Interview: Mario Amadio – President & CEO, GE Healthcare Mexico



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23.03.2017

Tags: Mexico, GE, Medtech, Medical Devices, Latin America, Healthcare, Diagnostics, Digitalization, Big Data

"Equipment is not everything that GE can contribute with!" – The CEO and President of GE Healthcare's Mexican Unit elaborates on how GE provides added value to its customers by focusing on innovating access, cost and quality.

With what mission were you appointed CEO and President of GE Healthcare Mexico in mid-2015?

I believe the mission for me and all my peers around the world is the same: be the main provider of innovative solutions for the challenges of the healthcare system and thus, be in proximity to the patient—at the end, the welfare of the patient is our goal. In operational terms for our customers, that means that we are there to provide better solutions that increase efficiency, effectiveness and have the right innovative characteristics to fulfill their need.

What would you consider to be the main strengths of the Mexican affiliate?

I am confident that the main aspect is the unique ‘go-to-market’ approach here in Mexico, which is based on two pillars. Firstly, we believe in full transparency so that our clients are always informed about our collaborative progress ensuring every stakeholder is on the same page. Secondly, considering the needs of Mexico’s market, we have chosen a hybrid strategy depending on the type of client – direct approach in some cases and, in others, we have tailored the ‘go-to-market’ approach to the individual need of each market segment. This has been a huge internal transformation of GE and GE’s healthcare business model. Nonetheless, it was the right decision to engage in this transformation, as Mexico’s public healthcare sphere, for example, is too fragmented to use traditional channel approaches. Just to provide you with a sense of workload generation, today about 40 percent of our business is generated by public clients as opposed to 60 percent of private clients.

What has been your strategy to ensure the success of the unit considering that Mexico is a quite dynamic and challenging market with high fragmented public health institutions?

As aforementioned, we have tailored the ‘go-to-market’ approach to the individual need of each market segment. The thorough segmentation of the market allows us to identify and address the individual needs of each segment thus positioning us as partner rather than as supplier. GE Healthcare acts as a “health consultant” and offers customized solutions, which are developed according to the needs of the client. It means we help our customers to develop their business growth, we assist in making decisions based on data and statistics, and help in choosing the best strategies to obtain a high productivity rate of our client.

GE Healthcare is a global leader with strong presence around the world. How strategically important is the Mexican Unit within the regional and global operations of GE Healthcare?

Mexico is second to Brazil in Latin America in terms of market size and thus of highest significance to the group. What’s more, the geographic proximity to the US is a clear advantage point of Mexico. Moreover, Mexico has developed into an innovation absorbent market, seeking and embracing new technology and ideas which fits our business culture perfectly. All in all, Mexico is a unique market of utmost significance to the GE Group!

Speaking of absorbing innovation, I would like to underscore that I understand innovation in all relevant dimensions: access, costs and quality. Innovation does not mean the product is now the most sophisticated on the market—that is not how we understand innovation. For us, innovation means using our capabilities and expertise to find an innovative solution to an existing customer challenge. That means, it can be about finding an economic solution in order to make a certain product affordable to the client, it can mean innovating the ways of operating the product to make it accessible to wider range of clients, and—of course—it can also be to find a premium segment solution. As company, we are confident that we have the widest portfolio and capabilities to understand the challenges of our customers and tailor a solution to it. This is the essence of what we do.

GE Healthcare divides its operations into two major business divisions: life sciences and diagnostics solutions. What is the breakdown of revenues per business line and where do you foresee more growth?

I would further segment these areas as follows: Life Sciences is our business division focused on helping to create the future of regenerative medicine and cell therapy with customers by providing novel tools, technologies, methods and analytics to research, develop tomorrow’s therapeutics and support the biopharmaceutical industry. It also involves Core Imaging, our segment for Contrast Medias. Then, Ultrasound is one of the segments, Life Care Solutions (LCS) and all equipment related to critical care areas such as Anesthesia, Respiratory, and Maternal and Infant Care is another one and Imaging, which includes all our portfolio for Diagnostic imaging such as MR, Mammograms, X-ray, PET/CT, Surgery and many others, is the third segment. It’s important to mention that we are currently establishing and working on everything related to digital development in healthcare—undoubtedly a key pillar for us now and in the future alike and the segment who can unify all the others! I am confident that digital solutions is the growth sport of the future!

When we had the pleasure to meet with Mikel Arriola, General Director at Mexican Social Security Institute (IMSS), he told us his main objective is to ensure the financial sustainability of the IMSS. Considering the added value of your offering in this area, could you explain to our readers how GE Healthcare can help the government to meet its goals?

Of course, we have equipment in all our segments which are tailored at early diagnostics thus providing real value to prevention methods. However, equipment is not everything that GE can contribute! We can furthermore provide experience, service, management support and more. However, the real question is how the talent in the healthcare system can be developed and what financing models and outcome analyses the system can use to improve efficiency and healthcare outcome—and that really is the whole objective and our solutions are complimentary to the goals of the system!

Moreover, we are currently thoroughly studying the possibilities digital solutions can bring to the Mexican healthcare system. For now, we identify the main areas where such solutions can be applied. Analytics—of course—to properly analyze processes of any kind in the system and, secondly, how medical equipment deployed across the system is used. This will allow to have a thorough analyses of the technology used across the system thus enabling to reduce OPEX and CAPEX in the system alike. Frankly speaking, clinical education, operational efficiency and effective financing wraps up the real added value we can bring to our clients.

Technology is indeed breaking the diagnostic and research boundaries through digitalization. As a global leader with highly innovative solutions such as GE Health Cloud, could you explain to our international audience how much of such innovation is translated into your product portfolio?

As a company we are leading the race towards offering next generation digital solutions. Most recently we have incepted the ‘GE Health Cloud’ – which is designed to be a scalable, secure, connected cloud ecosystem to help manage the volume, velocity and variety of healthcare data. Essentially, it is capable of managing customers’ data, reduce the time needed for certain projects and maximize our customers return on investment. This initiative is also anticipating the customer of the future, who will have a different approach to the accumulated data and therefore will have different challenges to overcome. GE Healthcare –and the entire group in their respective segments—is ready in the starting blocks to be the preferred partner once the next digital revolution is complete. The healthcare segment is highly regulated, which is an important step to be taken to the development of digital solutions in the healthcare sphere. Even though the regulatory framework is yet to catch up with the opportunities digitalization has to offer, we are already developing our newest solutions for big data management and analytics for the industry.

A significant amount of the innovation in the digital area is carried out in the IQ Center Queretaro, where we employ over 1500 scientists. Of course, they work on a variety of development, however, digital development is one of them, over 300 engineers are focused on software. I believe that there is a lot of ground to gain remaining in the digital arena and that we are on the right path to grasp the full scope of these possibilities.

How is GE Healthcare helping the healthcare community to take advantage of such technological developments and cutting-edge portfolio?

Education is a significant part of what we do. Educational services means that we have specific modules on offer which will be brought closer to healthcare professionals to develop their skills on operating an equipment and getting it best results. The second is management education followed by the third, leadership education. Of course, The latter two are of external and internal relevance. GE operates its own university in the US, The Corporate University GE Crotonville, where we educate top level leaders from within GE and from our clients, thus bringing together the business leaders of tomorrow providing them with leadership skills.

What are the key objectives that you would like to achieve in the upcoming three years?

Frankly speaking, our key objectives are quite apparent: profitable growth, transparency and developing our talent. By focusing on these three pillars, we ensure the sustainable future of GE’s and our clients’ businesses alike!

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