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Radiolopolis

Interviewee

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With so much information available on the Internet, the advantages of a one stop shop are clear. One such resource is Radiolopolis (http://www.radiolopolis.com), which brings together a wealth of information resources and tools for the radiologist. HealthManagement interviewed Radiolopolis founder Dr. Roland Talanow about his vision for this fast-growing radiology community. Talanow studied to become a medical doctor in Germany and completed a radiology residency and a nuclear medicine fellowship in the United States, where he is now based.ER STORY

When and Why did You Start Radiolopolis?

I started in 2009. The idea of a central platform, a 'metropolis' for radiology (thus Radiolopolis) was born out of the necessity to combine all the projects I have developed in the past. I presented many projects at meetings, and afterwards they got forgotten, because people don't want to remember this and that website for some niche purpose. That's why I put everything into a 'cloud' and combined it with a social aspect.

The social aspect is extremely important to me because of my past experience, when I could not find a peer who was as interested in these 'unusual' projects as I was. So why not create a platform where people can find each other? Thanks to Radiolopolis people found each other and we have developed and presented over 50 projects at conferences since Radiolopolis has been launched.

Is Radiolopolis Primarily a Continuing Education and Knowledge Sharing Resource?

Yes, and there is more in development, but we do also have valuable sections for clinical practice and for businesses.

Radiolopolis can be seen as a Facebook for radiology, with the professionalism of LinkedIn. We have subforums for different interests and groups for subspecialties (subcommunities). These can be kept private or public. Privacy and member protection is our highest concern, which is what distinguishes us from Facebook and other social media sites. We care about quality – not quantity.

There are other Radiology Communities on the Internet. What's Different About Radiolopolis?

The major difference is the cloud computing concept and the ability to customise and change towards the user's needs. An example of customisation in Radiolopolis is a consultation section that can be used via a realtime chat or handheld application – RadSnap (http://www.RadSnap.com).

What are the Benefits of Registering as a Radiolopolis Member?

· Secure environment: *Radiolopolis is more secure than Facebook or LinkedIn since all members/registrations are screened (by a human) and only eligible people gain access. We have the highest level of security. You can for example upload an image to a private chat with another member.*

· Educational resources: *and tools for students and residents: Thousands of links to educational websites, book sections, self exam tools, tutorials, videos, teaching files and much more.*

· Clinical benifits: *programmes and resources valuable for daily clinical routine such as calculators (GFR, Crea, cortison dose etc.), staging tools, consultation sections, news section, CME and conference calendar, job centre (over 50,000 jobs worldwide), differential diagnoses programmes, links to virtually all radiology societies and journals and a user tailored literature search section.*

· Business section: *this includes jobs postings, a business index, news section, hospital index etc.*

How many Members are There?

Around 12,000. There is literally no country NOT present.

Is There a Mobile Version of Radiolopolis?

The complexity and interactivity of Radiolopolis website makes it difficult to make the site completely mobile. However, we are working on some sections that will be available on mobile devices. One example is the free RadSnap application which allows case consultation and teaching by sharing cases (see http://www.RadSnap.com). Any radiologist interested in mobile radiology should join the Radiolopolis "Mobile Radiology - Radiology Apps" group.

We also just launched a site index for mobile applications in radiology, which can be reviewed and rated. We are working on that with Dr. András Székely from Hungary. Please refer to our paper in the January issue of the European Journal of Radiology (Székely et al. 2013).

What are You Most Proud of in Radiolopolis?

That it became the largest community for radiology professionals worldwide. Almost every day I receive emails with thank yous from students, residents and radiologists for providing such a resource. That is very fulfilling!

Are there Any Forums in Languages Other than English?

Yes, there are groups for different languages and countries, for example German speaking, Hungarian, Spanish, Turkish, Kurdish, Mexican, Panama, Indian, Iranian, Filipino, Saudi Arabia, Russian.

Radiolopolis is Founded on Giving and Sharing Expertise. How is this Monitored?

We put the highest importance on HIPAA (the U.S. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) compliance, and require that any patient information needs to be removed for example when uploading cases. We recently also integrated tools to deidentify afterwards if they forget.

In regard to answers given in forums, it is common sense, and up to your own judgment. Some members already know each other and also you can see their experience level in their profile. A real-time chat offers also a private and instant communication venue between two users.

Radiolopolis has Brought Researchers Together. Can You give Some Examples?

These are just a few examples of projects initiated in Radiolopolis and presented at many radiological and medical conferences:

RadDX - a web-based tool to form a concise differential diagnosis of findings in diagnostic and interventional imaging;

Radiology museum - a central repository of historic and contemporary radiological artifacts;

Radiation Passport - an educational iPhone and iPod touch application for patients and healthcare professionals about radiation-associated cancer risks from medical imaging exams and procedures (Baerlocher MO et al. 2010);

Cancer Staging tools - a free and customised online tool to facilitate quick and accurate staging of common malignancies;

eLearning Radiology.com – quality assurance of radiology education material on the internet;

PubRad - PubMed for radiology;

Study about Smart phones Tablets and mobile applications for radiology (Székely et al. 2013);

Study about radiation awareness- amongst radiology professionals;

Study about "Predictive Analysis'- of the use of a novel procurement tool to acquire radiological technology for NGOs".

How does the RadDX Differential Diagnosis Tool Work?

Users enter data in a comprehensive form, based on what they see on the study and clinical and demographic data, if available. This will be compared to the database of entries provided by subspecialists, analysed and the results shown in the order of priority.

This is not to substitute for the radiologist but to serve as a learning tool for the radiologist in training/resident and as a confirmation and support tool to either confirm the differential diagnosis the radiologist thought about or come up with additional ones the radiologist did not think about. This gives additional peace of mind. This programme is built in a modular way for different subspecialties (MSK, neuro, breast etc).

What is the Process for Uploading a Case to Radiolopolis, for Example if a Radiologist wants Another Opinion? Who Checks the Image, and Once it is on the Site, what Happens?

Uploading a case is as simple as a click of a button. Every member has automatically his/her own case gallery/ teaching file collection. In the upload form, several categorisations based on specialty, modality, image plane, body region help retrieval later on. The user may add a title or question (depends if the case is for teaching or consultation purposes), a description, which could contain for example pertinent patient demographics and clinical history. It is however clearly stated that NO patient identifiers are allowed. We have watchdogs to make sure the cases are not violating any rules. I personally check most cases too.

Each uploaded case receives its own personal page which contains an individual discussion forum, viewing tools, and additional tools like 'Get more', where we automatically fetch images and other information from the web as an extra service. For that we use our affiliate site http://www. searchradiology.com, a peer-reviewed radiology specific search engine. It all stays in our cloud.

After a case has been uploaded, it is promoted in Radiolopolis and on our various Facebook and LinkedIn pages and groups to increase the likelihood of a timely answer.

PubRad is the Radiology-Specific Search Tool for PubMed. What are the Advantages of Using this Instead of going Straight to PubMed?

PubRad was developed to make PubMed search more efficient from a radiology standpoint. It pre-filters results specific to radiology, allows users to select a specific journal or multiple journals to search at once and also to search PubMed unfiltered. You can create your own literature portfolio on Radiolopolis by saving the links to articles in your own folders.

Does Radiolopolis Link to Other Radiology Resources on the Web?

We have a huge link/website index, which is categorised to find the right resource. Links can be searched or browsed in categories such as Radiology Societies, Hospitals & Universities, Online Textbooks, Radiology & Anatomy Atlases, Teaching Websites, Teaching files & Case Collections, Reference Databases etc. When added, these were peerreviewed by at least one person.

Are There any Upcoming Developments for Radiolopolis That You can Tell Us About?

Developments to come include a professional consultation section with DICOM capabilities, CME, closer collaboration with journals like the JRCR, more sophisticated educational sections such as tutorial creators, a desktop application that will integrate into the radiologist's daily workflow and more.

What Social Media do You Use?

I am "Radiologyman" on Twitter. Twitter is another venue to distribute information and teaching. I also post interesting cases and blogs on the Radiolopolis facebook page and groups.

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