

RevolutionEHR Takes on the Establishment: We are Different, and We are Proud of It

by Scott Jens, O.D., F.A.A.O., President, EyeCodeRight Online

Welcome to the EyeCodeRight Online website! As a practicing optometrist, I can appreciate the time that it takes to learn about the various options in the arena of optometric practice management systems (PMS) and electronic health records (EHR.) As a colleague, please accept this document as my personal reply to the critics of our new software system who are suggesting on their websites and in their newsletters that our company and our RevolutionEHR online software application have been placed before the optometric profession with “smoke and mirrors.”

The reality is that all optometric software programs are in a constant state of improvement. Regardless of the number of users or years in business, every software company will state that they have an established and proven system. Yet, they will periodically contradict that established status by improving their system with upgrades or new features. That’s good business and good customer service, and optometry is fortunate that most if its industry vendors do not rest on their laurels.

Every vendor has to start from day one in business, and every vendor has to have customer number one, two, three, and one hundred. If the product that has been delivered to those customers has a solid performance in the patient care game, those customers will be justifiably loyal to that vendor and its products for a very long time.

At EyeCodeRight Online, we are proud of our new-to-the-market status. We understand that the competition will attempt to undermine our effort to join their game by telling prospective customers that there is risk associated when buying from a new company. In response, I say that there is great opportunity in working with our new company: the staff is highly responsive to every customer, the development process will be greatly impacted by feedback of early adopters, and cost will be reasonable. No smoke and mirrors here.

The most critical issue in selecting an EHR is the ability to easily use the software application. Ease of use can be measured in many ways: lack of significant IT coordination for servers, easy connectivity between multiple offices, graphically rich/visually satisfying user interface, quick data entry capability, and integrated software functionality. RevolutionEHR is the first release of our fully online PMS/EHR system, and it has all of those attributes.

Optometrists are savvy purchasers, so there has to be reassurance that a software application and the parent company are worthy of the doctor’s

investment. After all, ease of use is critical, but other standards are important, too:

- Excellent customer care: I have talked to many optometrists who are looking for a new software system because their current software company's customer service system rarely works as expected. They report long wait times, sometimes through the end of the business day. They also complain about offshore service, where agents without good English-speaking skills labor through the service protocol. At EyeCodeRight Online, you get access to our new Customer Care Team, small in number but eager to answer every call and available during business hours on the technologically-savvy (and free) online communication system called Skype, as well as toll-free telephone.
- Electronic claims that come directly from the doctor's diagnosis coding within the EHR: It amazes me to listen to optometrists who are not paperless because they still rely on their historical paper fee slip or superbill systems, yet their PMS would allow them to do some degree of electronic claims submission. Cautious business evaluation would deem this inefficiency as money wasted. What's worse, I watch colleagues purchasing new software systems that have no EHR who must continue to enter codes on a paper form and then spend valuable staff time to re-enter the codes into a data system, which thereafter sends an electronic claim. With RevolutionEHR, the doctor reviews the exam findings and chooses the diagnosis codes that are new, or simply reviews codes that have been entered previously for the patient in the master diagnosis list, then assigns those codes to the proper CPT service codes. The staff enacts simple drag 'n drop action to assign the codes to the payer, and the invoice or claim is created; with one touch, it's submitted through Gateway EDI (our current clearinghouse partner.) It's that simple.
- Improved office communications: Does your office use reams of Post-It notes to request tasks of each other? Wouldn't you like to have a system that allows the doctor to recommend tasks to be done at the end of the patient visit, or to allow staff to send each other requests to accomplish trial lens orders, calls to patients, or important office functions? RevolutionEHR includes a Task module that enhances intraoffice task management.
- Graphical and analytical account management: My conversations with optometrists reveal that they are highly motivated to analyze their practice statistics, especially if advised by practice management consultants and services. Every software system analyzes receipts, sales, and accounts receivable differently. RevolutionEHR includes an advanced accounting evaluation system including graphical reporting for quick-view analysis.

When all of the functional analysis has been done and systems have been compared, the final determination almost always comes down to cost. This is a very difficult analysis to perform. An optometrist simply does not have time to spend hours (or days) on the phone with sales agents to determine the cost of each system of the desired configuration. This is analogous to the contact lens patient who is asked to price compare various contact lens options that involve different lens designs, materials, and replacement cycles; it is a painful cost-comparison analysis.

A recent article in a popular optometry publication attempted to analyze the real costs of integrating EHR. The factors that were considered included staff time to manage historical charting systems, the cost of consumable products in chart systems, and the expense of hardware and IT connectivity. The article did not make an attempt to evaluate the cost differences for purchase and annual support fees for the industry's software systems. If you wondered why, I would challenge you to create the analysis – it's nearly impossible. The primary reason is that most systems include many versions of their software, involving a variety of optional modules and functionality, and they commonly charge the user with increased costs with increased numbers of workstations. It's often impossible to know the real price.

EyeCodeRight Online is proud of its pricing policy because it is simple, fair, and cost effective. However, I recently had a colleague of mine say that the word on the street is that RevolutionEHR is expensive. My reply was that it is our responsibility to disprove that point, although this is another place where the competition can make an unproven challenge to our company and our product without any burden of proof on their end. Again, the industry has not published an effective comparison of costs.

Online systems in medicine and historical desktop systems in optometry gave us a very good understanding of price point. Before we developed Revolution EHR, even I went through the process in 2003 of getting pricing for an optometric system, and the software was going to cost tens of thousands of dollars for our three doctor/two clinic practice, and that didn't include the extensive server costs and VPN connections between office locations. In comparison, we priced RevolutionEHR to be quite inexpensive, given the cost of developing and maintaining online software that doesn't require servers or interoffice networking – it uses the internet, which equates to low expense.

Our Initiation Fee is \$5,988 for a one to three doctor clinic, which includes data conversion, online training and system set up. For the remainder of the customer relationship, the clinic pays a per-doctor Monthly Access Fee that we equate to the monthly fee that a person pays for cell phone service: you pay, you get access. However, our fees include unlimited access to the system for unlimited number of staff, computers, and office locations. The *annual* cost for a three-doctor practice is less than \$10,000, which can often



have monthly optical lab fees of \$5,000 to \$15,000. In comparison, do we think that RevolutionEHR is expensive? Of course, the answer is no.

Optometrists are slow to adopt EHR technology because they are afraid of change and they do not want to "move the cheese" on their staff. Optometrists should not be scared by some software companies into thinking that only the long-standing, traditional systems are worth their time and consideration, and that those companies are the only ones telling the truth about who they are, what they do, and where they will be in five years.

In summary, RevolutionEHR is a new offering from a relatively new company that is challenging the establishment. We are creating a revolution in the industry. While we realize there will be other online systems some day (there already are such systems in general medicine that are similarly priced to our system), we are first. We have most of the features that the legacy systems have, but not all of them. We have some features that none of the legacy systems have, and I mean none of them.

I welcome you to join our revolution today. See through the smoke, and peek around the corner into the future via the mirrors... RevolutionEHR will be an industry challenger in 2007 and beyond because of innovation and commitment to the optometric profession. Our aim is to make your patient care better, and yours should be, too. Let us help you achieve that common goal – implement RevolutionEHR today.

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