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Spotlight: novaMSC intends to stay focused

By CYNTHIA PETERSON

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STAYING focused on key competencies while enjoying success is a challenge as the temptation to venture into other areas is difficult to resist. For novaMSC, the focus is clear – it intends to continue concentrating on the e-government and healthcare sectors.

The company has so far spent about RM20 million on research and development, and commits 20 to 25 per cent of its revenue on R&D.

Lai Teik Kin, co-founder of the group and group business development officer, says the company is not going into other areas because it emphasises domain knowledge.

To illustrate his point, healthcare professionals such as pharmacists and nurses are working with them on the company's healthcare solutions.

Managing healthcare

The novaMSC solutions are aimed at managing healthcare in the information and communications technology (ICT) age.

Its two main products are Vesalius – Hospital Information System (Vesalius – HIS) and Vesalius – Clinical Information System (Vesalius – CIS), which make up 30 per cent of the company's business.

Vesalius – HIS is an administration system with eight basic modules whereas Vesalius – CIS, with its clinical specialty modules, targets medical professionals.

The company's suite of modules for administration includes patient administration, appointment scheduling, billing and accounts receivables.

Lai says hospitals are still implementing the basic system before moving to Versalius – CIS, which assists healthcare professionals via its non-discipline specific electronic medical record (EMR).

He says the solutions can be implemented between six months and one-and-a-half years, depending on the number of modules.

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Regional DEMAND

Lai says the company hopes to fill in the vacuum for healthcare solutions in the region which has a good market for it.

The scalable, modular homegrown solutions are being implemented in both private and public hospitals regionally, as a government hospital in Singapore and a private medical centre in Indonesia are implementing Vesalius – HIS.

NovaMSC is currently a player in the Asean market and its solutions are also being implemented in a chain of clinics in Hong Kong. A partner has been engaged in China to penetrate that market.

Expanding to other markets has its challenges, and for healthcare solutions, taking local situations into account takes on a greater importance.

In Thailand, where the solution has also been implemented, language compatibility and awareness of social norms have made it more acceptable.

Lai says it is not unusual for a patient to use aliases and the challenge was to ensure that patient's record was the same regardless. They found a way to deal with that, and the Vesalius suites are good enough to be featured in an industry directory published by the Public Health Ministry in Thailand.

BULK of BUSINESS

About 70 per cent of novaMSC's business is in the e-government sector, with its Pavo, Octans and Fornax suites of solutions. Pavo allows automation of business processes and collaborative transactions over the Internet between the government and private sector. Lai says the company has put a lot of R&D into this solution which features the fundamentals of interaction and transaction management.

A council management system called Octans has been implemented in Putrajaya, and it supports business processes such as processing of land development applications, checking the conformance of building design to existing codes and safety standards, valuation of properties and provision of essential city services.

Fornax is attracting international interest, with novaMSC talking to interested parties in the United States and Europe. The solution does automated checks on electronic building and development plans against building and land regulations or guidelines for design compliance.

What used to take weeks or months can now be done in hours, Lai says, adding that US and European interest in the product is

exciting as it shows a homegrown product has gained acceptance.

partnerships

Lai says novaMSC intends to grow through partnerships, marking a change from the way the company used to do business.

“We have always sold directly, but when we went regional, we could not have the same model. We’ve had to change to finding, training and managing partners,” he says.

But it is going well, and he adds that one of his yardsticks for success is when the products are accepted by its potential business partners and customers.

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