

SYSPRO ERP Helps Cranial Technologies Get Heads Up on the Competition

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■ The Company

Cranial Technologies, with headquarters in Tempe, AZ, is the only company in the world solely dedicated to the treatment of plagiocephaly, a condition in an infant’s head characterized by a persistent flat spot on the back or side of the head. This condition is also known as “flat head syndrome.”

Twenty years ago Cranial invented a device to correct plagiocephaly in infants and was the first to receive FDA clearance for the product, known as Dynamic Orthotic Cranioplasty or “DOC Band.” The DOC Band, a 6-oz device, consists of an outer plastic shell with a foam lining. Mild pressures are applied to capture the growth of an infant’s head, holding growth in the prominent areas and encouraging it in the flat regions. Adjustments are made to the band weekly or bi-weekly. Length of treatment depends on the age of the infant and severity of the condition. Because no two heads are identical, each patient’s treatment band and treatment course are customized.

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- Chris Owens
 Director, Sales & Marketing
 Cranial Technologies

“While there are 30 other bands that have been cleared by the FDA for treatment of plagiocephaly, most of them are just supplemental product lines added by orthotics companies. We’re the only company in the world entirely dedicated to plagiocephaly. This is all we do, and this is all we’ll ever do,” states Chris Owens, Cranial Director of Sales & Marketing. He quickly adds, “Out of these 30 competitors ours is the only product that has been cleared by the FDA for post-operative use, which is a testament to the quality, the safety and the effectiveness of our product.”

Not only is Cranial a manufacturer of DOC bands, but the company is also a treatment provider, running a number of clinics throughout the US. In fact, the DOC bands are only available through Cranial Tech-owned clinics or through licensed centers in Europe – they cannot be purchased directly by the general public. Cranial has treated more than 45,000 infants to date.

■ The Challenge

Cranial had been using QuickBooks to manage its accounting transactions. However, since Cranial is both a manufacturer and treatment provider, the company was forced to make double bookkeeping entries to maintain accurate financials. Even then, however, Cranial was unable to combine records to obtain the details necessary for business insight and management. Emily Prough, Cranial IT Manager, recalls, “We needed an integrated solution.”

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■ AT A GLANCE ■

COMPANY

Cranial Technologies

INDUSTRY

Medical Device Manufacturing

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

30

THE CHALLENGE

- Manual data entry
- Data duplication
- Two divisions to track
- Inaccurate financials
- Insufficient insight into business

SOLUTION & SERVICES

- Fully integrated ERP solution
- Automatic updates
- Raw data drill down
- Lot traceability
- Order tracking abilities
- Cost effective solution
- Short learning curve

THE BENEFITS

- Improved quality control
- Accuracy in accounting
- Enhanced management abilities
- Visibility into operations
- Cost and time savings
- Reduced data entry error





■ The Solution

After an extensive software search that entailed demonstrations from seven software vendors, Cranial opted to go with a SYSPRO ERP solution. According to Prough, “The deciding factor in choosing SYSPRO was the user interface. When it came down to it, all the programs we looked at were able to meet all of our needs, so we chose to go with the product that we felt was the most intuitive -- that would present the shortest learning curve. Price was also a consideration, and here again, SYSPRO was the most cost-effective solution.”

■ The Result

After implementing SYSPRO software, the need for duplicate data entries was eliminated, saving both time as well as promoting data entry accuracy. Because SYSPRO is an integrated software solution, data need only be entered once into the system, automatically updating all appropriate SYSPRO modules. According to Owens, “The immediate availability of up-to-date information on orders by region, sales volume and other information is significant in management’s ability to make informed decisions.”

SYSPRO also gives Cranial a much needed ability to quickly track and determine order status. “The SYSPRO software also enables us to easily trace factory orders. We literally used to have to walk around the factory floor to find things, but now SYSPRO gives us visibility into the stages of product manufacture. We also see the day in the near future when SYSPRO will also be providing information about our factory flows and time frames, ultimately enabling us to develop greater efficiencies,” says Prough.

An integrated order entry process is another area where SYSPRO has saved Cranial time while promoting order

entry accuracy. Cranial’s Practice Management clinics enter orders into Practice Management software after thorough analyses of the infant patients. An analysis includes a Cranial-developed digital surface imaging system that takes a high resolution, 3D image of the infant’s head shape. Every night, each clinic does a jobs run which lists its customers and sales orders. The runs are then automatically downloaded into the SYSPRO software, updating all modules. “It’s a big time-saver and a big benefit – it helps to alleviate data entry errors, and obviously it saves us time because we don’t have to manually enter the customer and create the sales order and the job. After a while you forget that things didn’t always happen that way,” notes Prough, adding that about six to seven hundred jobs are entered into SYSPRO each month.

Another area where SYSPRO ERP software plays a major role is FDA regulatory compliance. SYSPRO functionality, such as Lot Traceability, Engineering Change Orders and Return Merchandise Authorization, are instrumental in helping Cranial maintain the quality controls necessitated by the FDA. In addition, the ability of SYSPRO software to accommodate electronic signatures and enable drill down to raw data is also key to FDA compliance.

Prough concludes, “We’ve always run a tight ship, so our intention in implementing SYSPRO was never based on costs, though the software has produced savings. Rather, it was the need for better visibility into all operations, gaining the insight required to make better business decisions, and this we have achieved.”