



**Fall 2004**

**FILENEXUS\* CASE STUDY – ACL LABORATORIES**

**ACL is a full service clinical laboratory operated jointly by Aurora Healthcare, Wisconsin’s largest integrated healthcare delivery system, and Advocate Healthcare, the largest integrated healthcare system in Chicago. Serving 26 hospitals with 50,000 employees, 6,000+ patient beds and 8,300 Physicians, ACL conducts 16 million time sensitive tests annually – involving over 400 million individual transactions.**

**When an ACL supplier inadvertently wiped ACL’s entire data base of all patient information, they realized they needed a new vendor fast. Loris Technologies Inc. was selected from a group of three potential vendors and converted all of the data from the old system to their FileNexus system in only three days. But the best news came when ACL discovered the true power of FileNexus...**

*“The cost savings were immediate and huge.” “It’s been a wonderful relationship with Loris. They really saved us.”*

*Jacque Tuskiewicz  
Data Centre Supervisor  
ACL Labs*

*\* FileNexus is a Trademark of Loris Technologies Inc.*



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**FileNexus Case Study – ACL Laboratories**

ACL Laboratories is a full-service, clinical laboratory offering a wide range of services in the states of Wisconsin and Illinois. Operated jointly by Aurora Health Care, which is Wisconsin's largest integrated healthcare delivery system, and Advocate Health Care, the largest integrated health care system in Chicago, ACL services 26 hospitals and over 6,000 patient beds. That translates into more than 50,000 employees, of whom 8,300 are physicians, who rely on it for important information. In fact, every year ACL handles 16 million tests and, as for individual transactions, that number is an astounding *400 million per year*.

ACL's product lines include everything from hospital and ambulatory services to nursing homes. As one of the bigger labs in the Great Lakes region, it also handles all kinds of medical reports – anatomic pathology, forensic toxicology, molecular diagnostics, testing for heavy metals, and cytogenetics (a branch of biology which involves the study of cells and heredity). The nature of the service is such that some data, such as blood bank reports, must be maintained for seven years which is federal law in the United States.

And not only is there a great volume and variety of documents to be processed, time is of the essence. ACL Labs offers 24-hour turnaround on most routine lab tests. Obviously then, the level of expectation for such an organization is huge and if that's not enough ACL Labs also has a tradition to uphold; several established laboratories merged to form ACL in 1997 but the legacy of reliability and service goes back some 40 years.

Organizing and archiving all this patient data is no simple task – it was previously done by a supplier who used an optical storage system – so imagine the nightmare that ensued when the supplier inadvertently wiped out ACL's entire database. There was backup, but the system could not be restored and all of a sudden all those people who rely on ACL – physicians, pathologists, medical technologists, chemists, microbiologists, you name it – couldn't retrieve data.

Any data.



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ACL Labs had to find a solution and didn't have much time. A short list of three candidates was put together and one of them was Loris Technologies Inc. The Toronto-based company is a leading innovator in the programming, development and on-site application of digital storage technologies. Its product, FileNexus, is an electronic data repository of records – for any type of file, including electronic files, paper, forms, microfilm and even non-communicating computer systems – from virtually any source, including host systems, PCs, scanned images, emails or faxes. Records stored to File Nexus can be retrieved instantly without the user leaving the desk.

Loris did a demo for ACL Labs right on the Web and then Jeff Harris, the company's Senior Systems Engineer, came on-site for three days to ACL headquarters in West Allis, Wisconsin, which is a suburb of Milwaukee, and performed a demo with live data. It was an easy decision to make after that.

Says Jacque (pronounced 'Jackie') Tuskiewicz, Datacenter Supervisor for ACL Labs: "Three weeks later Jeff did the install and it took him only three days to convert all our data from the other system and feed in live data. It was really amazing. We didn't expect it to happen that quickly."

The challenge for ACL Labs is that many different types of documents must be scanned and stored. For example, there are all kinds of administrative documents such as billings, invoices and outreach requisitions, and along with that are various types of medical reports. Reports involving patient blood work, to cite just one type, come directly from physicians and such reports must be maintained by law for five years.

Initially, ACL Labs planned to use FileNexus for only outreach requisitions and patient reports, but it quickly became apparent that it could be used for a whole host of administrative tasks as well.



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“The cost savings were immediate and they were huge,” says Tuskiewicz. “We went from an optical storage system to disk. And the time required to retrieve a record went from minutes to seconds which is a great administrative advantage for us. With the Web capabilities Loris has we could use FileNexus throughout our entire system so anybody with security access can retrieve the documents they need. They can retrieve, view and print right at their own workstation. This is great. Before, you had to physically be in my department to do this so retrieval of documents was limited to my staff. The result is that my staff has become much more productive.”

Patient reports have to be purged and processed every week and with the old optical storage system this exercise sometimes took up to two days. But now it’s done under three hours. Tuskiewicz says the new system is very flexible, simple to use and, maybe the best thing of all, it’s always up and running.

“We have virtually no down time on this system,” she says.

It’s clear now that billings and invoices are only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the potential applications ACL Labs can enjoy with FileNexus. Tuskiewicz says two different types of blood bank reports are already on the system, as are orders from nursing homes. In the future she says more things will be added.

“It’s been a wonderful relationship with Loris,” Tuskiewicz says. “They provide excellent service and deliver excellent response. They really saved us.”

For more information please contact [sales@loristech.com](mailto:sales@loristech.com)