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Performance

Improving Patients' Health Care Experience Helps Customer Secure Recurring Revenues

TIS's integrated supply chain management services became the lynchpin for a large, complex technology infrastructure project undertaken to support a mission-critical goal. TIS brought human resources with special technical skills in a variety of disciplines, proprietary systems and processes, and world-class facilities that enabled the project to meet its objectives.

Background

The world's largest provider of products and services for individuals undergoing dialysis, a condition that affects more than 1,500,000 individuals worldwide, was faced with a new business challenge. With the growth of those on dialysis estimated to double in the next decade it was faced with unprecedented competition from hospitals, doctor offices and other global firms racing for market share. A key business driver became: how to keep the patient coming back? | 1

Most outsiders to the industry don't know that you have the right to choose a dialysis center and to change centers if you are not happy with your current provider. Moreover, there are typically a number of dialysis centers per zip code and competition is on the rise for these very valuable patients—representing approximately \$55,000 annually in top line revenue to the health care provider.

The company sought to upgrade technology in each of its 1,600 dialysis clinics in North America. The purpose of the project was to provide patients access to educational and entertainment programming as a way to improve the overall clinic experience for dialysis patients who must spend several hours in treatment, multiple times a week. However, a major concern of the project team quickly became, given the complexity, scope and timeline of the project combined with the requirements for work done by both the construction trades and technologists, could they find a partner that had the capacity to manage the work within budget.

After well over a year in evaluation, TIS contracted to manage the process of planning, sourcing and deploying a touch-screen computing device (digital media and/or kiosk) at each patient's chair side. TIS' client clearly views this project as transformational and necessary in order to protect and enhance market competitiveness.

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TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE SOLUTIONS, INC.

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Challenges

Time Frames: Each dialysis center is a revenue producing unit, so taking them off-line for new construction or technology upgrades was not an option. In addition, a timeframe of installing the equipment over a 24 month period was established.

Cleanliness: As in most health care settings, care givers are extremely sensitive to anything that might detract from the wellness of their patients from contaminants that might be created during construction and installations.

New engineering: The solution required the proof and testing of new construction techniques, new hardware, new software, new communication technology and all the interrelated dependencies.

Scheduling and Managing Trade and Technical Workers: Carpenters, electricians, plumbers, structured cable specialists, telephony, engineers, communication and I/T professionals as well as union and non-union workers needed to be coordinated for on-site installations.

Timing of equipment drops: Given the size of each location, and with so much new equipment coming into each center, there was no room to warehouse equipment. Therefore, equipment that hit the door had to get installed immediately.

Solution

This solution will be installed in each of the client's existing 1,600 U.S. based clinics as well as in 500 new clinics coming on-stream over the next two years. Each clinic will be equipped with approximately 20-25 devices per clinic, yielding an anticipated installed base of roughly 40,000 devices. The project entails revamping the clinics' technical infrastructure to bring voice, data, and video to each chair-side computer. In addition, much physical infrastructure must also be reworked as the computing devices will be attached to the end of telescopic arms, which are to be secured to countertops or chases.

To mitigate the risk inherent in installing equipment on site in the constrained time frames it is working under, equipment from a wide variety of vendors is inventoried and warehoused at TIS Staging and Configuration Center. Once there, TIS utilizes the detailed design-and-build materials provided by the customer and builds, configures and tests each clinic prior to shipment. Upon successful testing, equipment is labeled, shrink wrapped and shipped to each location for arrival at the start of the upgrade.



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TIS' Supply Chain Management Services for Technology Deployment is a unique marketplace offering as it provides clients one-stop shopping for large-scale, and complex technology deployments. The range of services to be provided as part of this project is comprehensive and includes the following:

1. Conduct site surveys for specific material, equipment, and labor planning.
2. Contract manufacturing the computers.
3. Warehouse, stage, and configure all technology components.
4. Rebuild chases to secure the mounting of telescopic arm assemblies.
5. Assemble telescopic arm sub-assemblies.
6. Source and install all electrical receptacles, and related wiring.
7. Source and install all voice, data, and video receptacles, and related wiring.
8. Install all networking switches and routers.
9. Provide landlord authorization call center services.
10. Install satellite racks, satellite dishes, and related wiring.
11. Remove existing equipment and related materials in compliance with code.
12. Install telescopic arms.
13. Assemble, kit and ship touch-screen computers.
14. Install new computers.
15. Provide first-call help desk services.

TIS is performing to expectations on the project and is expected to be complete with the project on time. Retention and same clinic revenues are up in all of the sites that have undertaken this upgrade.