

The RSNA deserves its international reputation

Image processing, storage and transmission breakthroughs at The Congress of the Radiology Society of North America hold much promise for Latin America

In anticipation of RSNA'04 we look back at last year's successful event, which took place in Chicago from 30 November until 5 December 2003, at the highly impressive McCormick Place.

Attended by over 60,000 people, this meeting has evolved over the years into the most high-profile Radiology Congress with the greatest international attendance, including a large number from Spanish-speaking countries.

Advances in technology was a major theme, with many different manufacturers presenting their latest generation "multislice" computed tomography, giving huge improvements in definition and image processing speed. The impact of these advances in imaging definition was particularly noticeable in the cardiovascular area.

As a result, computed tomography, which has been eclipsed for years by magnetic resonance as a diagnostic tool, is expected to see a significant increase in use.

The use of CAD in mammography and in radiography and tomography of the thorax was also a prominent theme.

But the greatest impact was reserved for volume-measuring and three-dimensional image generation, conversion and sharing.

PACS (picture archiving and communication system) was presented by all companies and there were improvements in all systems, so that we may soon be able to wave goodbye to studies that lack information, the impossibility of comparing current with previous studies, the impossibility of down-loading images for meetings and conferences, the impossibility of obtaining concurrence with the hospital, and so on.

There was a great quantity of software on show, above all free, for IT storage and transmission of images, some of which are already to be found working in Latin America.

Well received courses on the "Essentials of Radiology" and interactive case reviews were presented last year. The last of these really highlighted the benefit of the latest technology being showcased at the event. Some of the greatest authorities presented cases dedicated to the brain, spine, head and neck, interventionist radiology and pediatric radiology.

The audience was invited to register their choice between various diagnostic options via a keypad by each lecturer, who presented various cases, making reference to the clinical history of the patient and a number of images. A graphic instantly appeared on the screen showing the percentages accumulated for each answer, followed by a response from the lecturer. For many, this encapsulated the value of the role of technology in sharing images and expertise.

Whilst the business side of things still features prominently, the RSNA event has come a long way from the traditional model of reunions organized for companies dealing in technology. Adjusting the bias more in the favour of education and cost-reducing technology serves the international radiological community. Not only are the exhibitors and the

attendees becoming more international every year, but also the technology: this promises to help patients in all parts of the world.