

5 Ways Technology Can Optimize Ambulatory Surgery Centers

The Challenges Ambulatory Surgery Centers Face

Ambulatory surgery centers are a pivotal part of the entire continuum of healthcare. But surgery centers face a number of challenges in performing their crucial role and delivering positive patient care outcomes.

Everyone involved must work together as effectively and efficiently as possible to ensure a positive patient experience, all while meeting key business objectives and empowering clinicians with the right tools to do their jobs.

Ultimately, each center has to meet the differing needs and concerns of several key stakeholders, including the patient, surgeons and clinicians, and executive ownership.

The Patient

- Wants a positive and on-time surgery outcome
- Wants more time with surgeons and clinicians
- Wants communication and information to be readily available
- Wants a smooth and patient-friendly experience



The Surgeon/Clinician

- Wants to deliver positive and on-time surgery outcomes
- Wants to spend more time with patients and less on admin
- Needs the right tools to ensure high-quality, safe and efficient care
- Needs systems and tools to streamline and simplify their job



The Executive Leader

- Wants to deliver positive and on-time surgery outcomes
- Wants to maximize revenue and contain costs
- Needs to minimize medical errors, mistakes and risks
- Needs to retain high-performing surgeons, nurses and staff



Balancing and delivering on all of these needs and concerns is no easy task, and it's often the responsibility of clinical and IT leaders to figure out the best ways to do it.

Fortunately, digital and mobile technologies offer one of the most cost-efficient and effective strategies for optimizing all aspects of ambulatory surgery operations, from the point of care and patient experience to the supply chain and the bottom line.

In this strategy brief, we'll explore five ways that the latest automated data capture, clinical mobility, and tracking technologies are helping surgery centers optimize their operations and meet the needs of all their key stakeholders.

We'll explore real-world examples from our work as a managed service provider to leading healthcare providers, where we work with Zebra, a global leader in healthcare data capture and mobile computing technologies, to help providers streamline and error-proof all the key aspects of their operations.

We'll examine how you can dramatically improve patient care outcomes and satisfaction while empowering surgeons and clinicians to deliver safer and more efficient care with less labor, stress and hassles. We'll also take a look at how the right technologies are helping ambulatory surgery centers maximize revenue, and grow and expand within their existing footprint, all while minimizing financial costs and risks.

And we'll show you how you can work with a healthcare technology and managed services provider to implement, manage and support these solutions without taking on the burden of technological transformation on your own.

Let's jump in and take a look at the 5 Ways Technology Can Optimize Ambulatory Surgery Operations.

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ONE

Improving Patient Care,
Safety and Efficiency with
Automated Data Capture





Patients and their families experience a different level of care, and when they're able to see and share information about their care and get real-time and accurate updates along the way, it builds immediate confidence and trust.



Improving Patient Care, Safety and Efficiency with Automated Data Capture

Anyone working in the healthcare industry knows that delivering safe and positive patient care outcomes is the primary mission. But our healthcare providers don't always have enough time to spend with patients, and care workflows can sometimes be cumbersome and inefficient.

This means less time spent with patients, less satisfaction, and more frustration for everyone involved, and greater risk of potentially dangerous medical errors.

Patients who don't feel like they're getting enough time and attention from surgeons and staff are much less likely to return for future procedures or provide good reviews or referrals. Those who are a victim of a medical error or mistake due to mix-ups or a lack of proper tracking are more likely to sue, which means a heavy financial risk for surgery centers.

Surgeons and clinicians who don't have an automated, accurate and reliable way to identify, track and match the right patients, medications, specimens and

surgeries are less productive and more prone to make potentially serious mistakes. And IT is often caught in the middle, trying to figure out how to address these issues and connect people, data and information more effectively.

This is why digitizing and automating healthcare identification and tracking is such a crucial strategy, beginning with automating data capture in ambulatory surgery operations.

By automating data capture to digitize, error-proof and streamline patient care, surgery centers can significantly improve efficiency and time spent with patients while minimizing errors and patient safety risks. Instead of manually identifying and tracking patients, specimens, medications, blood bags, or medical devices, an automated system with the right

tools digitizes these processes for better efficiency, accuracy and safety.

This fully digitized and automated approach replaces manual and paper-based processes that are slower, more cumbersome, and prone to error. In the end, it creates safer patient care and maximizes positive surgery outcomes by enabling more accurate identification, matching, and tracking. In turn, this reduces the risks and potential costs of medical errors, and it all happens with better efficiency, so clinicians and surgeons can spend more time with patients and focus more on delivering high-quality care.

To implement an automated data capture solution for your center, it's always a good idea to work with a managed services and mobility technology provider who is

Here's a quick breakdown of how a typical digitized surgery center automates data capture:

- At check-in, patients are identified and matched with electronic medical records (EMR) and scheduled surgeries, and they're fitted with a barcoded patient ID wristband so they can be identified, tracked, and matched with all the correct care, medications, specimens, and medical devices, as they move through the center.
- Medications, specimens, blood samples, blood bags, medical devices, and other items related to their care are also labeled and tracked with specialized labels for each application. Using thermal transfer top-coated polypropylene labels have a permanent acrylic adhesive that ensures durable labeling and identification without the adhesive leeching through the blood bag.
- Clinicians then use healthcare-grade barcode scanners, enterprise-grade tablets or touch handheld computers to scan labels, identify items, and automatically match them to the correct patient and surgical procedure by transmitting collected data to their EMR or other systems.

experienced in healthcare and can procure and configure the right solutions for your business needs. The time, resources, and knowledge needed to implement a solution can be daunting for even the most experienced IT teams, so leaning on outside experts is a smart and strategic way to minimize the challenge and expedite a surgery center transformation.

Healthcare technology and managed service experts such as our team at Stratix can guide you through the entire process, recommend the right solutions, and help you with every aspect of optimizing your operations with a complete managed services offering that covers everything from technology and software deployment to training and long-term support.



TWO

Streamlining the Point of
Care with Clinical Mobility



As surgeons and clinicians are able to access information, collaborate and work more efficiently and effectively in real time, this frees up more time to focus on patient interactions.



Streamlining the Point of Care with Clinical Mobility

One of the most common complaints from surgeons and clinicians is that they don't have the right clinical information and communication tools they need at their fingertips. If they have to go back-and-forth to a desktop PC or an office to access patient records, imaging, lab results, or other critical information, it wastes time and creates delays in consultation and care.

Also, if they can't communicate instantly and in real time with other clinicians and staff across your operations, it takes more time and effort to coordinate surgeries and workflows. Ultimately, not having

the right information and tools readily available creates delays and obstacles that slow down the surgery center, creates a more disjointed and negative experience for patients, and increases the risk of costly and dangerous mistakes from human error and dangerous mix-ups of medications, specimens or blood.

To avoid these issues, surgery centers should execute a clinical mobility strategy that puts real-time information at surgeons' and clinicians' fingertips. By giving them mobile and on-demand access to patient records, imaging, lab results, FDA device information, all the apps, systems and

communication tools they need, then the entire point of care becomes vastly safer and more efficient.

For example, by combining healthcare mobile computers or ET80 tablets with your EMR or other mobile apps, you can put the power, connectivity and information of a desktop PC in the hands of surgeons and other clinicians.

Zebra's ET80 tablets provide similar and expanded capabilities in a larger slate-style device, with more screen space to display patient records, medical data and images, while delivering real-time access to information and communications.

There are different device sizes and form factors that will deliver different benefits and advantages depending on each surgery center

or role. But when you work with a mobile solutions provider that helps you select the right devices as well as test and design each use case for high user adoption and satisfaction, you can combine mobile computing with printing, labeling and scanning technologies to create a complete system for automating, digitizing, and streamlining the point of care.

As surgeons and clinicians are able to access information, collaborate and work more efficiently and effectively in real time, this frees up more time to focus on patient interactions. And patients see that their care is accurate and well-coordinated, which boosts their confidence, comfort and satisfaction.

Since clinical staff have immediate and mobile access to the medical information and tools they need at the point of care, it also means there's less burden, waste, and

For example, with Zebra's TC52-HC touch mobile computers, you get a complete set of tools and capabilities to streamline and improve the point of care, including:

- Mobile access to EMR, imaging, lab results, inventory, etc.
- Push-to-talk (PTT) inside and outside the four walls
- Voice calls with mobile access to your PBX
- Secure text messaging
- Mobile alarms and alerts
- Wi-Fi 6, Bluetooth and NFC connectivity
- Octa-core processing for resource-intensive apps
- Hi-res video streaming for better collaboration
- 4GB RAM and 32GB Flash memory
- Built-in barcode scanning with 1D/2D data capture
- Disinfectant-ready design for safe and easy cleaning



manual effort. And this saves time and cost for surgery centers and helps reduce risks from delays, manual processes, and human error.

It also simplifies ITs job by bringing together all the data, information,

apps and tools that clinicians need in simple, easy-to-use, easy-to-manage and highly durable and reliable devices.

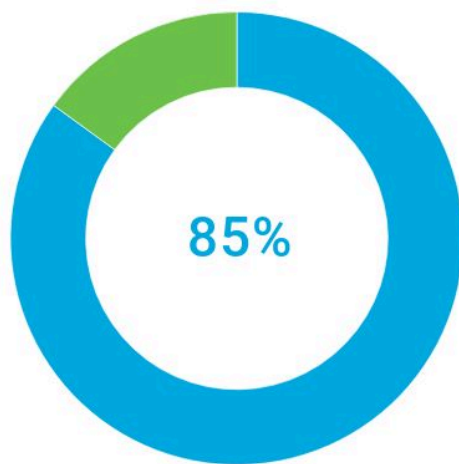
Instead of struggling with slow and disconnected systems or

informational blind spots, patients, clinicians and IT can all benefit from a holistically mobile and digital system that unifies and streamlines the point of care. And with a managed healthcare mobile services and technology provider,

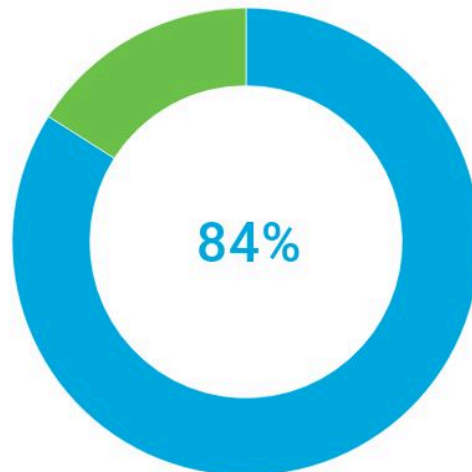
you can offload much of the burden of installing, maintaining and supporting your systems to outside experts who manage all of your technologies so you don't have to.

Clinical mobility is helping in more ways

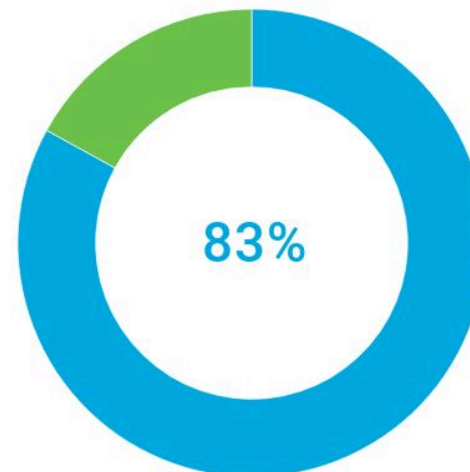
Clinicians and decision-makers emphasize improvements gained



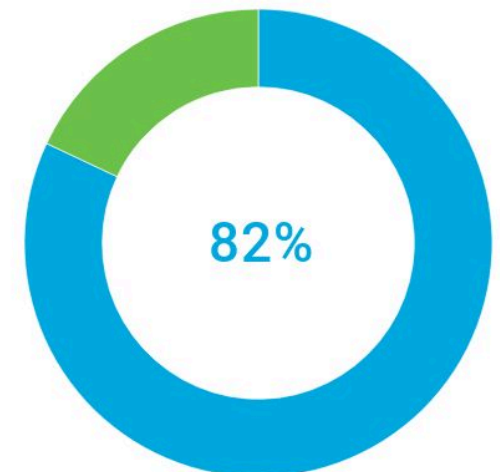
Increase medical workflow accuracy and precision



Reduces preventable medical errors



Raises focus on patient care and attentiveness



Boosts accuracy of supplies tracking and inventory management

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THREE

Creating a More Cost-Effective
Supply Chain with Better
Inventory Management





Surgeons and clinical staff need to have the right inventory available, in the right place and the right time, to get their jobs done quickly and effectively.



Creating a More Cost-Effective Supply Chain with Better Inventory Management

To enable successful and timely surgeries, ambulatory surgery centers need good inventory management. You have to have the right surgical supplies, tools, medical devices and other assets on-site, in the operating room, and ready when they're needed.

But this is a big challenge in an industry where smaller physical footprints and demands for bottom-line cost control do not allow for carrying excess inventory. There may be nowhere to store excess supplies or other inventory, and, even if you have storage space, it can be cost-prohibitive to order and

maintain extra supplies or assets to protect against a possible inventory error, loss, or misplacement.

Ultimately, surgeons and clinical staff need to have the right inventory available, in the right place and the right time, to get their jobs done quickly and effectively. IT needs to help create a lean and efficient inventory management system that minimizes waste, errors and excess costs. And surgery center owners want to see more same-day surgeries conducted on-time, without rescheduling, delays, or potential patient risks due to the right supplies or assets not being available.

Fortunately, better and more cost-effective inventory management is readily achievable with advancements in intelligent inventory management software and data capture technologies. At Stratix, we've worked with many healthcare clients to implement inexpensive and efficient inventory management software that leverages artificial intelligence and algorithms to create predictive inventory replenishment and control.

Instead of having to manually track and replenish inventory at the right time to avoid cost and space overruns, the whole process can be automated based on digital data capture, tracking, history, and predictive analytics.

For example, entire cabinets of medications can be identified and tracked using radio frequency identification (RFID) labels and tags

along with RFID readers and antennas. Using a handheld RFID reader, the surgery center staff can read the whole cabinet's worth of inventory remotely, without needing to scan barcodes or have line-of-sight access to a label. The reader uses wireless radio waves, similar to how Wi-Fi works, to send signals to the RFID labels or tags, which contain tiny micro transmitters that wake up and send their identifying information, location and status to the reader.

The same technology also allows staff to quickly locate the right assets or supplies when they need to be retrieved and moved into an operating room, examination room, or any other area. For example, instead of wasting time manually searching for a missing cart, tool or device, they can check the inventory software to find out its last known location to within a few feet.

When coupled with RFID-enabled inventory tracking software, the status, location and quantities of any supply, tool or asset can be tracked wirelessly, remotely and seamlessly, with ranges depending on the type of RFID tag you're using. And with the software's historical tracking, AI and predictive algorithms can automatically determine how much inventory has been used, how much needs to be replenished, and when.



RFID can be combined with barcoding to create complete inventory visibility and traceability, all without the burden and risks of having to manually track inventory with paper, spreadsheets, and less efficient technologies. And you can deploy a complete inventory solution through a managed services agreement with your technology provider, who can

recommend and deploy the right solutions for your needs, assist with training your staff, and handle all maintenance and support of your inventory technology and software.

Doing this helps ensure that there are no expired or wasted supplies, and that there are no delays to surgical procedures or medical errors due to inventory issues. And

patients, surgeons, staff and surgery center owners are all happier due to smoother running inventory and more prompt and efficient care with less cost and risk.



FOUR

Delivering a Patient-Friendly
Experience with
Digital Technologies





Patients and their families experience a different level of care, and when they're able to see and share information about their care and get real-time and accurate updates along the way, it builds immediate confidence and trust.



Delivering a Patient-Friendly Experience with Digital Technologies

For ambulatory surgery centers, medical procedures are an everyday occurrence performed with the confidence of knowing you have outstanding surgeons and clinicians to help ensure positive outcomes. However, for patients and their families, surgeries can sometimes be a scary and uncertain experience, especially if they don't have good access to pre- and post-surgery information, they have doubts about the safety and quality of care, and there aren't real-time updates for family members.

This is why surgery centers should look to create a patient-friendly and family-focused experience as they optimize other areas of their workflows and operations. One way to do this is by digitizing the patient journey and using digital technology to provide better information before and after surgeries, coordinate and deliver care, and provide real-time patient tracking and notifications for family members.

For example, many surgery centers are now implementing patient tablets, wall-mounted displays and software apps to share information about surgical procedures, both

before and after a scheduled surgery. Good examples of the technologies behind these efforts include tablet-style digital kiosks and tablets, which integrate easily with EMR and patient communication systems to securely transmit select data and information.

Using information-sharing technologies like these puts patients at ease and gives them access to detailed but easy-to-navigate information about their procedure, what they can expect, preparation and post-op, and much more.

Similarly, software-enabled solutions can be deployed to track patients' status in real time and provide updates and notifications for family members. Through tablets or displays in waiting areas or through secure texting and

mobile apps, surgery centers can send notifications and share information at each stage of surgery, so family members know what's happening, what to expect, and the status of the patient throughout their journey.

Additionally, by implementing the other technology strategies in this guide, surgery centers can create a more patient-friendly journey throughout the surgery experience. Whether it's digitizing check-in, information sharing and family notifications, or leveraging mobility and automated data capture to better coordinate care and ensure safety, surgery centers who use technology to optimize the patient experience create a strongly positive impression.

Patients see that technology-driven centers are better organized, more efficient, and have access to vital

patient records and medical information at their fingertips. Patients and their families experience a different level of care, and when they're able to see and share information about their care and get real-time and accurate

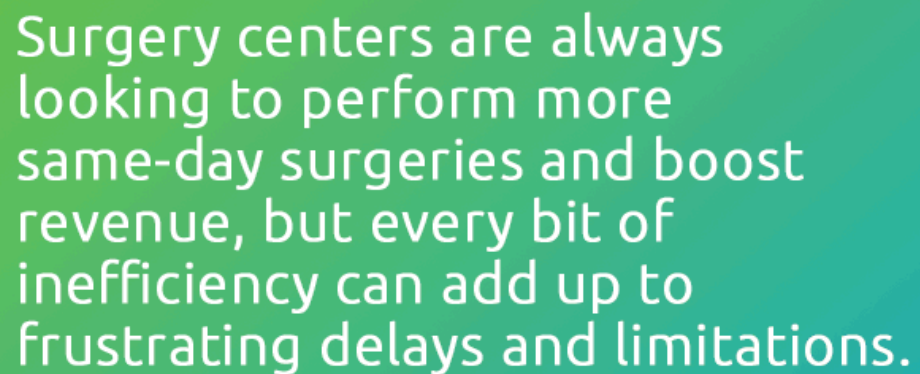
updates along the way, it builds immediate confidence and trust. That, in turn, builds a better reputation and leads to more referrals for surgery centers, which helps them grow their business.



FIVE

Maximizing Revenue, Growth
and Cost Containment with
Technology-Driven Efficiency





Performing safe and successful surgeries is the top priority for any ambulatory surgery center, but each center is also a business that needs to contain costs and minimize compliance and litigation risks while maximizing revenue and growth. However, in ambulatory surgery, there are a number of factors that can get in the way of optimal financial and business performance.

Costs will always be an issue if they can't be reduced through better operational efficiency and visibility.

You can't manage what you can't see or track, and if you're using manual and paper-based processes or not capitalizing on the best opportunities for automation and digitization, it's a productivity and efficiency killer every time.

Regulatory compliance is also a big challenge, but it gets worse if clinical staff are bogged down and can't easily maintain proper documentation or follow best practices to ensure patient safety and minimize errors and risks. This also increases the risk of expensive and potentially catastrophic litigation.

Hiring and retaining surgeons and other clinical staff can also be big headaches, especially when the challenges of serving patients and navigating a complex healthcare system are compounded by workplace inefficiency and a lack of the technologies and resources that surgeons and staff need to excel and make their jobs easier.

Surgery centers are always looking to perform more same-day surgeries and boost revenue, but every bit of inefficiency can add up to frustrating delays and limitations, whether it's coming from a slowdown in patient check-ins, an inability to access patient information and records quickly enough, or not having the right inventory on hand.

Additionally, many surgery centers have potential opportunities to grow, but not at the cost of

expanding their physical footprint, leasing more space, or building new facilities. Ideal growth comes from being able to increase throughput and both surgical and patient volumes within the same physical space and without sacrificing time with patients or care quality.

Fortunately, with the rapid adoption, expansion and evolution of healthcare mobility, digitization, and automation technologies over the past 20 years, it's easier and more affordable than ever to address all of these needs and issues.

Through manageable and affordable investments in proven technologies with a high return on investment, there are many ways to optimize ambulatory surgery centers for better operational and financial performance.

The Right Technology Positively Affects Patient Care



80% of clinicians and **87%** of executives agree patient care would improve if nurses, clinicians and nonclinical healthcare workers had collaboration tools and healthcare applications.

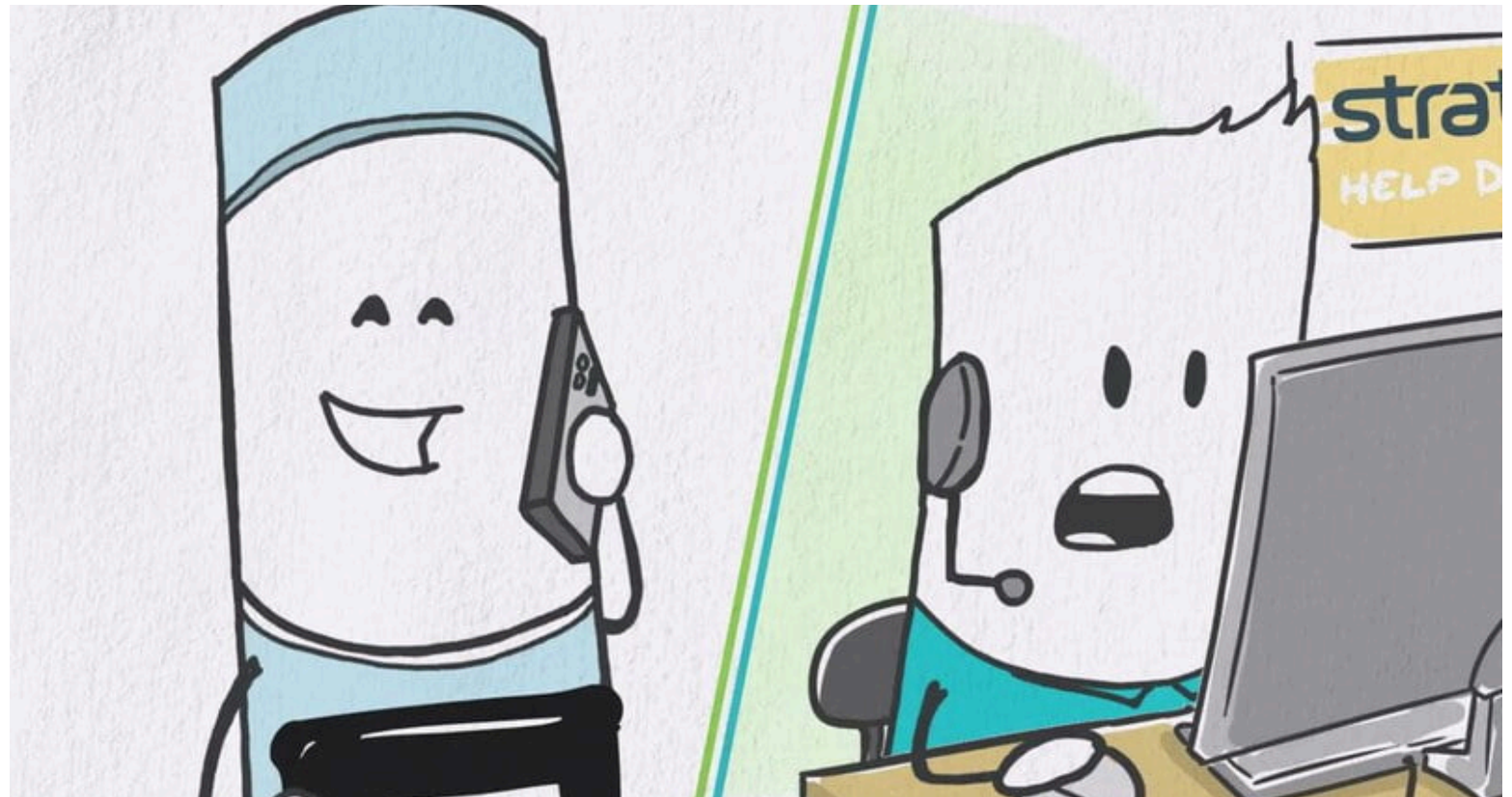
Zebra Healthcare Vision Study 2021

From patient intake to the operating room, recovery, and discharge, there are virtually limitless opportunities to streamline, digitize, automate, and connect all the workflows, interactions, assets and people that can maximize surgery center success.

Each center needs a unique solution and the right plan, support and services to get the most out of its technology investment and enable true organizational transformation. But when the right technology is applied and implemented with the consultation, services and expertise, it enables better patient safety,

efficiency, and overall surgery center performance.

Through automation, digitization, and smart technology strategies, centers of all sizes, from small local clinics to major regional operations, can achieve remarkable gains in their ability to work efficiently, cost-effectively, and safely. It all starts with a few simple but dramatically impactful moves to automate data capture, enable seamless clinical mobility, as well as better inventory management, and create digitized and superior patient experiences.



With end-to-end management of Zebra mobile ambulatory surgery centers solutions from Stratix, your employees will thank you and their productivity will increase, along with your bottom line. Watch how Stratix and Zebra work together to power today's Ambulatory Surgery Centers.



About Stratix

Wherever your organization is in its mobile-first journey, you don't have to go it alone. Stratix has led from the front on mobility for nearly four decades. We can help you design and deliver end-to-end mobile technology solutions that make your organization's mobility convenient, easy, and cost-effective. We execute deployments at scale and with precision, so they work in the hands of your end users out-of-the-box. Once devices are in service, we provide ongoing world-class managed services and visibility tools that ensure nonstop mobility throughout their lifecycle. For additional information, visit www.stratixcorp.com

About Zebra

Zebra (NASDAQ: ZBRA) empowers the front line in retail/ecommerce, manufacturing, transportation and logistics, healthcare, public sector and other industries to achieve a performance edge. With more than 10,000 partners across 100 countries, we deliver industry-tailored, end-to-end solutions to enable every asset and worker to be visible, connected and fully optimized. Our market-leading solutions elevate the shopping experience, track and manage inventory as well as improve supply chain efficiency and patient care. In 2020, Zebra made Forbes Global 2000 list for the second consecutive year and was listed among Fast Company's Best Companies for Innovators. For more information, visit www.zebra.com



Thank you for reading

5 Ways Technology Can Optimize Ambulatory Surgery Centers

To learn more, schedule a free consultation and start discovering the best solutions and strategies to optimize your ambulatory surgery center:

www.stratixcorp.com
800-883-8300.