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## A Long Term Vision for Esaote: Carlos Faustmann, Chief Global Marketing



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On the occasion of Esaote's recent launch of their latest mobile ultrasound diagnostic tools MyLab Gamma and MyLab 6, HealthManagement sat down with Carlos Faustmann to talk about Esaote's approach and strategy in the competitive ultrasound market.

### **Congratulations on the launch. It appears these new machines are the perfect diagnostic tool at an affordable price. Why?**

We have been redeveloping our products over the past years towards a future portfolio that includes ultrasound machines devised to run with software and probes specific to each specialty application. This has allowed us to design for different price points and budgets. Recently, there has been a lot of concern within healthcare systems globally with regards to the cost of imaging modalities and subsequent reimbursements. Compared to all the other big modalities, ultrasound is one of the most affordable modalities available today, and we have learnt a lot over 30 years. We have been in this business a very long time, we manufacture our own probes and design our own software and have now, for the first time, been able to use common software across the platforms.

Our customers can custom make their own ultrasound carts according to their needs. When a hospital is heavy-duty scanning lots of patients everyday, economics become an important factor for the operator alongside the user safety. For user safety, we analysed the results of a study conducted in a US hospital, which looked at the strain placed on a user of ultrasound machines. It gathered information via detectors on arms, the wrist, the user's neck, on how they reached out for the screen and so on. We involved one of our engineers, and with this study we have slowly and continuously improved our machines. To answer the question of economics we decided we need a system that is lower priced than the previous big hospital-designed 7 edition, that has the same software but just the right features for that particular type of market. The new 6 machine is intended for smaller private practices busy with routine screenings, and who do not want to compromise on image quality. To achieve this in our new product, we work more wisely with electronic components and apply lower mechanical cost structures.

Esaote has been making portables for many years; we are one of the leaders in portables and continue to grow. We have a very large installed customer base still using legacy systems, outdated MyLab systems, which are asking to be replaced for more modern versions. Our strategy is to continue taking care of our loyal customer base, while offering the latest technology. Esaote's ergonomically designed carts are unique, the probes are innovatively versatile and our software usable across all platforms.

With this launch we are also introducing our very first green ultrasound diagnostic tool. It is silent and emits a barely audible fan noise, has low power consumption using all the latest electronic advancements to comply with low power consumption and battery operation. Not to mention the ergonomics also in this context.

Hospitals who practice cross-departmental collaboration and who wish to share imaging equipment can use our machine and adapt it with the software and probe required at that moment, extending their capability to diagnose patients while keeping costs low. This in turn allows us to address not just cardiologists or gynaecologists or other specific healthcare centres, but to sell to shared service providers.

### **If you are constantly evolving your product you must constantly have new software versions. How about the upgrades, do you sell these?**

Our current portfolio is entirely upgradable by software. Every year we have a software update, and since all of the 7, 6 and Alpha Gamma machines run on the same software, there is an annual performance update available for four models. These are offered free of charge.

Our investments are made for long term. We do not compromise; so all our ultrasound product ranges offer productivity, efficiency and value. Value because the device can be used for many applications. Efficiency because the machine can be programmed to suit the way each user wants it to work. Productivity because of its ease of use, especially since we also offer Wi-Fi in our portable carts. This allows not only for remote service diagnostics in case of maintenance issues, but Wi-Fi also allows the users to connect to the establishment's network and to easily transfer images, use the printer and send data and dicom data, giving total flexibility.

### **Can the data still be given to the patient via CD or memory stick?**

To reduce costs we took the CD players out, and by transferring the images off the cart onto an outside PC or whichever other media enables the user to be very flexible. The new product family is the touch screen Tablet version, for the point-of-care users too. It can be used for specialties as wide-ranging as dermatology and sports medicine thanks to the different probes and software options. With modern technology we worked on making our products comfortable for the user and for the patient, the faster the diagnosis is made, the better. We can connect any kind of vendor

independently, all the modalities of a cardiology cath-lab, electrophysiology and other departments into one master network. PACs is the future.

**You seem to have a groundbreaking vision.**

I am responsible for the Esaote's global and I am trying to pull the various divisions together and to give one cohesive message. Our products also give one cohesive message. In the old days machines had to be retired when something new was developed, now the user simply needs to buy one machine, equip it with the software and probes of his choice, and receive our updates. We believe in reliability and quality.

**What is the company's philosophy?**

We like to consider ourselves as a partner to our customers; we see that customers have issues. This could be the need for fast diagnostics, or the need to solve a workflow issue. Nowadays, we all have to do more with less, we have less people and we have to care for more patients. So, as a company we want to figure out how we can make our machines help improve the workflow. We have a doctor in our team to ensure the medical approach is taken into consideration in our designs. One of the new structures we introduced in our team is called the Voice of the Customer, a group of people in marketing who listen to customers' needs and feedback. They pass the information to our RND guys, who add innovation to the problems or the solutions. As an example: a customer says to me 'I have this particular problem, I cannot see the needle very well when I do this procedure'. I will then talk to RND and work on that issue, and in the next release we will have new needle visualization software.

**What other innovations have you introduced within the company?**

I changed some of the reporting structures. The product managers no longer report to RND but to marketing now, so they are more involved in the product's success. Every product has a manager, who I have trained. They have to ensure their product sells, if it does not, then they need to fly to the location in question and ask what is going on. We work very hard on the products, customer focus and training with our training department. I travel the world as we have nine countries that bring in 85% of our business, and I'm training all of them on product launch, marketing and all the related issues so they all have the same look and message. In the past the company was successful in Italy and now we are doing very well in China and elsewhere, too. Our new CEO has enabled all the changes and has hired the entire team of professional country managers. He has a very clear strategy so we all are working the same way and I am delighted to be part of it.

Thank you for your time.

*Carlos Faustmann joined the Esaote Board of Directors in Feb 2011 as a Non Executive Director. In October 2013, he was appointed to the new current position of Chief Global Marketing & Domestic Sales Officer responsible for Domestic Italy Sales and Global Marketing of Ultrasound, Dedicated MRI, Interventional Solutions, Veterinary, Technical Service and Healthcare IT. Carlos has over 30 years Diagnostic Imaging industry experience having held international management & board positions in multinational imaging companies like Aloka, Siemens, and Acuson. Carlos holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Electronics Engineering from University of Santo Thomas, Philippines and Management of High Technology Companies Program of the American Electronics Association at Stanford University Executive Institute of California, USA.*

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