

The SISU Companies, A 7-Year Success Story

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The typical environment of a rural healthcare facility

- Faced with **declining reimbursement**.
- **Pressures to automate** their clinical areas and build an electronic medical record.
- Mounting **patient safety pressures** requiring significant investments in technologies they know little about nor have the staff needed to implement successfully. Technologies such as:

- PACS

- CPOE

- Bedside Medication Verification

- IP Telephony

- ITV

The typical environment of a rural healthcare facility

- Pressure to create and implement **HIPAA privacy & security compliance** initiatives.
- Pressures from staff to make technology purchases when their knowledge is limited.
- **Formidable task to create a comprehensive technology vision** that can be sold to their board of directors.

The typical environment of a rural healthcare facility

- **Little or no in-house information technology expertise.**
- **Most CEOs are in a position of having to rely solely on their software vendors to provide a technology direction which is not usually “all encompassing”.**
- **Reliance on outside technology companies to provide information technology support at premium prices (e.g. PC support, network management, etc.).**

The typical environment of a rural healthcare facility

- **Struggling to stay on top of hardware & software obsolescence.**
- **Struggling with Microsoft licensing – can't afford to keep all PCs on the same software levels and worried about a Microsoft audit due to their inability to adequately prove licensing compliance.**
- **Facility has little or no access to knowledge databases such as MicroMedex due to cost.**

This environment has caused the following reactions ...

- **Technology decisions based on inadequate research** many times resulting in failed implementations or low return on investment.
- **The tendency to put off information technology purchases** until absolutely necessary for fear of making the wrong decision and wasting precious resources.
- **Reliance on in-house staff not trained in information technology** or worse yet, reliance on outside technology companies not even familiar with the healthcare market.

Software vendors approach the rural facility and may get the following reactions...

- **The facility is unwilling to make a commitment to a new information system** – even though what is proposed might sound reasonable.
- **Other planned projects take precedence** over information technology.
- **Inconsistent approach** to Information Technology.

CAUSES:

- **Lack of confidence** in their technology decision-making.
- **Past information technology project failures** resulting in wasted resources.

What is SISU?



Our Roots

The collaborative precursor to SISU began in 1982 as the “Miller-Dwan Medical Center Shared Service”

SISU Medical Systems was officially formed in 1997 with seven original members.

Our Mission

SISU provides the medical community access to cost effective information technology so that it may provide the best in patient care and employee satisfaction. SISU provides strong service and training to support the technology needs of its member organizations. It facilitates the sharing of information, meets multi-facility needs with limited resources, makes available congregate data, and encourages members to share their expertise.

Our Vision

SISU will deliver timely and high quality support to its current and future members. Growth will occur by broadening the scope of services delivered and expanding geographically with the addition of new organizations. Maintaining positive working relationships based on trust will continue to be a priority.

Our Members

- Community Memorial Hospital, Cloquet, MN
- Mercy Hospital & Healthcare Center, Moose Lake, MN
- Miller-Dwan Medical Center, Duluth, MN
- Cuyuna Regional Medical Center, Crosby, MN
- Riverwood Hospital & Healthcare Center, Aitkin, MN
- Northern Itasca Healthcare Center, Bigfork, MN
- Cook Hospital, Cook, MN
- Cook County North Shore Hospital, Grand Marais, MN
- Kanabec Hospital, Mora, MN
- St. Mary's Regional Health Center, Detroit Lakes, MN
- Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital, Ely, MN
- Deer River Healthcare Center, Deer River, MN

SISU Medical Systems

- 501(e) non-profit corporation
- Must be a hospital to participate
- Share information technology
- Share information technology staff
- Collaborate on other projects

SISU's Operating Principles

- Non-profit consortium designed to share information technology & staffing.
- Each member organization has one voting board member.
- Our structure allows for small members to have same impact on decision-making as large members.

SISU Medical Solutions, LLC

- For profit corporation
- A place to call “home” for our employees
- Lease employees to SISU Medical Systems
- Can legally perform work for for-profit organizations
- Offer “turn key solutions” to physician practices that are well integrated into all facets of patient care

SISU's Accomplishments

- Successful installation of over 250 Meditech applications (105 in the first year alone).
- Have trained over 3500 active Meditech users.
- Have written over 2500 custom NPR reports.
- Have built and maintained over 2500 custom Meditech menus.

SISU's Accomplishments

- Over 1800 user devices (excluding Citrix).
- Over 550 printers.
- Approx. 35 Meditech file servers, 10 application servers, 45 background job processors and 5 Citrix servers.
- Over 150 servers throughout the entire SISU network.
- 1100 concurrent Meditech users.
- 950 monthly help desk calls.

SISU's Accomplishments

- Grown from 4 member hospitals in 1997 to 12 today.
- One completely integrated hospital and clinic using Meditech / LSS enterprise-wide. Presented at the Minnesota e-Health Summit held June 23, 2005.
- Video network used for distance meetings, education, remote pharmacy and other activities.
- Centralized dictation server.
- Centralized e-mail and scheduling with SPAM & virus filtering.

SISU's Accomplishments

- Several joint projects including Y2K evaluation, HIPAA privacy compliance, HIPAA security assessment as well as other projects.
- Network management of critical devices and wiring closets throughout our wide area network.
- Affordable licensing agreement with Microsoft – SISU is one of few sites in the nation with this special healthcare licensing agreement.

SISU's Accomplishments

- Centralized Internet access with content filtering.
- Centralized antivirus protection.
- Centralized device management using Microsoft Systems Management Server.
- Microsoft Sharepoint Intranet technology.
- Cisco IP Telephony.

Proof that the consortium concept is a compelling model for rural healthcare...

- We regularly receive calls throughout the U.S. as to how we created SISU and how we are structured.
- Several inquiries from around the country from sites interested in joining SISU.
- Published article outlining the SISU concept in the HIMSS Journal for Healthcare Information Management, Volume 17, No 1.

Proof that the consortium concept is a compelling model for rural healthcare...

- SISU's consistent growth and prospects for the future.
- Regular requests from information technology vendors to partner with SISU.
- Successful existence of other consortiums such as Avera Health and Inland Northwest Health Services.

The Sisu Facility



The environment of a SISU Facility...

- **No longer out on a limb** when making information technology decisions.
- **Capable information technology staff** that works on their behalf at all times and helps them with their technology vision and decision-making.
- **Negotiated pricing and benefits** through partnerships with technology vendors.

The environment of a SISU Facility...

- **Well developed and on-going technology strategy** that has been proven.
- **Access to the expertise of numerous “peer” organizations** following the same technology plan.
- **Collaboration on critical industry initiatives** such as Y2K, HIPAA, and patient safety.
- **SISU application user groups** which can be used by their employees to solve problems and bounce ideas off of.

The environment of a SISU Facility

- **Cost effective and well integrated information technology plan** that moves their organization from a position of fearing information technology to a desire to use technology as a strategy for:
 - improved fiscal management
 - improved patient safety
 - improved patient satisfaction
 - improved employee satisfaction
 - improved marketing strength.

The environment of a SISU Facility

- **Regular collaboration & savings with other technology projects** such as “Remote Pharmacy”, “PACS”, centralized digital dictation, centralized e-mail & scheduling, centralized Internet access, and many others.
- **Collaboration with other SISU sites in complying with HIPAA requirements.** Sharing of costs associated with hiring of HIPAA-related staff, security audits, compliance tools, policy development, etc.

The environment of a SISU Facility ...

- **Access to the types of healthcare information technology staff when and where needed including:**

Clinical Analysts

Lab Analysts

Financial Analysts

Programming Staff

Network Staff

Systems Support Staff

- **Healthcare information is stored in state-of-the-art data center and backed up by trained SISU personnel.**

The environment of a SISU Facility ...

- **Real-time network management by SISU personnel** as well as monitoring of wiring closets, server rooms and critical network devices.
- **Cost effective Microsoft enterprise licensing agreement** for significantly easier licensing compliance and legal access to latest software versions.
- **Enterprise access to the MicroMedex knowledge databases** by their clinical staff.

LESSONS LEARNED



Lessons LearnedCollaboration

- Competition –
 - Information technology is a utility
 - By itself it won't give you a competitive advantage
 - Leave competition at the door, or you won't be successful
- Trust – If you don't trust each other, forget it.
- Failure – If it doesn't work, move on to the next project, don't dwell on it.

Lessons LearnedOperations

- Hire very capable people, THAT COSTS MONEY FOLKS!
- Tell them what you want them to do.
- Let them do it, don't interfere.
- Rome wasn't built in a day. We have been at it for 7 years and have 12 facilities at 12 stages of implementation.

Lessons LearnedOperations

- Stay off the bleeding edge of technology, it's ok to buy equipment that is good enough.
- Leverage your collaborative power, companies charge less when you buy in volume.
- You will never catch up with technology, don't even try, set a goal and get there.

Thank You!

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