safety net in place, of course: To keep the hospital (with its approximately 120,000 annual treatments) out of jeopardy, the previous PACS ran parallel to *syngo*.plaza for some time. This way, staff using the 20 connected workstations and nearly 300 web clients could be trained using real patient data very early on – and could work productively, as well.

Success across the board

Even if the initial decision in Krems was primarily a technological one, the physicians – particularly the radiologists – are just as enthusiastic about the new possibilities. "*syngo*.plaza appealed to us from the very beginning," Dr. Andi Binaj recalls. He is Senior Physician in Radiology and uses the PACS daily – for sonograms, mammograms, and X ray diagnostics, as well as for reporting of slice images from computed tomography (CT) and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). Binaj is visibly impressed by the new software's speed. Images load much faster than in any other system he has worked with: "Ultimately, this leaves us a lot more time for diagnosis." The many new functions and improvements support him, as well; he considers Patient Jacket, Token View, Findings Navigator, and Cross Reference to be the most essential. The customizable menus and layouts make a huge difference, too – making his daily routines much easier.

Up-to-date technology for up-to-date medical care

Dr. Hans Mosser, Director of Radiology, also values the benefits of customization: "The Siemens plaza system offers excellent options for setting up individual workstations and adapting to the specific complexity of a given case." In any event, he adds, the technology should adapt to the physician, not the other way around. However, what ultimately counts is not the medical staff and their job satisfaction – which, as Mosser says, certainly increases with *syngo*.plaza – but a self-evident aspect: "When IT systems support us in these processes, they automatically support the patient, too."

“I would recommend that everyone make the transition to *syngo*.plaza.”

Bernd Schaffer

IT Coordinator, University Hospital Krems

Successful partners – into the future

Siemens and University Hospital will remain in close contact. “Signing an annual service contract like the one we have – with 24/7 coverage – is like an insurance policy,” explains IT Coordinator Bernd Schaffer, and adds, “We feel secure, in good hands.” In his opinion, the cost of a full-service maintenance contract is negligible compared to the risk that a PACS malfunction will severely compromise Radiology and other essential areas of hospital operation. The project participants from Krems, along with the referrers and Siemens, will continue to meet at regular intervals to exchange experiences and advice on the topic of PACS. Their partnership is what has made this project a success story. Binaj is clearly pleased as he summarizes, “Cooperation with Siemens as well as with our own IT department and with the colleagues [...] was very smooth. And that’s [...] the basic prerequisite for making this transition successful.”