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## Future Proof Technology

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Pvt. Ltd.

**How do you rate 2007 in terms of the growth of telemedicine? What was the total size of the market in 2007? What growth prospects do you forecast for 2008?**

Excellent! Our turnover has almost doubled as compared to that in the previous year; it increased from Rs. 0.75 crore in 2006 to Rs. 1.40 crore in 2007.

We hope that the demand continues to grow in India as well as in the foreign market. We expect more demand from unrepresented territories like neighboring countries (Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh), African countries, and the Gulf region. The focus is now shifting toward web/browser based telemedicine technology.

Overall, the industry growth rate should increase by 50 percent; whereas we expect to beat the industry growth.

**Please tell us about your company's offerings in the telemedicine segment. Also, tell us about your key marketing achievements.**

Medisoft Telemedicine Pvt. Ltd. is a research-based development company, which was established with the objective of improving healthcare delivery by setting the highest standards in the field of public health with the help of telemedicine and ehealth. Owing to the indigenous and focused effort on telemedicine, Medisoft is able to provide low cost innovative solutions. We offer telemedicine desktop and web based solutions, customized solutions in telemedicine, and customized product development and software development in the healthcare-IT segment.

Besides our packaged telemedicine and ehealth solutions, we also provide customized software and product development in the healthcare segment. We are now concentrating on foreign unrepresented markets like Nepal, Gulf countries, the USA, and Canada.

Our major customers include: Institute of Preventive Cardiology Heart Care Centre, Mumbai; Dr. Hrishikesh Pai's Clinic, Mumbai; TMJ Hospital Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; Med

International, Paris, France; International Centre for Cardio Thoracic and Vascular Diseases, and Wockhardt Hospitals, Mumbai.

We also launched an innovative web based telemedicine application [www.ehealthopinion.com](http://www.ehealthopinion.com) on July 24, 2007. eHealthopinion is a platform to connect the patient, the referring doctor, and the expert doctor. Using the web-based application, the patient and referring doctor can carry out telemedicine consultations with the expert doctor. We offer the service to patients and the preliminary version to doctors free of cost. Computer and internet connectivity are the only requirements to access the basic application.

Also, Medisoft Telemedicine is the only Asian company that has been profiled in the Web 2.0 in Health Sector E-Health Insider's Report.

**Please elaborate on major market and technology trends witnessed in the area of telemedicine? Please elaborate on the latest technologies available and also the emerging technologies.**

In broader sense, telemedicine can be anything from a simple phone call between the patient and the doctor, to a complex robotic surgery. In this modern era the emerging trend of telemedicine is "patient centric" and "web based".

With technological advancement, using telemedicine application has now become as simple as using an email. In other words, hospital administrators or expert doctors can now provide access to their telemedicine application, to any person across the world. In "Web-based" or "Browser-based" telemedicine, the application resides on the server and it can be accessed by the doctor and the patient from any computer with the help of an internet browser and internet connectivity.

In the global market two major players Microsoft (healthvault) and Google (Googlehealth) have recently entered the EMR for patient market. This may prove to be a great opportunity for telemedicine vendors to make a footprint in the global market. The latest trend for any application including telemedicine is to use the internet as a backbone. Go for the Web and make it available for the world audience.

**Please elaborate on benefits, opportunities, challenges, and limitations related with telemedicine.**

**Benefits:** Telemedicine is a proven technology. It offers great benefits to all stakeholders-be it the patient, the referring doctor, or the expert doctor. The patient gets easy, convenient, and accurate second opinion, treatment, or line of treatment. For a referring doctor, it is a great tool to get assistance from the expert, and for the expert, it provides a new horizon to expand his services.

**Opportunities:** It has great opportunities for the Indian healthcare sector. Besides being used for philanthropic purposes, telemedicine is a great tool that can aid the healthcare providers in expanding their services to the world market. It will also prove to be a means to attract more patients within India as well as the foreign countries (medical tourism).

Challenges: Its implementation. The use of the system must be convenient for doctors. The technology, as such, has a lot to offer and users may opt for customized solutions as per their needs.

Limitations: Though the use of telemedicine is possible in any specialty, but it is not a replacement of the doctor as it cannot provide all services.

### **How do you see the role of the government in the growth of telemedicine?**

Government has a big role to play. The biggest and the most significant advantage of telemedicine is the provision of quality healthcare to the rural people. Telemedicine is the most effective way for the government to ensure the provision of quality healthcare to all by 2020.

It is next to impossible to build brick and mortar hospitals to serve all including rural population. Telemedicine allows the government to use its resources more significantly by implementing need based telemedicine for rural people.

Presently, the government bodies-state governments, Ministry of Information Technology, and ISRO (Indian Space and Research Organization)-are investing heavily in telemedicine infrastructure. These government organizations, at the same time, need to ensure that their investments are not used only toward development of ultra modern and sophisticated equipment, the services of which can be used by only a few hundred people, which is the case right now.

### **How do you perceive the future of telemedicine in the country?**

We rate it as very good. Telemedicine is needed more in countries like India than in the developed countries. The increased awareness about IT and improved communication media may facilitate the growth of telemedicine. As indicated it is next to impossible to build hospitals to provide quality service to all; telemedicine is the most efficient way.

### **An increased emphasis is being laid on the adoption of an integrated approach for healthcare delivery. How do you see this as an opportunity for growth of the telemedicine products and services?**

An integrated approach for telemedicine is definitely required and the following example will illustrate its use as a follow up.

The hospital may integrate the web based telemedicine application with the existing HIS or EMR and upload the patient data in the patient's account once the treatment finishes and the patient is about to leave the hospital. The system generates a user name and a password for the patient. The hospital may also demonstrate a method to acquire/send ECGs, laboratory reports, or any other post-operation diagnosis reports and allow the patient to view the expert's response.

It is an era of providing "customer delight" services. It is a win-win situation for all.