



Leader Spotlight: Denis Zerr

Denis Zerr, Radiology Partners' chief information officer (CIO), was recently recognized for his valuable efforts at the practice.

Earlier this year, Denis was named a winner of the [HMG Global Leadership Institute Award](#), which honors elite global technology and business leaders whose teams deliver unparalleled value to their organizations. In 2022, he received the [Central Texas CIO of the Year ORBIE award](#), which honors CIOs who demonstrate excellence in technology leadership.

As Denis celebrates four years at RP, we spoke to him about his passion for his work, commitment to his team and dedication to RP's mission.

“We see technology as a clinician-enhancing support tool enabling scale. We are clinician-centric, so we develop and deploy technology *with* clinicians, not to them. This strong

clinical partnership is extremely powerful and key to our foundation.” – Denis Zerr

Tell us more about your role at RP.

As the CIO, I lead the Information Technology team to deliver, operate and optimize all information systems required for RP to function and grow efficiently and securely. This includes the systems and technologies for HR, finance and revenue cycle but also our medical imaging technology platforms, outpatient radiology information systems, comprehensive data repositories with advanced reporting tools and collaboration tools so important across our network of affiliated practices.

With radiology being the most tech-enabled healthcare subspecialty and RP’s aim to transform radiology, our medical imaging platform must be the best in the industry, with excellent user experience for our clinicians and with the ability to integrate proven innovations as quickly as possible. We aim to equip our clinicians with easy-to-use, state-of-the-art technologies in a cohesive workstation to deliver the best care to a growing number of patients while preserving their quality of life.

How would you describe your leadership philosophy and style?

For me, leadership must first exemplify and nurture an organization’s core values. At RP, those values are present in hiring, evaluating, recognizing, celebrating and promoting our teammates. [Our values](#) of integrity, teamwork, excellence, service and accountability (ITESA) are foundational to RP’s mission to transform radiology (and healthcare), and our mission and ITESA values are all relevant to the IT function.

When developing or resetting an IT team, I start by clarifying the accountabilities of the leadership team and focus on expected outcomes in support of the organization’s goals. Then, I empower service leaders to define how to deliver those outcomes while supporting and guiding them within a comprehensive framework. This service-based approach is not my own but part of a Technology Business Management framework that helps clarify the goals and rules of engagement within and outside IT while maximizing the leaders’ and their teams’ engagement and ownership. Empowered leaders learn from and rely on each other when operating transparently within a larger “service supply chain” with both internal and external partners to our practice. Of course, this is easier said than done and a significant change, especially for teammates from smaller and less complex organizations.

How does IT produce results, drive innovation and support business strategy?

IT is foundational to delivering radiology care and to any radiology practice’s operations. Operating nationwide and enabling our practice to take full advantage of its network is even more important.

With specialized clinicians across nine subspecialties 24/7, each radiologist should be able to operate from the same platform within the same integrated workflow. Any improvement in uptime, response time, scalability or speed of deployment directly translates to an increase in our capacity to capture and analyze images and deliver faster and better patient care. Such a critical infrastructure is increasingly sophisticated and expensive, especially where patient information is the top target for cybercriminals. Therefore, RP has consolidated and standardized our technology assets and support teams to improve quality, speed of delivery and efficiency.

Like other clinical specialties, radiology is suffering from a significant shortage of clinicians, demands on a radiologists' time and healthcare cost pressures. RP's technology must be a strategic differentiator to attract and retain radiologists with state-of-the-art technologies like artificial intelligence, enabling them to deliver better care for hospitals with the opportunity to shape standards of care. We have seen this in the delivery of RPX, which hosts clinical algorithms across our platforms and recently became the world's largest-known AI platform in healthcare. Our teams submit millions of patient exams through the platform per month using nine algorithms, enriching the work of our radiologists.

We are uniquely positioned to provide the best medical imaging platform for our clinicians and affiliated practices but also to the hospitals and facilities we serve. Here, IT becomes a fantastic enabler of RP's mission to transform radiology.

What will radiology look like in the future and how will RP transform radiology?

RP's mission to transform radiology requires growth so the practice can influence the standard of care and develop new standards of care, and IT's support is a top enabler of this growth. Our clinical IT platform and the outpatient radiology information system is a production tool that operates 24/7. These innovative platforms create capacity, a critical need amid the growing shortage of radiologists. Any platform improvements in performance, user experience or automation directly translate to our ability to deliver patient care efficiently.

Looking ahead, RP continues to pilot different digital tools for team engagement, listening to team input and broader landscape trends. Information, data and technology are key components to delivering radiology care. While RP is forging new standards of care and practice, we expect the whole clinical specialty to adopt the same innovations and technologies to produce the same outcomes. RP also understands its responsibility to safeguard the specialty long-term and set up the next generation of radiology professionals for success. We are truly transforming radiology.

What has been your most remarkable success story?

My greatest accomplishment is building a high-performing and engaged IT team trusted to deliver

RP's technology and innovation strategy. We have created the world's largest cohesive radiology IT team, and our team has played a significant role in the growth and success of the practice. Our passion for our work has enabled us to build a robust and innovative IT platform that supports our radiologists in delivering quality care to our patients, and our focus on providing the best clinician and operator experience has led to integrating and deploying multiple technology solutions at an unprecedented scale. Our commitment to RP's values ensures we remain focused on delivering results that drive innovation and support the organization's business strategy. Our vision for the future of radiology promises to shape the industry and drive RP's continued success.

Denis Zerr is the CIO of [Radiology Partners](#). Learn more about [Denis](#), connect with him on [LinkedIn](#) and follow him on Twitter [@DenisZerr](#). [Radiology Partners](#) is a leading physician-led and physician-owned radiology practice in the U.S. Learn more about our mission, values and practice principles at [RadPartners.com](#). For the latest news from RP, follow along on our [blog](#) and on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).