





STAYING AHEAD OF THE GAME IN THE HEALTHCARE SECTOR

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ICT subsidiary Improve Quality Services and VECOZO work together testing automated processes in the highly demanding and rapidly changing healthcare sector. Their biggest shared challenges are maintaining high quality standards, while remaining flexible and agile in the face of constant change. Both companies see innovation as the key driver to succeed in staying ahead of the game.

VECOZO is a communications lynchpin in one of today's most challenging and complex environments, the healthcare sector. The Dutch company provides streamlined nationwide communications exchange between healthcare providers such as hospitals, doctors and dentists and health insurance companies. VECOZO's mission is to reduce the administrative costs of healthcare in the Netherlands by making the exchange of billing and other administrative data as robust, efficient and flexible as possible. "That is incredibly challenging, given that the healthcare sector is changing constantly due to both government reforms and the ever-increasing need to automate processes", says Hannelore Albrecht, team leader in VECOZO's software development organisation. The laws governing the healthcare sector change virtually every year, which means VECOZO has to create new software and implement new standards for the controls in just a few months' time. On top of that, the need to cut costs has led to huge growth in the number of

automated administrative processes. "We broker some 1.6 billion transactions a year. That's 583 transactions per second in peak times. We have to be 100% reliable, flexible and secure, as we're dealing with vital and confidential information. Our software has to be incredibly robust, so our testing has to be remarkably thorough. At the same time, we have to respond to changes very quickly. So being agile is a must," Hannelore says.

Quality, quality, quality

Improve's Pascal Maus says one of the reasons Improve and VECOZO work together so well, is that the two companies share the same extremely high quality standards. "They are very good at what they do. VECOZO is one of the companies at the forefront of software testing. We help VECOZO by automating tests and with the testing itself, using agile testing methods, until we're both sure the software is safe to launch."

Staying ahead of the game

The biggest challenge both companies face is simply not knowing what is going to happen next and what they will have to do to deal with the latest changes. "Regulations and market demands are changing so fast and you don't know exactly what is going to change. It's always at the back of your mind: Am I missing something? We have to anticipate changes and remain agile and flexible so we can adjust as quickly as possible," Hannelore says. The key to VECOZO's success is that its clients know the company is extremely secure, reliable and flexible, and it is constantly striving to achieve the very highest levels of quality. So we treasure our quality, but the real key is innovation. If you want to stay ahead of the game, you have to be innovative."

New world, new expertise

Innovation is also one of the main drivers of what Improve sees as its biggest selling point, the company's expertise. "We're highly specialised testing experts, very knowledge oriented and constantly looking to improve our expertise. The world is changing rapidly, especially in software

development, and to keep up you have to work on your expertise. Innovation fuels our expertise and is also an essential part of our culture. Knowledge is very fleeting in terms of its application, so we need to focus on what's next and guide our clients to what they might need years down the line. That's one of the reasons we want to offer a mix of training, consultancy and interim services," Pascal says.

One of the first steps to true innovation is the ability to learn and adapt. You need to be agile enough to apply new knowledge quickly and effectively for your clients. For Improve, that also includes learning from its clients. "We don't claim to know everything. We appreciate the knowledge of our customers and we understand how to adapt to their context, their world. But what we do is challenge them on aspects where we can add value to get the best from both worlds. Like pointing out new tools, new systems, new approaches, and seeing if they're useful for a particular client. But it always is a dialogue. We feel that working together and learning together in the end results in the right solution for our clients," Pascal says.

IF YOU WANT TO STAY AHEAD OF THE GAME, YOU HAVE TO BE INNOVATIVE



A proactive approach is vital

Hannelore agrees that teamwork is vital, especially in agile testing environment. She says one of the key success factors in this teamwork is that Improve knows VECOZO's culture. "We're pretty demanding. But we like to be challenged as well. This requires a group dynamic which Improve is able to master." And that is exactly why Pascal enjoys working with VECOZO. "They always ask our consultants to bring something extra to the table."

Change is the only constant

The biggest challenge of all is the need for continuous improvement, for the development of new skills, new tools, new insights, new programming languages and new



business knowledge. "The only constant factor in this world is change, and you won't survive if you cannot adapt, learn, improve and innovate on a continuous basis." Pascal says.

"On that front, working with Improve is very important," Hannelore says, "as they bring new best practises and new techniques into our company. It's essential to stay ahead of everyone else. I see VECOZO as a pioneer and I want to – need to – keep up with the changes, learn new tricks and constantly improve the quality of our software. Improve helps us to do that. In this sector, you have to be dynamic and proactive - and innovative - if you want to be the best. And we want to be the best. Not just today, but long into the future."