

Case Study: Continued Care

Dan DeSimone, President/CEO



From Paper Napkin to Paperless

You've heard that old cliché: the best ideas or partnerships start with little more than a lively discussion over drinks, stale pretzels and a plan scrawled on a cocktail napkin.

It happens.

Continued Care of Long Island, New York (www.continuedcare.com), is a small mom-and-pop shop owned by a former nurse. The company has been providing medical home health equipment, including Respiratory Therapy Services, Orthotics and Women's Health Products, to residents of Long Island and the five boroughs of New York City for more than 25 years.

In 2008, Continued Care's president and CEO, Dan DeSimone, recognized the company needed to become more efficient. Antiquated technology was not helping Continued Care keep up with competitors who had modernized their methods of doing business. He was attending a conference in Waterloo, Iowa, trying to figure out how to keep his mother's business alive, when it happened.

"Sitting all alone at the hotel bar, I couldn't help but try to cram all the networking I had done that day. I decided to walk downtown to find another place where I could possibly absorb everything I had learned. Walking across the bridge, I was seriously focusing on technology. There were so many new applications available for HME at the time and I was struggling trying to decide which way to turn," DeSimone said. "I had spent the last year upgrading all our hardware. We virtualized our server, brought in Microsoft Exchange server, BlackBerry Server, bought all new workstations, new laser printers and this thing my IT department calls a Barracuda. As far as I knew, the barracudas were beneath me as I crossed the river in downtown Waterloo."

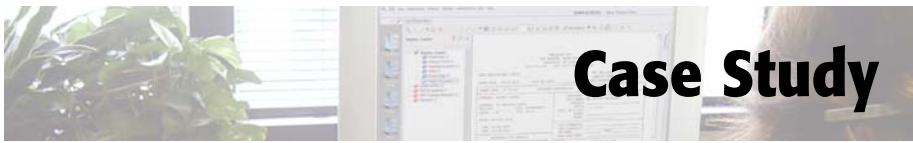
A chance encounter at another bar with Esther Apter, the CEO of MedFORCE Technologies, and her staff, cemented the direction Continued Care would take. After several hours of listening to and digesting the MedFORCE prescription, Dan signed on.

"I slowly put together the technical transformation Continued Care was about to go through over the next year. I signed a contract with MedFORCE on a five-inch square paper napkin that night at approximately 1:30am and MedFORCE has been servicing our needs ever since," DeSimone said.

The MedFORCE Solution

Continued Care started with MedFORCE Scan, the popular tool that creates a secure process for importing documents, also known as "going paperless." By adding the document imaging solution into his daily routine, DeSimone said he was able to remove the 12 huge, four-drawer file cabinets containing patient files that were engulfing his main office.

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"Our billers were no longer walking around the office looking for papers that were 'missing,'" DeSimone said. "MedFORCE had streamlined operations for Continued Care over a one-year period. The 2009 Results were a 22% increase in productivity for billers. We were also able to see a reduction of DSO (Day's Sales Outstanding) by 11 days. Even retail receipts increased from under \$1,000 daily to an average of \$3,400 daily thanks to increased spacing," he added.

Next, Continued Care began using the savings from going paperless to add D&R Manager, MedFORCE's denial and reimbursement tool, giving the company the ability to import the ERAs (Electronic Remittance Advices) from its payers and placing the EOBs (Explanation of Benefits) just a click away.

"We used D&R more and more to follow up on pending claims and denials and still use it to evaluate denial rates," DeSimone said. "The denial rate was reduced from 26% to 14%."

Future Expansion

The company continues to increase the responsibility that D&R Manager has in the Continued Care office. DeSimone said this would lay the ground work to add MedFORCE Technologies' business process management (BPM) solution, WorkFLOW, in the future.

"We've been adding new items into Autoscan, including Barcoding, and integrating forms with our billing software such as Order Entry and Plan of Care," DeSimone said. "When we first started, the savings we would come to realize were hard to see. We needed to gradually apply the different applications MedFORCE had to offer, but the trickle-down

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Continued Care*

effect of savings came over time. When we add WorkFLOW, we expect to see even more savings."

In the past two years, DeSimone's world has quite literally turned upside down. As the son of a nurse who owned an HME company, he was working at a hospital at the age of 14.

"It was there that I learned how to care about others," DeSimone said. "While no software can do that, if you already care about others, it can sure help you do it better."

And it all started with a small paper napkin. ■

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