

Frame Grabber Speeds Cardiac Testing

Patients with heart problems routinely undergo cardiac catheterization as a diagnosis tool. During this procedure, a tiny camera is inserted into the heart. Cardiologists use the images from the camera to diagnose blockages and other problems.

In a conventional catheterization system, images are captured on film with a 35-mm camera mounted on the head of the X-ray system. After the procedure, the film is rushed into a darkroom and there is a 40-minute wait while the film is being developed and loaded onto a projector. In serious cases when the patient requires immediate surgery, precious minutes are lost waiting for the developing process. Another drawback of the procedure is cost: the 35 mm film for one catheterization costs approximately \$100 US. For a typical hospital that does 5000 procedures a year, that adds up to one-half million dollars per year in film alone.

ComView Corp., a manufacturer of digital imaging products for cardiology and radiology, has developed a digital imaging system that allows laboratories to record cardiac catheterization procedures without using film. The WriteStar™ system is a self-contained PC-based system that records X-ray images at 30 frames per second and stores the data on a network or on a DICOM CD. Images can be viewed in real time or immediately after the test. The PC acquires X-ray image data via Data Translation's [DT3152](#) variable-scan monochrome PCI frame grabber.

Completed tests are viewed on the ViewStar™ system, a PC-based workstation that imitates the look and feel of a traditional film viewer. Patient tests can be easily accessed for later viewing, second opinions, comparison with earlier tests, and accessed from anywhere in the hospital. ComView chose the DT3152 frame grabber because of its high image accuracy and perfect fit for monochrome X-ray applications.

For more information, click on [DT3152](#) or call (800) 525-8528.