

## Overview

### Practice

Sean CF Lai, M.D.  
Santa Monica, CA

### Profile

Gastroenterology Solo Practice  
Five Staff Members  
Two Satellite Offices

### Business Challenge

A growing practice hindered by mounting paperwork and lost revenue due to an inadequate web-based practice management system.

### Solution

Implemented GeniusDoc Gastro, which allowed the practice to realize the benefits of a practice management system integrated with an effective EHR solution.

## A Leading Gastroenterologist Says Goodbye to Web-Based Billing and Manual Documentation

Typical of many practices, Dr. Sean Lai, a prominent gastroenterologist in Santa Monica, California, had a problem with the “paper chase.” Frustrations were mounting as charts were continuously lost or misplaced, along with transcription inaccuracies that required significant error-edit time.

Dr. Lai’s first major step towards automating his medical office was utilizing web-based billing software. The low startup costs associated with web-based software were initially attractive for his solo practice. Within time, he found the web-based software had hidden costs he failed to consider prior to the investment.

With only back-office automation, Dr. Lai saw that other parts of his office were experiencing inefficiencies that only could be solved by digitizing the entire office. After deciding to discontinue the web-based billing services, Dr. Lai wanted to address the tremendous amounts of paper work that demanded the time of the entire office. It was now time to invest in a complete electronic health records and practice management solution for his predominantly paper-based gastroenterology practice.

Dr. Lai initiated his search for an integrated EHR and PM solution with a refined evaluation criteria based on personal experience and research:

- ◆ Web-Based vs. Client-Server Models
- ◆ Independent EHR and PMS vs. Integrated Solutions
- ◆ Transition to the Digital Practice
- ◆ Cost and ROI
- ◆ Workflow Efficiencies

### Product Distinctions

- ◆ Extensive GI Knowledge Base
- ◆ Powerful Functionality
- ◆ GI Specific Point of Care Charge Capture
- ◆ Automated E & M Coding
- ◆ Business Intelligence

*“Through personal experience, I’ve now come to realize that web-based applications are great for activities that are not time critical. But in medicine, each minute is critical and time is one of those hidden costs that is not given enough attention to in the selection process.”*

**Dr. Sean CF Lai M.D.**

### Web-Based vs. Client-Server

Dr.Lai was skeptical of web-based applications for small practices. Rather than reducing aggravations, his web-based billing software slowed him down in many ways.

Despite a fast Internet connection, Dr.Lai sacrificed valuable time waiting for screens to load, which hindered his productivity. Graphic transfer with an Internet browser slowed down the charge capture process. Soon, Dr.Lai’s frustration grew tenfold with the delays in moving from screen to screen and he wanted a faster application.

In automating his entire practice, Dr. Lai narrowed the selection to client-server applications. During his initial GeniusDoc demonstration, he saw the application’s functionality from a different perspective. “GeniusDoc provides the user with a tremendous amount of clinical information on one screen. With a web-based solution, the same amount of information would require significant amounts of loading time. But with GeniusDoc, jumping between screens does not sacrifice a physician’s time because the data loads quickly in the client-server model,” Dr. Lai explains.

### Independent EHR and PMS vs. Integrated Solutions

Dr. Lai developed a greater understanding of the hidden costs associated with maintaining his existing PM solution and acquiring a new EHR solution. The most important factor to consider was the costs associated with updating the interfaces when each independent system released new versions. Buying an all-encompassing EHR and PM solution was a great way to keep costs down to a minimum.

### Transitioning to a Digital Practice

Dr. Lai’s office benefited from a phased GeniusDoc implementation, beginning with the input of active patient demographics. The second phase followed with recording active medications for this patient subset. The third phase created shelf space by scanning and storing relevant records, including lab histories and endoscopy reports – into their appropriate folders. The fourth phase involved documenting vital patient medical data.

As the rollout came to an end, the final phase required entering appropriate billing information as each active patient arrived for a scheduled office visit. The phased implementation gave the technophobic staff time to adjust to the new system.

## Benefits

- ◆ Complete Transcription Savings
- ◆ Extensive Time Savings
- ◆ Optimizes Staff Performance
- ◆ Ensures Proper Coding
- ◆ Shortened A/R Cycle
- ◆ Eliminates Missed Revenue

*“GeniusDoc is a complete package that is powerful and flexible enough to be used in the most demanding practices, yet simple enough for even technophobic physicians to become proficient and effective.”*

*“Your dollar is worth much more when you bring it in sooner rather than later. “*  
**Dr. Sean CF Lai M.D.**

## Cost and ROI

For single provider practices, cost and ROI are important factors. Compared with other vendors, “GeniusDoc’s pricing is reasonable taking into account the minimal GI customization required and vast built-in functionality,” says Dr.Lai.

With GeniusDoc, the immediate ROI is undeniable simply with the elimination of paper charts. “Not only have I saved \$200 per year on charts, but I have cut down on renting premium space in Santa Monica – by saving shelf space and not having to store records off site. Savings from renting space immediately cuts the monthly payment to GeniusDoc by 30%. Then with the transcription savings of \$500 per month, I’m actually saving money!” Dr Lai says.

Dr.Lai was also frustrated with the hidden expenses of web-based billing, which amounted to \$500-750 per month. He wanted a solution that would allow his practice to conduct all of its billing in-house. “GeniusDoc has increased receipts by 20% with more accurate charge capture and the E&M Wizard that allows me to code during the patient encounter.” Dr.Lai now appropriately codes for more Level 3 and Level 4 visits, with the appropriate documentation to support such coding.

## Workflow Efficiencies

The need to resolve the inefficiencies of Dr.Lai’s practice was clear: his nurses worked long hours to complete each day’s work, spent valuable time finding and refiling patients’ charts, and looking through his long notes to find pertinent information quickly. GeniusDoc solved all these problems and more.

Now Dr. Lai remotely connects to GeniusDoc with its built-in VPN technologies for the vital information necessary for quality patient care, anytime, anywhere – eliminating the delays in transcription turnaround, sign-offs, and chart handling.

Interfaces with devices and imaging centers enable direct importation to the patient’s chart, while calls are reduced with automatic faxing of prescriptions. This saves data entry time and error and reduces calls to patients, labs, pharmacies, and payers.

Moreover, Dr.Lai now enjoys the benefits of electronic billing. “Before I leave the office, all claims are posted, audited and electronically sent out each day.” Through the use of electronic remittance advice messages, Dr.Lai’s back office now efficiently assigns rejected claims for appeal and follow-up, improving the A/R.

*"With GeniusDoc, there is no 'paper chase' so my staff and I can leave the office earlier each day."*

**Dr. Sean CF Lai, MD.**

### **A New Day Has Come**

"One of the most surprising events during implementation was that we did not have to reduce our patient load to accommodate the introduction of GeniusDoc," says Dr.Lai. "And now, the GeniusDoc has positioned us to take on an additional patient load without increasing our support staff."

Although Dr.Lai regularly met performance standards in the past, such efforts went unrecognized with insufficient documentation. Now, they always will be. "I wasn't able to document the care that I was rendering to my patients by writing my notes, using paper templates or by dictation" says Dr. Lai.

Others also appreciate Dr.Lai's newfound extensive documentation. "I am now more complete in my documentation and communication with my colleagues and patients," says Dr.Lai. "Our referral requests amaze others. My visit notes are pristine and professional looking," he continues. "I can look back on any prescription printed to verify amounts and refills. We have had nothing but positive comments from our patients about our computerization."

As well as creating outstanding documentation, coding is effortless with point of care code and charge capture. "Six months after going live, we can leave around 5 p.m. with our visits fully documented, coded, billed, and electronic payments posted with complete bank reconciliations."

Dr. Lai and his staff have put the long hours in the office behind them. The savings in hours have created a new day indeed.