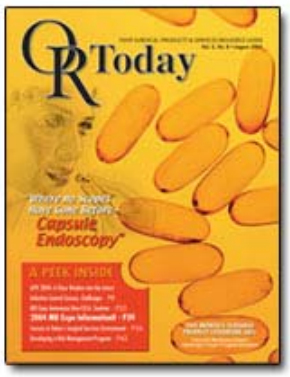
OR Today

Your Surgical Products & Services Resource Guide



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Special Feature
Jul 04

MediCapture, Inc.

Leading the Way to Easy, Affordable Digital Imaging

by Doug Taylor, Vice President, Marketing
MediCapture, Inc.

MediCapture, Inc. is on a mission: to make capturing digital images so easy and affordable that it becomes standard procedure in every medical practice.

MediCap™ USB 100
Captures digital images from analog medical imaging devices

To achieve this goal, MediCapture has introduced the MediCap™ USB100, a simple, low-cost device that easily captures digital still images from virtually any existing video imaging source, including endoscopes, surgical microscopes, and ultrasounds. The images are captured to a USB flash drive that can be plugged into any Windows computer, tablet PC, or other portable device with a USB connector. The digital images can then be downloaded for archiving, viewing, emailing, or other digital processing, bringing all the power of digital imaging to existing analog imaging devices.

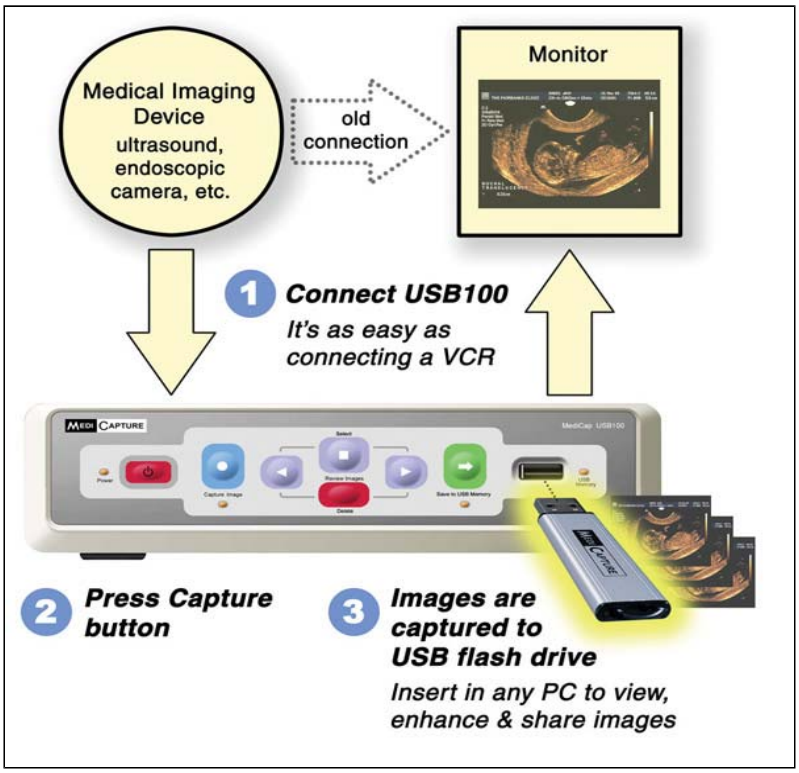
"The USB100 is truly a revolutionary device," commented Michael Bishop, President and CEO of MediCapture. "It makes digital imaging affordable to almost any hospital or private practice regardless of their budget, staffing, or type of existing equipment. Installation and operation are a snap and require no formal training. You simply connect the video jacks in-line with your existing equipment and you're ready to go. When you see an image on your monitor that you want to save, you press a button (or use a foot switch) and the image is instantly captured to solid state memory. And when you're not using the USB100, you won't even know it's there."

To distribute the USB100, MediCapture has partnered with two industry leaders in medical imaging device distribution: Choice Medical Systems, Inc. (www.choicemedical.com) in the Eastern U.S., and Scientific Vision Systems (www.svsimaging.com) in the West.

"The USB100 solves a serious problem faced by many of our customers," remarked Jean Harper, Choice Medical's Sales Manager. "They have been looking for ways to take advantage of digital imaging, but have been reluctant to replace their existing analog imaging equipment. MediCapture understands this need and has designed the USB100

especially to address it. This innovative device protects customers' capital investment; it allows them to extend the life of their existing equipment while enhancing it with digital capabilities, and does this at an exceptionally low cost. This makes for a very compelling ROI."

"By leveraging its patent-pending capture technology, MediCapture has achieved a price point thousands of dollars under other digital imaging solutions," said Dick Wheeler, President of Scientific Vision Systems. "At the same time, they've included a comprehensive set of image capture features. A Review Mode allows the doctor or clinician to display the captured images during an imaging session or in a post-op review. Unwanted images can easily be deleted. The same imaging session can also be saved to multiple USB flash drives. MediCapture even pre-loads a software wizard on its USB flash drives to simplify the process of transferring images from the flash drive to your computer – anyone can do it quickly and easily."



"MediCapture has also paid careful attention to the hardware components," continued Mr. Wheeler. "The USB100 is a Class 1 medical device registered with the FDA. It's enclosed in a rugged metal case manufactured to meet the harsh demands of the medical industry. The front panel switches are protected by a sealed, fluid-resistant membrane. The back panel includes a standard mini-jack that allows images to be captured via a footswitch or using the controls built into most endoscopic devices. The unit can operate at 110 or 220 volts and has an extra grounding post. Both NTSC and PAL video inputs are supported. Captured digital images can be saved in the JPEG, BMP, or DICOM format, plus several other common image types. The MediCapture design team did its homework on this one. They really listened to what users wanted."

MediCapture's vice-president of engineering, Martin Bishop, added, "We really wanted to ensure we were in synch with the OR staff and that the USB100 would be easy to use even in emergency situations. Early on, we realized that the key to simplicity was to use USB flash drives for storing and transporting the captured images. These drives are becoming a universally accepted storage medium. They're low-cost, reusable, and exceptionally easy to use. Other imaging solutions such as recordable CD-ROMs and networked devices can introduce an unnecessary level of complexity and risk of malfunction into a hectic OR environment. On the other hand, capturing images onto a flash drive with a USB100 is as easy as pressing the button on a digital camera – it's simple, intuitive, and reliable."

"USB flash drives also have several other advantages," commented Ben Stluka, MediCapture's vice-president of sales. "The flash drives are rugged and compact. They can be carried on a key chain or worn on a neck lanyard. This allows doctors and patients

to carry crucial medical records with them. Obstetricians can also offer pregnant patients a flash drive keepsake containing prenatal sonogram images. We see a bright future for USB technology in digital medical imaging."

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Q. WHEN YOU SAY, "SELF- CONTAINED", WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

A. It means that you do not have to take your endoscope out of the OR, purchase or attach any other pieces to make this system work. The video system is part of the trainer which allows the surgeon to work alone. With the Self Contained unit, all you need is the instruments you plan to use and practice material. You can work wherever you have standard AC power.

Q. IF THIS UNIT HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL, WHY HAVE YOU CHANGED IT?

A. We like to receive feedback from the people who use the trainer everyday. We receive many good ideas and evaluate them on how it will enhance the product for our market and the cost impact. Some ideas are better suited for other versions or a separate product. One issue we have addressed is creating a camera and lens with more "depth of field," that means the area above your practice material is also in focus without making any camera adjustments. After searching the marketplace for a new camera and lens, we had a setup made to our specifications to fit the new trainer.

Portability has also been an issue. While the last generation was an improvement over earlier options, it was still a load for our clients who carry it around all day. We cut both weight and size by using a LCD screen while providing a larger viewing area. This was our intended direction from the beginning, but LCD TVs have been cost prohibitive until now. With the new model there is no setup time because the monitor is part of the unit. You just plug it in, open the lid and turn it on. By trimming off inches on all sides, this model is about half the weight of the earlier models.

Everyone asks for more Instrument Portals. We keep adding more and this model is no exception. The new model has seven Instrument Portals! The new portal has been added right in the middle of the top. The standard portal grommet has a 10mm opening, but we also offer a 5mm grommet. Besides giving you another instrument location, we find it is the perfect spot for our new product, the CAMERA STICK.

Q. OK, SO WHAT IS THE CAMERA STICK?

A. The basic trainer allows you to work alone, however in surgery you would not be alone. In our efforts to recreate the surgical environment, we have created a simulated endoscope. The design allows you to work alone if you choose, but is a great tool to help develop the skills of working with an assistant. You can manipulate the camera stick to closely follow your instruments in the practice area and provide a wide range of motions. It can also be used in other situations where you have a video source that will accept the NTSC signal and a RCA jack. The Camera Stick requires standard AC power.

Q. WHO ARE THE CLIENTS THAT USE YOUR TRAINER?

A. Several companies use them to train sales teams in the use of their new equipment and instruments. Sales teams in turn, use the trainers to demonstrate to doctors and hospitals, while doctors learning new techniques use the trainers, Doctors already using laparoscopic techniques, will use it to practice a specific task. Some of the doctors who also teach will have the school of medicine purchase trainers to use in the lab.

Q. HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO GET A TRAINER?

A. We manufacture the trainer in our facility. We try to time production cycles so that we always have inventory on hand. In most cases the method of shipping determines the delivery time.

Q. WHAT OTHER PRODUCTS WILL WE SEE FROM 3-D TECHNICAL SERVICES IN THE FUTURE?

A. Well, we have several products that are in testing or other stages of development. I believe the next product to be ready for the public is a trainer for laparoscopic spinal surgery. I have had several discussions with Dr. John Chiu of the California Spine Institute Medical Center about features that would make a good trainer. We generally test several prototypes in the field before the final version reaches the public.

Q. WHAT IS YOUR DESIGN PHILOSOPHY WHEN CREATING A NEW PRODUCT?

A. Creating a quality product for a reasonable cost is always at the top of the list. Our staff

designs and manufactures the items in-house, therefore it's easier to control quality and cost. It also allows us to change or improve things immediately. I believe that the talented professionals at 3-D are proud of their creations and take pride in the fact that the surgical training aids help make someone's life a little better.

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