

INDUSTRY

Non-Governmental Organization
(NGO)

DURATION

6+ months, ongoing

HEADQUARTERS

Geneva, Switzerland

SERVICES

CTO Consulting, Delivery
Acceleration, Team Augmentation

Combatting Disease Abroad

Designing the technological infrastructure for a major humanitarian initiative



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David Kuchar studied Virtual Reality and Neuroscience before raising from Angelpad and Google Ventures to start LendFriend, one of the first financial inclusion products. He now applies his startup experience to help guide strategy for Fintech companies and NGOs.

BACKGROUND

International humanitarian aid organization Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) established a project called Nimtone to help support its mission of providing aid to tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS patients across the globe. The program aimed to streamline patient management, allowing for SMS-based appointment reminders proven to boost the attendance of patient meetings by at least 10%. By putting this patient management system in place, MSF aimed to boost its effort to assist patients suffering from these deadly diseases and find a means to accommodate its growing scope of care.

CHALLENGE

Before SVSG was brought onboard, MSF had utilized part-time internal resources to create a proof of concept (POC) of Nimtone. The POC proved there was demand for a product of this type, but in order to meet the needs of the complex technological and legal landscape the application would need to function in, the organization needed a dedicated team with significant telephony experience that could also design the system to allow for offline functionality. Due to the wide reach of MSF, many nations the organization serves could not make effective use of Nimtone's benefits without offline functionality or with common telephony tools because of poor internet connectivity and governmental restrictions prohibiting any client-related data ever touching a server outside of the country's geographical borders. It became increasingly clear that a radical, yet unknown approach was needed, and MSF ultimately brought in the specialized professionals at SVSG to overcome these challenges and move Nimtone from a prototype to production.

SOLUTION

After a successful bid for the project, SVSG began its work on Nimtone 2.0. While Twilio was used in the POC to manage the SMS messaging, this format had to be adjusted in favor of a customizable system that would allow clinic administrators to select which telephony providers they would use, with Twilio serving as the default backup. Since data regulations in some countries dictate that sensitive patient information remains within its nation of origin, standard cloud infrastructure was no longer a viable option.

SVSG's solution involved utilizing a mobile messaging platform that connects clinics and allows them to share information with each other and patients without the need for servers through the use of an Android beacon and local SIM cards. This setup complies with applicable data regulations and allows for offline use, an essential benefit considering the variable Internet access in MSF's service areas. In addition, the file importing process allows for a variety of different file formats, ensuring that clinics are able to sync their data regardless of how their data is configured within the system. While the new system marks a significant expansion of the initial Nimtone prototype, its functionality can continue to evolve.

Over the course of multiple phases, SVSG's iterative approach to the Nimtone project provided the opportunity for user feedback to ensure MSF staff in the field were able to use the system and provide input to SVSG before the next version was launched. This input played an instrumental role in the direction of the system and its user interface, optimizing real-world user feedback to deliver the best product available.

RESULTS

SVSG's leadership on the Nimtone project has pushed the system to new heights of usability. Its updated, intuitive design has made the system far more accessible to users and its customizable functionality and innovative Android beacon solution has created an inexpensive, flexible solution that can work within the data communication regulations of any country. This has ensured that MSF can reliably advance the reach of its global services by ensuring more patients are part of a scheduling cue, know when their appointments are, and receive treatment.

ABOUT SVSG

With over 100 years of combined Silicon Valley CTO experience, SVSG provides thought leadership in emerging technology trends, guidance on incorporating innovation into the enterprise and crucial introductions to build strategic partners. Whether sizing up a potential acquisition, developing a go-to-market strategy or building out custom technologies, our CTOs work to bring clients to the forefront of innovation.

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