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iSOFT and Ultragenda Join Forces

HITM spoke to Hugo Schellens (HS), CEO, UltraGenda and Andrea Fiumicelli (AF), Chief Operating Office, iSoft about their recent alliance, the reasons behind it and their shared vision for the future.

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Lets Talk About the New Partnership. How did it Happen? Why did it Happen?

AF: The answer is very simple, iSoft needs to provide solutions along three walls: cross-sectoral interoperability, centred to the patient and easy to access. This is our vision as a company. Now if I look at what this man did (looks at HS) in the last 10 years, his company and his intellectual property, his software application actually match very well this vision. From a strategic point of view our existing applications around the world, 13,000 plus clients, have an increased demand enterprise wide and so we will see more and more the intellectual property of UltraGenda being outsourced or integrated or eventually as a standalone.

HS: I think that one of reasons for iSoft buying us was that their application's don't include scheduling so there was a need there. Also we realised that with the management vision formula that we have used so far we have been very successful but we were coming almost to the maximum.

Don't forget we are company that has no sales force, no marketing personnel. So we had very limited power, we had reached our limit. We feel that this application could really be used all over the world. It is generic, not linked to any particular company and we have proved that you can sell it into of different markets. iSoft will do this.

At the minute you say you have 13,000 clients. What would be your dream number of clients?

AF: I think it is not about predicting/stating the number of clients but I think that the aim we share with Hugo is, that in at least those geographies where iSoft are the leaders is to have the UltraGenda intellectual property embedded or as a standalone application as leader in that country. That means our aim is 7/8 countries in a timeframe of 2/3 years.

HS: Scheduling systems on the market today have been designed for healthcare 25 years ago but healthcare has become more complex. So you need very sophisticated systems, we think we have the best system in the world at the minute and it gives us a lot of confidence for the future.

AF: If you change the perspective, as you know for a long time there has been a lot of talk about providing joined up care throughout the patient pathway, wherever the provision of the healthcare service is given. So scheduling, cross-sectoral scheduling across the different providers, stakeholders, community- wide is becoming really the essence of healthcare. So that's the reason why scheduling for us has been strategically an enabling technology to be the leader in the area. We are the "evangelists" of cross-sectoral scheduling.

Who are your core competitors?

HS: Fundamentally, UltraGenda has no competitors.

AF: iSoft is in a different league now. Healthcare as a market is changing, the competitive market is changing. Local companies are competing too. Cross-sectoral scheduling is changing the essence of competition- many companies can offer it so we are competing with new companies.

Integration projects can go right and wrong—how do you see this acquisition?

AF: My main fear is the risk of losing the entrepreneurial mindset of the small company when the size of the companies are so different. It is a delicate process.

HS: The best way to start and ensure success is to realise quick wins. I am very optimistic.

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