HEARTLAND MEDICAL SUPPLY, INC.
Starting Strong...Staying Strong

"We *had* to be up and running as soon as possible," recalls Brian Rummelhart, co-founder and President of Heartland Medical Supplies located in Iowa City, Iowa talking about the anxious weeks just before opening his doors. "Master Distribution System (MDS) made it happen."

Back in April 2001, Brian Rummelhart and several of his co-workers saw an opportunity to start their own business after their company was reorganized. Fortunately for Brian, MDS was there to lend a hand.

"I credit MDS and The Systems House for helping us achieve our immediate, and long-term business objectives," says Brian. Today, Heartland Medical Supply, Inc. — in its second year of business — enjoys a steady expansion, and a broadening client base among area physician centers, hospitals, outpatient medical facilities, and nursing homes.

There were major factors to consider when starting the business. Brian demanded his company serve customers in a manner that communicated a genuine commitment to customer service. "We wanted our customers to recognize that finally, there was a supplier that sincerely cares about their needs," explained Brian. The entire business is centered on this goal.

When selecting an enterprise management software system, Brian needed a package that would help him meet customer needs quickly and effortlessly. "The system I used at [my former company] was complicated and slow," Brain described. "Getting vital customer information could take nearly an hour. But with MDS, it's quick, everything takes seconds…that's a benefit we pass along to our customers."

Acting on the recommendation of a contact at ABCO, Brian called The Systems House. After speaking to Brian, Sy Fertig, President of The Systems House, flew to Iowa City to present MDS.

"MDS was exactly what we needed," Brian remembers. "MDS had the features, power, and reliability to run our daily operations. Similarly, it had the flexibility and scalability to accommodate the evolving demands of our growing company."

As a new startup, Brian was apprehensive. "We were looking to conserve resources, and the user fee, plus the IT infrastructure we would need, made me hesitate." By voicing these concerns, Brian learned just how committed The Systems

House is to serving the needs of its customers — regardless of how large or small the company.

Sy recommended Heartland connect to MDS through an ASP server. He explained that with MDSASP, customers utilize all the features of MDS through a secure Internet connection linked directly to The Systems House's main server.

By using ASP, Heartland would be able to manage their business effectively with MDS, but with a smaller up-front investment than an in-house set up. And, through ASP, Heartland would be fully supported — using The Systems House as their IT department and system administrator, overseeing maintenance, backups, upgrades, and technical support. This gave Brian the added benefit of not having to hire a technical staff to run his computer systems.

ASP is a tremendous benefit to companies experiencing rapid growth. Zero obsolescence guarantees the continued effectiveness of the system, and when it becomes feasible to establish and in-house IT Department — as Brian foresees within the next five to six years — The Systems House can easily perform the conversion.

Asked how MDS is working out, Brian was happy to share his satisfaction. "MDS is even better than we had hoped," enthused Brian. Among the benefits he cites as being most helpful, Brian points to the power and flexibility of MDS' reporting features. "I'm constantly amazed by the power MDS has to generate my end-of-day (EOD) reports," explains Brian. "MDS does the entire job in a matter of minutes. At my old company, it would take hours."

Other impressive reporting features include customer histories that can be viewed on screen, printed, or e-mailed anywhere. Plus, these reports can be downloaded into almost any spreadsheet program for easy manipulation and analysis.

HMS
HEARTLAND MEDICAL SUPPLY

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Heartland Medical Supply

The Systems House, Inc.

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Brian mentions how often he uses MDS to reconfigure fax reorder forms to reflect common orders with modified pricing. Also, Brian finds himself constantly amazed at how easily he can include a non-stock item on a purchase order. "MDS simply lets me create a new item number, input a description and price," he says. "Then, at the day's end, MDS just includes all non-stock items in my EOD report."

"The entire process from order entry to billing is seamless," says Brian. "And because inventory management is so integral to the interface, I can list our in-stock products to customers while they're on the phone." Brian also points to the level of user-friendliness as a factor in his expansion. "MDS is easy to use, and interfaces easily with all my Windows-based programs. Therefore, because it's easier to train new people with MDS, I have more time to sell."

Another benefit, according to Brian is the outstanding customer service from The Systems House, Inc. "We were a new company with nine employees," recalls Brian, "and none of us were technical wizards." (He laughs as he remembers how The Systems House used to get ten to twelve calls daily from Heartland) "The service reps were just great," says Brian, "and judging from the level of service we received, you'd think we were a huge corporation. We just wouldn't get this level of support anywhere else."

Heartland Medical Supply, Inc., the company that views customer service as its hallmark, is looking toward a long, successful future. If you ask Brian Rummelhart, MDS and The Systems House will be along for the ride. After all, he says, "MDS from The Systems House is a solution that grows with you."