

Application Story



Thermal Angel® Blood Warmer Company, Estill Medical Technologies, Selects Nefsis® Web & Video Conferencing for Remote Customer Outreach & Online Demonstrations

Introduction

Fluid-induced hypothermia can be a major problem for trauma centers and first-responders, especially those in battlefield environments, rural areas and all weather conditions. Recognizing that the first hour of trauma, called the Golden Hour, is especially important in responding to patients who have suffered trauma, Estill Medical Technologies of Dallas, Texas developed and introduced the Thermal Angel blood and IV fluid infusion warmer. This life-saving medical device is light-weight and completely portable, making it the most viable option in a wide variety of medical applications due to its battery power. These features allow the Thermal Angel to be used in the hospital, as well as any setting including EMS, Flight Services, Search and Rescue, and battlefield conditions.

With a growing track-record of success in the field came a chorus of new customers, civilian applications, and international medical establishments that required more outreach and support – an enviable problem for any business.

President and CEO Jay Lopez presided over a two-year expansion of the Company’s manufacturing process, ensuring reliable supplies and enabling the Company to pursue its corporate agenda of competing in the larger medical device market. In particular, Mr. Lopez sought new ways of customer development without replicating the field sales offices, international subsidiaries and the high-overhead cost structures of its competitors.

“We have a 21st century, life-saving product, and we didn’t want our customers to wait for last century’s sales approach to getting it out there,” said Mr. Lopez. Indeed, one overseas government customer went to the extreme of chartering a jet to expedite initial delivery and training for its military staff. “It’s a testament to the product, but we needed

Problem:

- Welcoming new customers without opening more field sales offices
- Online visual medical device demos for remote sites

Solution:

- Nefsis web & video conferencing, an online service optimized for participants with variable internet connection speeds and bandwidth

Business & IT Benefits:

- Nefsis online services and plug-and-play video peripherals eliminated the large capital equipment expense normally associated with fixed-site video conferencing systems
- Ease of use saves IT staff time
- Nefsis presentation sharing and on-demand video allows Estill staff to easily convey product knowledge to new customers, in live, company-led sessions

a much more cost-effective way of briefing interested parties, hosting Q&A sessions, and delivering product demos,” he added.

Web & Video Conferencing Product Selection Criteria

Estill turned to web and video conferencing, as a cost-effective technology solution.

The primary conferencing applications were Thermal Angel product briefings, introductory demonstrations, and product discussions for new and existing customers. This required presentations and document sharing over the web, such as that available in most web conferencing products, plus the addition of high-quality video conferencing capabilities for Thermal Angel demonstrations and improving the interactive nature of live, product discussion sessions.

The product had to use off-the-shelf, widely available PC audio and video peripherals, obtainable anywhere in the world. Proprietary components and solutions were untenable. In addition, the product had to use industry standards for web services – port 80, 443, SSL, and so on – so that it would be compatible with Estill’s existing live chat system and customer networks, including proxies, firewalls and IT security policies.

Lastly, Estill’s customers in combat zones and remote locales further imposed a need for effective operation over a wide variety of Internet access connection types, bandwidth, and latency times. Traditional video conferencing systems would not work in this environment, because these systems required an inordinate amount of bandwidth and specific equipment that is not always available at many locations.

During Spring of 2009, Mr. Lopez evaluated 9 potential solutions. With participation and input from the larger Estill team, Nefsis emerged as the best choice for their application. Nefsis was selected and deployed because it was able to handle remote Estill customers and, most importantly, allowed Estill staff to control the size, on-screen placement and quality of the video for all conferencing participants. “Being able to change the live video screen size and frame rate on behalf of our customers allowed us to tailor our live demos to the military medics deployed in the field, regardless of their wireless bandwidth limitations. Choosing a technology to support these users was the number one priority for our company, and Nefsis was head and shoulders above all the other solutions we considered.”

Using Nefsis Video Conferencing

After some in-house dry runs and familiarization with Nefsis, Estill staff found it straightforward to use, much like any online service that simplifies once-complex tasks.

Thermal Angel product documentations can be shared; whiteboarding tools are instant; and any desktop file can be accessed and presented online with Nefsis. Medical personnel can review documentation, ask questions and interact with their presenter in real time.

“Our Company looks forward to meeting new customers using Nefsis web and video conferencing; and I am pleased to spend my time on growing the Company, instead of office space lease negotiations,” said Mr. Lopez.

Summary

Estill Medical Technologies is saving lives with its Thermal Angel medical device. With telemedicine at the forefront of U.S. policy, the Company is experiencing success in the application of Nefsis web and video conferencing to get the Thermal Angel in the hands of more medical establishments, remote sites and international customers with requisite briefings and online demos.

With the initial application a success, Estill is already using Nefsis with product development partners in various parts of the world, as well as internal team planning and project management. Said Lopez, “I was speaking in Boston at a conference, and I needed to have a video meeting with my team back in Dallas before my speech. Using my laptop with broadband wireless service, I was able to take a break, go into the hallway of the conference hotel, and have an interactive video call with three of my team members. The entire process took less than a minute, and I was able to return to my presentation without even having to pick up the phone. Nefsis has made quite a difference for our Company, and our customers and patients receive better service because of it.”

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