

BUSINESS PROFILE

Improving patient care

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Xhale Inc. has been working since 2005 on commercializing several products based on vapor detection technology, but when one in particular started moving quickly to market, the board of directors moved quickly to spin out a new company around it and bring in an experienced CEO to lead the effort.

They recruited Craig Davenport to head Xhale Innovations, since renamed HyGreen Inc. after its hand washing detection and reminder product.

HyGreen had been installed in 2010 in Miami Children's Hospital's pediatric oncology unit, and more hospitals were lined up for 2011.

Davenport started in January of this year.

"The board looked and said one of the mistakes you can make with early-stage companies is not getting a dedicated resource as fast as they need it," Davenport said from HyGreen's office in the Xhale building off Southwest 47th Avenue behind the 34th Street post office along Interstate 75. "Our board said we need dedicated resources, we need dedicated marketing, dedicated field operations, dedicated sales personnel, etc., and the fact that we could go to market immediately is what really drove that."

Davenport has 37 years of experience in management and sales in the health care industry, most of that with medical device companies, and has served on the board of directors for 21 companies.

His last venture was as head of Endocare, which made needles that freeze and kill prostate tumors, before the company was acquired in 2009 by Healthtronics.

"One of the things that really attracted us to Craig was the fact that he's taken companies that were in our position, very early-stage companies, and turned them into highly successful business ventures," said Elena Fraser, director of marketing.

Xhale was one of several health care companies funded by the founders of Regeneration Technologies Inc., now RTI Biologics, and became the personal project of Richard Allen, who serves as CEO.

The company's vapor detection technology licensed from the University of Florida is being used to develop devices that can measure breath for blood glucose levels, alcohol levels and pharmaceutical levels.

The HyGreen hand-washing system includes a hand-washing station for health care workers.



Erica Brough/Staff photographer

Craig T. Davenport — CEO, president and director of HyGreen Inc., the hand hygiene recording and reminding system — is shown with the company's devices. The two on the wall coordinate with the personal clip-on device.

After washing, they put their hands under a sensor that detects alcohol from hand sanitizer or soap and sends a signal to a badge worn by the worker with a light that turns green.

A monitor over patients' beds detects whether the hand washing was recorded, and if not the badge vibrates as a reminder.

If the badge vibrates three times before its wearer washes his or her hands, a noncompliance event is recorded on software that tracks each patient interaction.

The system addresses a crucial issue in health care. Hospital infections kill 270 people in the U.S. every day and cost an estimated \$35 billion to \$50 billion, Davenport said.

"It's a very chaotic, stressful, complex work environment in a hospital today. We have sicker patients. We have nastier bugs that are harder to eradicate. There hasn't been a technology to address that," he said.

Since using HyGreen, Miami Children's Hospital has gone from an average of five or six infections in pediatric oncology every three months to one and a half.

The hospital now is installing HyGreen in other departments.

HyGreen has gone from one customer and less than \$100,000 in revenue in 2010 to seven customers this year and just less than \$1 million, Davenport said.

With requests for quotes from more than 30 hospitals next year, he said the potential is for \$3.5 million in revenue.

Davenport credited U.S. Rep. Cliff Stearns, R-Ocala, with getting HyGreen an audience with Veterans Affairs.

The system is now in VA hospitals in Chicago; Wilmington, Del.; and Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

HyGreen has 38 employees, with about a third based out of its Gainesville headquarters, another third at its engineering facility in Bowling Green, Ky., and another third being sales reps, technical assistants and nurses who train customers on the system across the country.

Davenport still lives in California, where he has been unable to sell his house.

He said he spends about 85 percent of his time traveling to trade shows and visiting customers.

"I've always been captivated by transformational kinds of technologies. I really wanted to get involved in things that are going to have a big impact on patient care," he said.