

# IMDA 2001 Annual Management Conference

## Conference Highlights

- It's a different market today. But despite group purchasing, contracts and hospitals' cost-cutting efforts, specialty distributors have ample opportunities to excel, said Ron Stephenson, expert on medical products distribution and professor of marketing at Indiana University. But opportunities may lie in some unexpected places.
- In today's environment, specialty distributors have to understand the financial condition of their customers and how new technology will affect that, said Nancy Reaven, president of La Canada, CA-based Strategic Health Resources. Reaven showed IMDA members how to help their customers assess the clinical and financial impact of new technologies.
- Your website should be a call to interaction, a call to create a relationship, said Jennifer Renauld, director of new business development for Minneapolis-based ThreeWire. Too many sites provide plenty of information but little direction for viewers and potential customers. Don't let yours fall into that trap.
- When it comes right down to it, manufacturers who work through distributors really want to know just one thing: "How are you going to manage my business when I co-mingle it with yours?" Working with Bradenton, FL-based software company MedXChange, Products for Surgery (Forest Hill, TX) has taken some bold steps to help it manage its business correctly and stay focused on the customer.
- Clinician-preference items – the kind most often carried by specialty distributors -- are now fair game for group purchasing organizations. Two GPO executives (Todd Ebert and Gary Kane of AmeriNet) explained to IMDA members how they can get involved with that GPO's Clinical Service Program.
- Even if you're not thinking of buying a business or selling your own, you should still know the fundamentals of valuating companies. IMDA Legal Counsel Mitchell Kramer showed IMDA members how to do just that.
- What are materials managers' expectations of their suppliers' Internet capabilities? Back by popular demand was Al Cook, chief resource officer for St. Francis Medical Center, Monroe, LA, who addressed IMDA at an earlier conference. Cook is president-elect of the Association of Healthcare Resource & Materials Management, and head of an e-commerce task force of materials management executives.