

# SurgiTrace Releases Tracking System

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It's 10:00...do you know where your hip implant is? SurgiTrace does. The company has just released its "New" E1100 medical device long range tracking system—TRAXMD—a real time software system based on global integrated positioning and triangulation.

**Regarding how TRAXMD shortens the period-end close cycle, Bob Salvat, CEO of SurgiTrace told OTW,**

Introducing the automatic transference of real-time information makes response time more accurate and faster. Lag times in manual data transference allow for variables to be affected, especially where humans are involved. Due to a hospital's unwillingness and inability to manage mass quantities of inventory, this becomes an outsourced or 'just-in-time' solution. Many are not aware that manufacturers typically ship in their products a day or two before surgery. This is usually done by courier and is only tracked by the on-line tools they provide. Let's say a \$300,000 implant tray and instruments are being shipped to a hospital across the nation by next day air. They are scheduled to arrive 24 hours before surgery and there is a 12 hour snow layover in Chicago. The manufacturer isn't notified, neither is the field rep or the hospital, unless a specific inquiry is made and by that time it is usually too late. Perhaps the airport is hours away from the hospital. And what if the courier brings only 4 out of the 5 trays that are needed for the case? These and more can create timing problems for the OR.

**This, Salvat said to OTW, should not happen in our high tech era.**

This method has been used for many years and with the availability of today's technology it is a shame. Patients' lives are at risk and costly OR time is wasted. Relationships between the manufacturer, the surgeon, and the hospital are strained and sometimes ruined. Mistakes like these are costly and in the end we all pay.

SurgiTrace uses a geofence tool—a virtual perimeter on a geographic area using a location-based service. This means that when medical equipment fitted with an enabled tracking device enters or exits an area, a notification is generated and can be sent to an end user's mobile telephone or email. It allows manufacturers to draw zones around any area of interest including distribution points in their supply chain.

**Detailing how TRAXMD puts the mind at ease, Salvat commented to OTW,**

The SurgiTrace tracking solution combined with the TRAXMD system will help to eliminate logistics errors by catching them faster. It will help to reduce shipping costs by giving the manufacturer confidence that the information related to the asset is complete and not conflicted with the potential of human error. Representatives in the field can perform services more efficiently without having to worry about a container or asset that is lost and not ready for their next case. Surgeons can arrive at the OR knowing that all of their tools

are present and ready to go. Hospitals can feel at ease knowing that the constant flux of implants, instruments, and medical equipment coming through their doors is being constantly monitored, in turn reducing their liability.

**Regarding product adoption, Salvat told OTW,**

SurgiTrace has received consistently positive feedback, but I realize we are all creatures of habit. SurgiTrace pioneers a new market niche in real-time long range tracking very similar to the early generation cell phones that exploded onto the market in the 90's. A similar evolution can be expected of the long range tracking market for medical devices pioneered by SurgiTrace, but the only difference is that the technology is already here. It's affordable, and waiting to be harnessed by all.

Salvat also told OTW, "Currently the FDA is pushing for the adoption of a universal solution in what they are calling the UDI program (Unique Device Identification). In fact, by 2012 the question of adopting a method of tracking medical device usage similar to the SurgiTrace product offering may not be a question at all but instead a necessity."

Regarding a learning curve and training, Salvat commented to OTW, Our three primary objectives are to be efficient, effective, and easy-to-use. Our research revealed that anything more intuitive beyond what is needed is a data migration nightmare. During the implementation process a SurgiTrace team will travel to a new user's facility, assist in retrofitting the tracking systems, load their data into the system, and cover all aspects of learning the system. Then the user can log-in and begin locating their assets by simply choosing an asset's ID number. Or, the user may choose an inventory distribution point such as a hospital or distributor's office in order to obtain the location of all containers in that region. The automated reporting provides location data for each asset several times daily based on a schedule set by the manufacturer's preference. This information is then streamed to the backend system, such as Oracle or an SAP based system, so the manufacturer knows at all times what is in the field versus what is in their inventory store house.

**He also told OTW,**

Future system enhancements are in their final phases of development, and will give even more precise information of a medical container or asset's location and the status of its contents. These enhancements along with others will aim to complete the entire lifecycle of every single product that leaves the manufacturer's warehouse from their initial shipping point to billing and lastly reimbursement. SurgiTrace is determined to close the gap between technology and medical inventory logistics management in an effort to maximize a device manufacturer's profits and service, streamline reimbursement efficiencies, and more importantly to recognize the true potential of patient safety.