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VCPI bounces back, rebrands after Extendicare sale

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Last year's sale of Extendicare's U.S. operations had the potential to deliver a crippling blow to subsidiary Virtual Care Provider Inc.

With the February 2015 closure of Extendicare's Milwaukee headquarters, 287 jobs were eliminated and Virtual Care Provider (VCPI) was devoid of a hefty proportion of the contracts it maintained through its relationship with Extendicare's U.S. senior care communities.

In total, about 20 to 25 percent of VCPI's annual revenue stream evaporated because of the sale of Canada-based Extendicare.

The disappearance of that large of a sum could have been devastating for the company, which provides technology consultation services to businesses in the long-term care and post-acute care industries – but it wasn't.

And that's because VCPI's leaders committed themselves to preventing such a situation.

"About one year ago we said, 'There's an opportunity for this business to grow, in a very strategic way, that we think we can leverage not only operationally, but financially,'" said Dan Weise, chief executive officer of VCPI.

Despite the nearly 25 percent loss in revenue, the company didn't slash jobs. Instead, it was able to retrieve some of the lost revenue and create positions for



VCPI

Michelle Dalton is director of sales

a new team of professionals focused on repositioning the company. And, it actually added jobs.

Michelle Dalton, director of sales and marketing at VCPI, is spearheading that new team to help the company find fresh clients. Previously, VCPI "didn't really branch out" because of its relationship with Extendicare's U.S. business, she said, but now it can look at tapping new prospects through avenues not previously explored.

"We're now able to focus on new sales, whereas before it was focused on Extendicare, and maintaining, maintaining," Dalton said. "And now we have more resources available to us to be able to go out and find new business."

During the Extendicare sale, Weise said it was hard for people to understand that VCPI was completely separate from the transaction because of the two companies' close relationship and because they were both located in the same building. So rebranding the company separate from its parent has been a real focus for VCPI's leaders, who are eager to develop their own corporate culture and identity in the marketplace.

Specifically, VCPI has cleaned up its logo, adopted new company colors featuring plum and gold, and has plans to redesign its website this year.

"In the health care industry everything is blue, it's just a sea of blue," Dalton said. "So this is giving us a differentiator. We stand out at trade shows."

With a renewed sense of self, VCPI is looking to move forward and up. In particular, the company sees tremendous growth in its service desk offerings, along with some of its other core services. There's currently a surge in "what we call service desk as a service," Weise said, and the company is aiming for growth rates of 15 percent per year.

"We see this as a huge boom where people are not just outsourcing their service desk to anybody, but somebody who's in the industry," he said.

And VCPI, Weise said, is just the right company to do that job.