



Siemens Healthcare Partners with *Disney Institute* to Help Clients Improve the Patient Experience

SUMMARY

Medical equipment manufacturer Siemens Healthcare enlisted the help of *Disney Institute* to assist in creating and presenting a three-day educational conference for a select group of clients. The conference helped Siemens Healthcare position itself as a manufacturer committed to helping its clients improve patient care while offering the latest in innovative medical equipment. The event was so well-received by Siemens Healthcare clients that it's now held annually.

FULL STORY

Offering Customers More

Siemens Healthcare, the respected developer and manufacturer of high tech medical equipment, such as MRIs and ultrasound machines, had an identity problem.

"Although people knew us as a great engineering company with great technology, we also wanted to be known for our commitment to helping our clients improve their customer service," says Laura Lee Shapiro, senior director, strategic national accounts for Siemens.

Shapiro and others at Siemens Healthcare had developed a range of programs with one aim in mind: to help hospitals improve the way they deliver patient care.

"Healthcare has been notoriously behind the times when it comes to customer service," says Shapiro. "As the industry gets more and more technologically advanced, patient satisfaction has often suffered. For example, too often a hospital patient may be known only as 'The kidney in Room 305'."

Siemens Healthcare's customer service programs found a ready audience among healthcare professionals. However, the company wanted, as Shapiro notes, "to bring our programs to the next level and offer our customers even more." To accomplish this, they asked *Disney Institute* for help.

The Navigators Circle

The *Disney Institute* staff of experienced content specialists, consultants and facilitators developed a unique, three-day presentation that Siemens Healthcare could offer to its existing and potential clients.

"We married our expertise with Siemens Healthcare to build a program that covered everything from identifying talent to improving patient satisfaction to managing customer loyalty," says Chris Caracci, *Disney Institute* Consultant and former hospital manager.

“Our location for this meeting presented a unique opportunity to learn first-hand some of Disney’s principles for providing outstanding service to Guest that generates strong brand loyalty.”

The program, dubbed "The Navigators Circle," featured presentations from *Disney Institute* as well as Siemens Healthcare executives and healthcare experts who incorporated many Disney best practices into their organizations. "*Disney Institute* worked hand-in-hand with us to make the program as educational and entertaining as possible," says Shapiro. "They really made it come alive."

Like many *Disney Institute* programs, these custom presentations and workshops were interspersed with visits to theme parks at the *Walt Disney World*® Resort in Lake Buena Vista, Fla. There, healthcare executives experienced, firsthand, how Disney principles are put into action. Says Caracci, "There are so many parallels between our parks and a hospital. We both have guests visiting us every day,

we both have a varied labor force, we both need to create a rewarding experience for our guests.”

On *Main Street, U.S.A.*® at the *Magic Kingdom*® Park, attendees learned, for example, that Disney carefully measures visitor movement patterns and has found that 90 percent of park guests walk to the right upon entering the theme park. So that’s where you’ll find needed items such as sunscreen, bottled water or film.

After seeing this, “many of our clients noted and confessed that they need to move their reception desks in their own hospitals—to the right,” says Shapiro.

Siemens’ clients also learned that details matter. As they walked through the park, Caracci pointed out the way Disney employees, or “Cast Members,” get down on one knee to talk to a child.

“It’s all about making that Guest feel welcome,” he told the Siemens Healthcare group. “If we do it here, isn’t it even more important to do that to a child, or a patient in a wheelchair, in a hospital?”

Another quick lesson: cell-phones are a no-no in the park. “Letting an employee talk on a cell phone while at work sends the wrong message to Guests,” noted Caracci. “It’s telling that Guest, or a visitor to your hospital, ‘I’m not available’ or ‘You aren’t important to me.’”

Back in the conference room, Caracci reminded the executives that none of what they’d seen, or heard, was rocket science. “What we do here at Disney is just common sense,” said Caracci. “But it isn’t common practice.” Other speakers, including Shapiro and additional Siemens Healthcare executives, rounded out the conference with presentations that blended seamlessly with the *Disney Institute* content.

A Lasting Partnership

“Very informative.”

“Just what I was hoping for!”

“Lots of examples from Siemens Healthcare and Disney on how to build a service culture.”

These are just a few of the rave reviews from Siemens Healthcare’s Navigators Circle participants. Nearly 100 percent of them said they would return and would recommend a colleague attend. As a result, the firm will now offer the conference, in conjunction with *Disney Institute*, on an annual basis.

“***It’s all about making that Guest feel welcome. If we do it [at Disney Theme Parks], isn’t it even more important to do that to a child, or a patient in a wheelchair, in a hospital?***”

“Putting on this conference with *Disney Institute* has given us the cache that comes with working with such a quality company,” says Shapiro. “It was a perfect fit. The conference helped us go from being seen by clients as just a commodity provider to someone who can help them solve their problems.”

Best of all, notes Shapiro, partnering with *Disney Institute* sends a compelling, Siemens Healthcare-generated message to the healthcare world: “High-tech has to be accompanied by high-touch.”