



Exceeding expectations with PowerWorks

New Braunfels Vision Center

“The learning curve is mild, and new personnel easily ‘catch on’ when learning the system.”

Dr. S. Grant Smith
Physician/owner

Client at a Glance

Location: New Braunfels, Texas

Opened: 1999

Cerner Solutions:
*PowerWorks
Ophthalmology EMR,
PowerWorks Specialty PM,
RapidClaim, RapidBill*

When New Braunfels Vision Center first opened its doors in 1999, Dr. S. Grant Smith’s personal vision was to run a paperless office—or as close to it as he could get.

The physician/owner implemented an electronic medical record (EMR) before the practice ever saw its first patient.

The EMR and practice management (PM) solutions developed by Prism Systems offered a lot of features and functions the practice found helpful. But the system ran on a proprietary operating system and hardware, which made daily operations more difficult.

Everyday things like fielding scheduling phone calls while trying to help patients at the front desk were sometimes overwhelming, said Office Manager Sylvia Arizola. Reports could take hours or even overnight to compile.

“Sometimes we would wait hours for a financial report to print, only to find out we had selected the wrong information so it didn’t even have what we needed,” she said “It was very inefficient.”

Dr. Smith and Arizola quickly saw that the practice needed a more state-of-the-art system to meet its growing needs. They turned to the *PowerWorks*™ suite of ophthalmology-specific solutions, and since then, life at New Braunfels Vision Center has gotten a whole lot easier.

Exceeding expectations

“The system has exceeded my expectations,” Arizola said. “It’s just a lot easier and faster; a lot better.”

Before *PowerWorks*, Arizola said she and others would have to exit the system to answer questions or get additional information and then “go back in again. With our new system, I can open two, three, five windows—your questions are answered, you



Dr. S. Grant Smith

close the windows, and you’re back where you left off. So much has improved.”

Through the EMR, multiple people can securely access the same chart simultaneously—something their previous EMR did not allow. Because *PowerWorks* solutions are constantly updated by Cerner, they grow with the practice. The latest EMR upgrade fulfilled Dr. Smith’s vision of a free flow of information between systems and devices. The upgrade includes interfaces to three Marco Ophthalmic, Inc. equipment devices—the Marco RT900, RT2100 and RT5100.

Another plus is scanning. New Braunfels’ staff scans insurance cards and drivers’ licenses for every patient who walks in the door. The scanning feature, part of the *PowerWorks Ophthalmology* base package, allows the practice to efficiently manage outside paper and non-integrated devices.

“You don’t even have to pull a chart—you have everything right in front of you,” she said.

“The system has exceeded my expectations. It’s just a lot easier and faster, a lot better. A lot of things have improved.”

Sylvia Arizola
Office manager

Easy to use

A critical aspect of any busy ophthalmology practice is scheduling—another area where New Braunfels excels. Arizola said she enjoys being able to find available appointments, future scheduled appointments and confirm appointments directly from the patient’s account.

“It’s a very quick system to cancel and reschedule an appointment,” Arizola said. “Just cut and paste—it’s amazing.”

Scheduling in *PowerWorks Specialty Practice Management (PM)* is color-coded, so those learning the system don’t have to absorb much other than to look for a specific color. The staff is alerted when the patient’s insurance plan requires an authorization, if a balance is overdue or if they have returned mail.

With all the different scheduling situations the practice encounters daily, it’s critical to be able to view the schedule in a variety of different ways. Said Arizola: “You can look at a day at a glance, a week at a glance, everybody’s schedule, one schedule—however you want to work.”

Dr. Smith agreed, saying that learning and using the EMR is intuitive. As technicians and staff change, he can train new hires without additional help from Cerner, a savings that adds to his overall return on investment.

“The learning curve is mild, and new personnel easily ‘catch on’ when learning the system,” he said.

Referral tracking and marketing

The lifeblood of any specialty practice is referral tracking and marketing. *PowerWorks Specialty PM* is designed with this fact in mind. Referral tracking goes far beyond a simple report of your referring physicians and the amount of business they referred.

“Sometimes the doctor asks, ‘Dr. [Green] referred a patient—what was her name?’” Arizola said. “All I have to do is pull the doctor up on the screen, and it lists all the patients he referred ... and you find the patient immediately.”

Cerner has integrated *PowerWorks* with Microsoft® Word, allowing you to generate professional-looking, natural-sounding letters with ease. Arizola called the mail merge “wonderful.” “I’m using it like crazy,” she said.

With *PowerWorks*, New Braunfels’ staff gets more information on reports in a matter of seconds versus hours. And the system allows you to view a report before you print it.

“Before, I had to go through too many steps,” Arizola said. “Now I can just click on Preview, and it shows it to you, which is a big plus for me.”

Also integrated with Microsoft Excel, reports can be managed in an electronic format, which can be manipulated, graphed, e-mailed and stored electronically.

Patient Monitor

The innovative Patient Monitor feature includes patient tracking and wait-time analysis, which New Braunfels uses as a virtual dashboard for office activity, replacing traditional room flag or lighting systems.

“The Patient Monitor is much better than manual systems, because the detailed reports let you address issues that are impacting patient flow and productivity,” Dr. Smith told an interested physician at the 2005 American Academy of Ophthalmology Annual Meeting. “I strongly endorse it.”

New Braunfels Vision Center also uses the transaction or Electronic Data Interchange services within *PowerWorks Specialty PM*: electronic statement processing (*RapidBill*™) and electronic claims processing (*RapidClaim*™).

With *PowerWorks*, Arizola has the freedom to work from home.

“Overall, we’d rate it pretty high up there because it’s just a good, quality system,” Arizola said.

“We’ve even had other physicians comment on how impressed they were with the system, and they want to know what we have ... It makes us feel more organized, and that’s the way we like to run.”

A partner you can trust

Even a great solution is of little value without a strong partner to back it up. Cerner’s professional services were “awesome,” Arizola said. “We have been very impressed with support. The people are friendly, and they have been good to take care of us when we need them.”

For more information about *PowerWorks* Ophthalmology solutions, call us at 800.927.1024, or visit us at www.cerner.com/powerworks.