



Small Business Case Study

Server with Intel® Xeon® processor technology, laptop with Intel® Centrino® mobile technology
Number of employees: 26-50



Telehealth® business goes global with Intel

Case Summary

The Digital Group of Telehealth Companies® has been working with health care corporations and governments around the world to enhance accessibility to health care services with new technology. After a phone call from Canada's Prime Minister requesting their participation in the World Fair in Germany, Digital Group of Telehealth Companies® was launched into the global market. Beyond the necessity of server capacity for product development, mobility became a critical issue for this Nova Scotia business with new projects happening around the globe, including the recent opening of an office in China.

Challenge

The Digital Group of Telehealth Companies® specializes in solutions that address all facets of distance delivery of health care. Originally founded as a company that produced training CD-ROMs for the health sector, Digital Group's® expertise evolved into incorporating the sense of touch in its training simulations – and ultimately telerobotics for surgery.

"I had thought we would be a local business working in Nova Scotia or at most Canada-wide. After the World's Fair, all of that changed," recalls company CEO Wayne Bell, recalling the day when he was asked to represent the Canadian healthcare sector in Hannover, Germany.

With 67,000 business cards and 200 nations in the world approaching Bell, the company was launched onto the international stage.



“I get virtual reality files that I need to review and comment on, so I need the graphics capacity and number crunching ability in my notebook.”

Solution

Bell wasn't ready for this new global scope. He had a solid network infrastructure (built around his server with Intel® Xeon® processor technology) that they needed when the company was developing Virtual Reality. Having this bandwidth and capacity within his server has given Digital Group® a solid platform on which to grow its global consulting company.

What he now needed was more mobility, and the flexibility to travel the world consulting with his new clients. Laptops with Intel® Centrino® mobile technology, coupled with a wireless LAN at the office, provided that flexibility and mobility.

“I wanted a portable computer with high graphics ability. I am very happy with the choice which has even more processing power than I expected,” says Bell, adding when choosing his computers, he looks for Intel processors. “If it's not an Intel processor, I'm not interested. They set the standard and do the job for us.”

Key Advantages

The company had developed and continues to maintain a technology transfer agreement with NASA and a Memorandum of Understanding with the U.S. military, which require Bell to provide support and advice. For this, Bell depends upon the processing power and speed provided by Intel.

“I get Virtual Reality files that I need to review and comment on, so I need the graphics capacity and number crunching ability in my notebook,” says Bell, noting the speed increases in laptop technology over the past years have been impressive, more than meeting his needs.

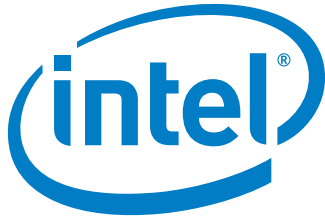
WLAN allows flexibility

Since the majority of Digital Group's® work is for countries around the world, there are rarely more than four people in the office at any time. For the consultants, access to files and e-mail while traveling is essential and using laptops with Intel® Centrino® mobile technology give Bell and his team the combination of accessibility and long battery life that is needed when travelling overseas.

Bell notes that being able to access wireless networks from airport lounges allows him to be more efficient. “It's a lot more convenient than constantly looking for a place to plug in,” he says. “Wireless is the way of the future.”

As a global traveler, Bell is noticing more and more countries providing wireless access and has been surprised and the level of connectivity coming to countries such as Malaysia, which has high-speed wireless Internet access at many hotels.





Connected around the world

Whether it is developing a new health information system for the Bahamas, or working with the Chinese government to bring new technologies into their hospitals, Digital Group® consults with a wide range of organizations to solve basic challenges with accessibility to health care.

Bell admits that in some countries, the top priority is sterility of the hospitals and not technology, but with an aging population, limited number of medical experts and spread-out areas from which people are trying to access care, technology solutions – such as video conferencing, telemedicine, call centres and handheld devices to access online patient records – is becoming more standard.

Digital Group® relies on its team of experts, including doctors, nurses, administrators, lawyers and IT specialists (the majority of whom leverage the mobility of laptops with Intel® Centrino® mobile technology) to evaluate local needs, and provide recommendations on the best approach to meet the priorities of each organization. Digital Group® takes a holistic approach to the adoption of new technology.

The right tools to access better health

A priority for Digital Group® is matching the right technology to the desired outcomes.

"We use as much technology as needed to get the job done efficiently," he says.

A VPN connection provides secure access to the office server with Intel® Xeon® processor technology, Digital Group® consultants use their laptops with Intel® Centrino® mobile technology to implement the right levels of technology and processes to enhance accessibility to health resources. Consultants connect to e-mail and files over the secure VPN link to the office, while leveraging Microsoft FolderShare* technology to synchronize important data between remote workers and the office to improve version control and sharing of important information.

"We look at using technology to enhance care," says Bell, who relies on the flexibility of his own remote access and wireless connectivity with Intel® Centrino® mobile technology to effectively collaborate with his clients. When building a telehealth network in Nunavut, Digital Group® worked in Canada's north to install the network and train staff to use audio and video transmission over satellite to provide real-time access to health expertise from main city centres to 15 remote communities. Without this technology, some of these residents would need to travel great distances to access primary care.

Future Uses

As a business that was founded as a local industry and quickly became a global enterprise, Bell admits he doesn't have any pre-conceived ideas about what is coming next. Plans are underway to partner with Nigeria to open a telemedicine centre of excellence, and possibly a new Digital Group® office to run the clinical delivery of telemedicine.

"In this industry, things are happening fairly quickly. It's hard to project where we'll be but we will be staying ahead of the needs of our clients," Bell says, adding that they will be evaluating the new Dual-Core Intel® Centrino® mobile technology to further enhance their mobility and processing power, and is watching with interest Intel's initiatives in digital health industries. Projects on the horizon include the possible establishment of a nursing call centre in Canada to expand the capacity for in-home care by providing easy access to nursing expertise.

Find out more about a business solution that is right for your company by contacting your Intel representative, or visit the Intel Business Enterprise Web site at intel.ca/business or its industry solutions specific sites at intel.ca/business/bss/industry.



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