

Andrew Sommers

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04:21:00 [Start of recorded material]

[Director's comments.]

Interviewer: Just give us your name and title.

Andrew Sommers: I'm Andrew Sommers. I'm the VP of Finance here at Texas Institute for Surgery. I've been here for about two years.

Interviewer: Tell us the rationale behind the decision to purchase the new wireless HD platform for the OR's.

04:22:08 Andrew Sommers: Well the decision to purchase the platform was pretty much based on our need here at TIS for quality equipment. One thing we wanted to take a look is especially the premium of what we place on for the quality -- sorry. I screwed that up.

04:22:32 The biggest thing that we looked at making our decision was quality equipment. Uh, we realized we'd be in competition with the larger hospitals in this area that we wanted to have a platform that, uh, especially the Striker, in order to feel like we have a competitive edge; because we feel like we have the best physicians in the Dallas area. This equipment will allow us to be much more competitive.

Interviewer: And as VP of Finance at a time like this, how do you justify it?

04:23:03 Andrew Sommers: Well, again our mission and value statement has nothing to do with financial gains or any kind of reimbursement. What we do is try to provide quality patient care. And the one thing we find with the best outcomes is to have the best type of equipment. And with our physicians here of what they've asked for, what we try to do is deliver it to them. I mean we're small enough to be flexible where we can take a look and evaluate and be able to purchase the type of equipment on a, on a much more reasonable, reasonable -- uh, I can't think of that. Sorry. Much more faster pace.

Interviewer: Why don't you start again.

04:23:36 Andrew Sommers: Okay. Okay. So the question again? Sorry.

Interviewer: How do you make this all add up?

Andrew Sommers: Okay. Well, in taking a look at it, the one thing that we really looked at was the life cycle of our equipment and where we wanted to position ourself, not just now but in the future. And looking at the DFW area and seeing the type of market share Striker had, we had to consider them in our initial assessment. And seeing their product and seeing the gains that we could make on a financial but also much more on the quality side of it, it just made more sense to go with Striker.

Interviewer: How do you perceive the ROI on this?

04:24:21 Andrew Sommers: Well, I think looking at us and TIS we were founded here in 2004, and it's about a five year life cycle. So the equipment we had lasted that time, but we realize probably that we need to shorten that life cycle in a surgical hospital to remain competitive and to keep on having the same quality income. So I would say probably a return on investment would be within the two to three year period. But also too is from the platform that Striker has offered is that there's a lot of interchangeability, so we're not, we're not starting over if we want to decide within three or four years to look at different equipment. It's just more of a kind of an add on.

Interviewer: Is there any way that Striker worked with you to make this realistic for you? What were the other factors?

04:25:14 Andrew Sommers: Well, the biggest thing was is that we have a lot of physicians that are hard to impress. I mean they've been, they've been around. They're one of the most experienced group of physicians in Dallas. And for them to see the product and for them to sit there and agree that Striker was the best, what we took into consideration is that what could we do from a financial perspective of what we could sit there and say what is, what is, what is comparable outside of here? And Striker has met all of our needs, uh, from a costing standpoint to where they were able to deliver a quality product.

04:25:46 Uh, at a, at a price that fit within our budget; so that. . . .

Interviewer: Why don't you try that whole thought again?

04:25:52 Andrew Sommers: Okay.

Interviewer: How did Striker make it work for you?

04:25:57 Andrew Sommers: Okay. How did Striker make that work? Okay. Well, in taking a look and doing the assessments of the different systems that the physicians tested, we knew that Striker was the one that the physicians really liked. And so what we tried to do from a budgeting standpoint is, is make it, make it work. In a sense to see exactly if we could fit the financial constraints that we had as a smaller facility into the type of system that the physicians wanted.

04:26:27 Andrew Sommers: So we were able to work with Striker and they were able -- they were very honest and up front with us about everything they thought we needed. We threw some things out that we just didn't consider for ourselves, but we did come back and when everything was said and done, we feel like we got the best product available to suit our needs at the best price.

[Director's comments.]

04:26:58 Andrew Sommers: When we took a look at the -- when we took a look at all the different quotes from the systems, Striker was able to give us the ability to take a look and be flexible with what our wants. The one of the issues for us being a small surgical hospital is that we do not have the same requirements as a lot of these bigger facilities with multiple OR's. And so what they were able to do is to take a look within the quote and say, "This is what we think you need. This is what we're able to take out and be able to fit that within our budget."

Interviewer: What do you think are some of the intangible returns on this investment?

[Director's comments.]

Interviewer: What are some of the intangible returns that go beyond. . . .

04:28:27 Andrew Sommers: Well the intangible it has is it helps us define our mission and value statement. It gives us the ability to provide quality outcomes. Seeing what we had previously and seeing with the HD system is, is like night and day. And so giving the doctors the ability to use top of the line equipment, allows us to have the type of outcomes. I mean we feel that TIS, Texas Institute for Surgery, has some of the best clinical outcomes in comparison to any healthcare facility out there. And this is only helps us to continue that tradition.

Interviewer: You obviously want to attract the skills of new surgeons. . . .

04:29:10 Andrew Sommers: Well, I would just invite them here. I think -- I, I -- we're a firm believer in seeing with what we do. I mean we, we believe in that the patient experience starts not from the time that they're in the surgery, but from the time to how they're treated from scheduling, from insurance verification; but just to assure them while they're here and what the physician is using is the best equipment. That's what people always want. They just want to know that they're getting the best -- that they have the best equipment to, to have and to use and to utilize and have the -- those usually result in the best type of outcomes.

Interviewer: Do you think the HD capability will make the surgeons want to come here to work?

04:30:00 Andrew Sommers: I would like to think so. Uh, the biggest thing for us is that we have a good core group of physicians. But then again is that -- to keep that technology and keep that advance going, what we want to do and the one thing these physicians are really open to is seeing what's out there. And, and they're very reciprocal in nature to other physicians coming and observing and taking a look, so I mean the proof is in the pudding. I guess you could use that adage to say that we feel that we're the best.

04:30:28 We always want to prove that we're the best. That's what we strive to achieve is 100 percent, 100 percent of the time. Uh, that wasn't good. Sorry. Say that again. That was terrible.

Interviewer: Is the new HD platform going to attract the caliber of physicians that you're looking for?

04:30:47 Andrew Sommers: Well, if that's an offshoot of what we can accomplish, that would be great. I mean first and foremost we want, we want quality. We want to, to provide our physicians the best. And hopefully with having everything here and seeing the technology and seeing the advancements that we're making is that if that attracts physicians that would be a great, that would be a great, uh, offshoot of that. I don't know. I'm sorry. Did Debbie screw up this much?

Interviewer: You're not screwing up at all. You're giving us good sound bites.

04:31:18 Andrew Sommers: Say that question one more time.

Interviewer: By having the best technology, do you feel that part of the return of investment on that is to attract quality physicians?

04:31:35 Andrew Sommers: That's what we're shooting for is to attract the type of talent to come here to help us continue the type of outcomes that we're having. To continue this tradition that TIS has in being one of the best surgical hospitals in the country. And if this

technology and this platform can get us to that point, then we're all aboard for it.

Interviewer: Anything in terms of the mission that physicians, patients etc. who see this about TIS and about HD?

04:32:14 Andrew Sommers: Well, I've, I've -- Texas Institute of Surgery, when we were started this, we were looking for a partner. And we were looking for a long term partner. We wanted some kind of strategic alliance, so that way we knew the type of platform that we could grow with. We're always considering expansion. We're always considering all the type of intangibles out there to see what we could do to make us a better operation. And this is something in reviewing all the different, all the different systems, that Striker was able to give us.

04:32:42 Andrew Sommers: And so we just feel that in a sense that with TIS trying to strive to be the best, having the best type of equipment, having the best surgeons, having the best type of clinical staff, that we'll be able to achieve that.

Interviewer: Anything else you want to add?

04:33:01 Andrew Sommers: No. My mind's mush right now. I'm a bean counter. Is that okay?

[End of recorded material]