William Beaumont Hospital already has an existing Picture Archival Communication System (PACS) in place. The institution's plan for PACS implementation called for all radiology examinations to be captured digitally and be included on PACS, with the exception of mammography, by the end of 2002. A large grant was offered to the hospital for the purpose on establishing digital mammography as the standard mammography exam at William Beaumont Hospital. A requirement of the grant was the completion of phase 1 to include four digital mammography units as well as supporting infrastructure for a total of 17 units, to be in place for the first patient on June 17th. Preparations began to implement the project in Early 2002. This talk deals with the experiences encountered in preparing the PACS to accept the sudden addition of up to 17 digital mammography units, discussion of the projected data volumes resulting from increases in patient volume, impact of field size, Computer Aided Diagnosis (CAD), network architecture, and archival strategies, and the role of a medical physicist in the decision making processes.

Educational Objectives:

1. Provide insight into the PACS issues involving digital mammography
2. Discuss relevance of medical physics support in PACS
3. Share knowledge acquired in developing a fast track approach to implementing digital mammography PACS