

# Chapter XXI

## The Expansion Plan of TeleDoc: What and How Much of the Technology Employed is to Change?

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*The TeleDoc project of Jivan Institute has combined mobile commerce and the ancient concepts of Ayurveda for treatment of rural residents of India for whom health services are still available only in dreams. Using GPRS network and J2ME applications on Nokia 6800 mobile phones, TeleDoc field workers are reaching the remotest villages of India with the promise of possible Ayurvedic treatments for subsequent illnesses. With cash-positive results in the first year of operations, TeleDoc wants to expand in a big-bang way by covering 10,000 villages in 2006. They also want to improve the service quality by using real-time video streaming. But many members of the TeleDoc technical team are skeptical whether the existing GPRS-based solution will serve the purpose or not. There are different priorities in the team (e.g., cost-effectiveness, quality of service, availability, immediacy, cost-of-change, etc.). The IT consultant has many options, but getting the priorities sorted out is the daunting task at hand.*

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## **ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND**

Life is just a phone call away with far fewer side effects than hi-fi medicines with loads of chemicals in them. In rural India, where modern medical care is almost nonexistent (UNDP, 2004), Jivan International has launched a project called TeleDoc.

Jivan Institute is an R&D organization founded primarily on a social enterprise model. It has operational bases in India, the U.S., and the UK. It is a not-for-profit organization that has been working since 1992. The vision statement of Jivan mentions that it aims to foster sustainable development by producing innovations that improve practices of education, health, and social enterprises. Regarding health services, the vision is to create affordable health products and services that integrate indigenous and modern health systems, and delivery methods that use innovative technologies.

Jivan focuses on three major service domains: education, health, and social enterprise development. In education, it operates by providing quality learning resources and technologies to underprivileged segments of societies (e.g., a significant chunk of the population in rural India (Prahlaad, 2004)). In the social enterprises sector, Jivan helps non-profit or self-supporting organizations or groups by allocating necessary operating funds and applying efficient management techniques for better performance, formulating their revenue generation models using innovative ways, and using enabling technologies. It provides training programs for NGOs, conducts programs like Learning for Earning to promote innovative revenue models, and also is instrumental in designing and establishing initiatives like Baatchit for developing multilingual, community-based software and CLIC (Community Learning and Information Centers).

In health sectors, the effects of Jivan's innovative technology usage have been phenomenal according to the experience of the service users, who are the rural residents of India. People in remote villages where no health service has bothered to spread its arms have found a solution through Jivan's Teledoc program that connects the villagers to the world of indigenous Ayurvedic medicines. In 1995, Jivan was the first to launch a Web site on Aryurveda. Ayunique is an online consulting service that enables people to access the vast knowledge repository of Ayurvedic medicines and healthy remedies. The site is e-commerce-enabled by a feature called AyurBuyer, through which people can buy remedies that are prescribed to them online.

This site constantly assists the TeleDoc project team. Exhibit 1 shows how the operational model works. The Web site encompasses more than 1,800 pages with detailed Ayurvedic remedies and consultation information. More than 10,000 patients have been treated online and have received help only from the site until December

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