

# SHIELDS HEALTH CARE GROUP SPEEDS DIAGNOSES AND CARE WITH COMCAST BUSINESS



Massachusetts' Leading MRI Provider Delivers Image Accuracy and Accessibility with High Performance Network Connecting 36 Locations

## MULTI-SITE MRI PROVIDER DELIVERS INDUSTRY-LEADING SERVICE TO NEW ENGLAND AREA PATIENTS

Shields Health Care Group is the leading provider of magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) services in Massachusetts. Established in 1986 as a single location family-run business, today Shields offers MRI, PET/CT and radiation therapy services across 36 locations in New England. Shields partners with all major hospitals outside of Boston and currently performs approximately 40 percent of all MRIs in the state each year. Since day one, the company's mission has been to provide patients with industry-leading technology and care at affordable prices.

"Access to high-quality, easy to read MR images can play a crucial role in the early identification of life threatening disease," said Chuck Spurr, CIO, Shields Health Care Group. "Quality MRI technology can have a direct impact on a patient's life, and we're dedicated to ensuring that our doctors always have fast access to clear and accurate images. It's this dedication that has made us Massachusetts' leading MRI provider."

## IMAGE SHARING ACROSS A DISTRIBUTED ENTERPRISE DEMANDS SUPERIOR CONNECTIVITY

Shields is proud to deliver high-quality, cutting edge service to patients across its network. To do this, the company needs a reliable connection across all of its 36 locations. MRI files are huge, easily running between 200 megabytes (MB) to a gigabyte (GB) each. The transfer of these files across locations requires significant bandwidth, as slow downloads and transfers negatively impact radiologists' workflow.

"A strong network connection is essential to enable our radiologists to effectively access images and ultimately help patients make important decisions about their healthcare," added Spurr.

While image transport is the most demanding network requirement for Shields, support for its entire system – including patient facing operations – is also critical. The company offers electronic check-ins at all of its locations and an online patient portal, which puts even greater demands on the network.

As Shields continued to expand, the company saw a need to improve bandwidth issues and flexibility – its connectivity needs were growing, and its network needed to keep up. Additionally, the company was looking to optimize IT expenditures and price-for-performance. Finally, Shields was receiving inconsistent customer service from its previous provider due to a regularly changing roster of account representatives who were unfamiliar with its business, its needs and its network. To address these issues and provide superior service for both its radiologists and its patients, a network change was imperative.

## SITUATION

- Leading provider of MRI, PET/CT and radiation therapy services
- 36 locations across New England

## CHALLENGE

- Network needed to better support large file sharing
- Variability in bandwidth requirements demanded network flexibility
- Service costs were too high

## SOLUTION

- Comcast Business Ethernet Network Service
- Comcast Business Ethernet Dedicated Internet
- Comcast Business Internet

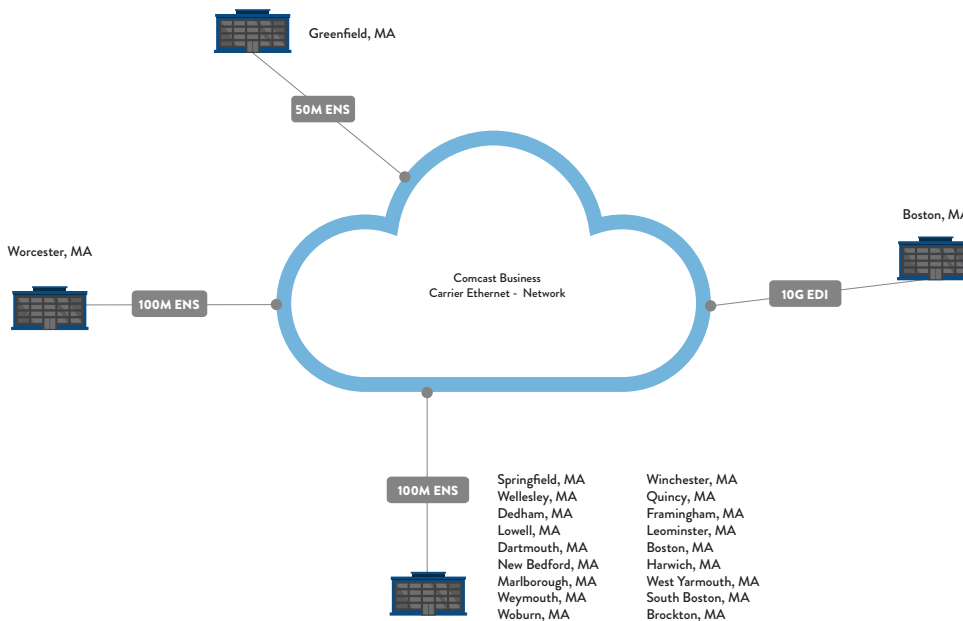
## RESULTS

- Scalable, flexible high-performance network
- Seamless image sharing across locations
- Service costs reduced

## COMCAST BUSINESS DELIVERS SCALABLE ETHERNET NETWORK SERVICES TO POWER EQUIPMENT FOR PATIENT CARE

After a thorough review of providers, Shields turned to Comcast Business to deliver a comprehensive network solution of Ethernet and Internet services across its 36 locations. Shields chose the provider for its reliability, network agility and ability to scale seamlessly to accommodate growth and changing needs.

Comcast Business installed an Ethernet Network Service (ENS) with up to 100 Megabits per second (Mbps) of capacity to expedite the transfer of data-heavy files across 20 of Shields' busiest locations. It also installed a 10 Gigabit per second (Gbps) Ethernet Dedicated Internet (EDI) line connecting to the company's main data center in Boston, which serves as the system's hub and allows radiologists to easily send, store and access files across the network. The remaining 16 Shields locations not accessing the ENS stay connected to the network via Comcast Business Internet services.



With Comcast Business, Shields doubled its bandwidth and reduced costs, which has been integral in the company's ability to deliver high-quality, reliable service at affordable prices. Comcast Business has also readily addressed Shields' changing network and bandwidth requirements, delivering the flexibility needed to adjust to varying technology needs and network growth. Previously, adding new MRI locations was challenging due to significant lag time in getting them up to speed on the network. After switching to Comcast Business, Shields added half a dozen new locations to its network in the course of a single year, and got them up to speed and connected on the ENS network quickly and seamlessly, given the significant geographic reach of the provider's fiber network.

With Comcast Business, radiologists across Shields locations have benefited from improved connectivity and bandwidth, which helps them read images and dispense the proper care. Patients benefit from convenient digital check-in at locations. Additionally, Shields now enjoys the support of dedicated Comcast Business representatives who understand the company's specific challenges and needs.

"Working with Comcast Business has enabled us to elevate our service, provide a better experience for both our radiologists and patients and ultimately expand our business," concluded Spurr. "Shields is always pushing the technology envelope, and we're proud to deliver cutting edge service. Working with Comcast Business means we can count on high-speed, reliable connectivity."

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- Chuck Spurr  
Chief Information Officer  
Shields Health Care Group