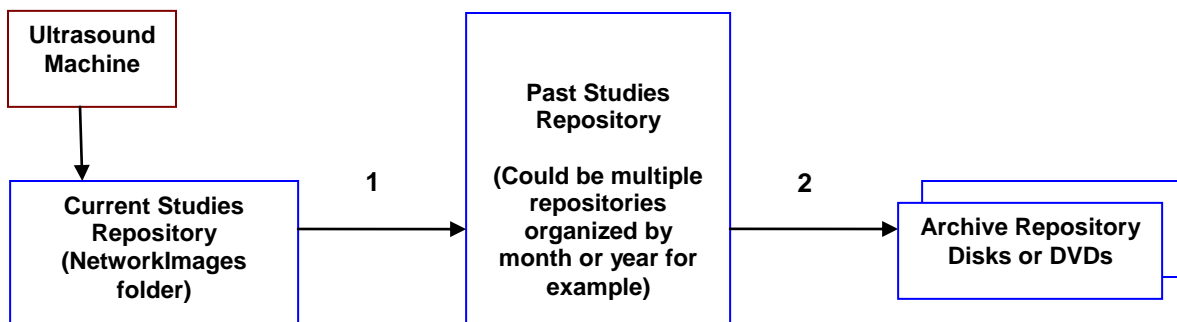


This guide describes a small clinic workflow solution for managing large repositories of images on a small office network. For information on configuring a small office network see the Quick Step Guide for “Configuring a Small Clinic Network to Send Studies to ShowCase Connect”.

Typically, a clinic designates one high end computer as the image repository that runs a copy of ShowCase that includes the ShowCase Connect option. This machine receives studies sent over a DICOM network from ultrasound machines. ShowCase Connect stores the images to a designated folder (default name is “NetworkImages”) on the local disk drive. ShowCase viewing software can display the images in this folder on the repository PC or on other PCs networked to that PC.

An image repository consists of a directory file, called the DICOMDIR, and all of the image files referenced in the directory. The directory file is updated when each image file is received. If the image directory gets very large the process of updating the directory becomes noticeably slow. To maintain good performance, it is recommended that the NetworkImages directory contain only current studies – the current day’s, week’s or month’s studies depending on the number of cases performed at the site. The following diagram shows the recommended flow of image storage. The Current Studies Repository should be kept small to improve the overall performance.



Recommended Small Clinic Workflow

1. Each day, week or month, move the oldest studies out of the Current Repository to the Past Studies Repository. (This could also be a good time to archive them to a DVD). Some clinics move the studies right after they are read. Others move them daily or at the end of each week. The idea is to keep the directory that receives images from the ultrasound machine(s) as small as is practical for your clinic. The Past Studies repository can be larger because the DICOMDIR file is only changed when studies are copied or deleted so performance is usually not an issue.
2. Periodically move studies from the Past Studies Repository to a backup disk or to a DVD for archiving. As stated above, this step could also happen earlier when the study is first moved out of the Current Repository. [Tip: To find the oldest studies, sort the ShowCase study list by date in the ShowCase Directories Window.]

This strategy keeps performance optimized and still allows easy access to images. For information about setting up folders that are shared on the network, see the “Quick Step Guide for Creating Additional ShowCase Image Repositories”.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Always move studies using the ShowCase Copy and Delete functions. If you move image files with the Windows Explorer, the image directory will be incorrect and you will need to run a ShowCase “repair directory” to reconstruct the directory.