



2013 North American Cardiology Informatics  
Customer Value Leadership Award



F R O S T & S U L L I V A N



50 Years of Growth, Innovation & Leadership

## **Customer Value Leadership Award Cardiology Informatics North America, 2013**

### **Frost & Sullivan's Global Research Platform**

Frost & Sullivan is in its 50th year in business with a global research organization of 1,800 analysts and consultants who monitor more than 300 industries and 250,000 companies. The company's research philosophy originates with the CEO's 360-Degree Perspective™, which serves as the foundation of its TEAM Research™ methodology. This unique approach enables us to determine how best-in-class companies worldwide manage growth, innovation and leadership. Based on the findings of this Best Practices research, Frost & Sullivan is proud to present the 2013 North American Customer Value Leadership Award in Cardiology Informatics to ASCEND HiT.

### **Key Industry Challenges**

Cardiology is second only to radiology in regard to undertaking of major digitization efforts of both imaging and workflow over the last two decades. As such, the market for cardiovascular image and information management systems (CIIMS, combining C-PACS and CVIS functionality) has evolved considerably over the last ten years, now about to enter the second wave of system replacements, at least within the early-adopter market segments. The wave of industry consolidation between radiology and cardiology informatics vendors during 2005-2007 did give way to the third generation of CIIMS systems, however the impact in the field has been mitigated, and is evolving gradually at best.

Frost & Sullivan independent research shows that as providers strive to progress in this maturing market ripe for replacement, they are still challenged to find any single-vendor solution that can address their unmet need on every front, from technical to clinical, to regulatory and operational. While the opportunity to add value to the discipline of cardiology through information technology (IT) is immense, only few CIIMS vendors can claim that a decision to purchase their new technology can be founded entirely on its value enhancement potential.

### **Customer Value Leadership Award**

The Customer Value Leadership Award is a prestigious recognition of ASCEND's accomplishments in cardiology informatics. As an unbiased, third-party, Frost & Sullivan recognizes ASCEND for delivering excellence and best practices in their respective endeavors. The Customer Value Leadership Award is backed by extensive analysis. Companies are identified, and the award nominees' focus on providing customer value is monitored and evaluated through primary analyst research. This stringent methodology positions ASCEND as a superior market participant.

## Best Practice Award Analysis for ASCEND

The Frost & Sullivan Award for Customer Value Leadership is presented each year to the company that has demonstrated excellence in implementing strategies that proactively create value for its customers with a focus on improving the return on the investment that customers make in its services or products. This award recognizes the company's inordinate focus on enhancing the value that its customers receive, beyond simply good customer service.

### ASCEND's Performance in Cardiology Informatics

ASCEND, a division of Cyberpulse L.L.C., is an entrepreneurial cardiology informatics company specialized in solving the challenges of data accessibility and usability in cardiology. Building on nearly two decades' domain expertise of its parent company as a leading business-to-business (B2B) industry participant, ASCEND has recently entered the business-to-consumer (B2C) segment of the cardiology informatics market as well. Armed with an extremely solid technology background, deep field knowledge of cardiology and extensive experience with cardiology workflow, ASCEND is extremely well positioned to deliver effectively on one of the most crucial elements of the cardiology value chain, that is cardiovascular procedural reporting.

### Key Performance Drivers for ASCEND

#### Addressing a Crucial, yet Underserved Component of the Cardiology Workflow

Frost & Sullivan firmly believes that cardiology procedural reporting is one such area of the cardiology workflow where the quality and efficiency of current processes in use in the field today, offer large room for improvement. While cardiology PACS and CVIS vendors continue to invest much needed attention into areas such as multi-modality image and information management, mainstream industry efforts are falling short of marked needs when it comes to reporting for imaging procedures. Indeed, there is a huge and largely untapped value opportunity that can be gained from concentrating on this aspect of the cardiology workflow. This involves cardiology providers working proactively toward the standardization, quality assurance and quality improvement (QA, QI) of their procedures and reports, and vendors creating technology solutions that make these steps more efficient and more consistent, but also more actionable and valuable both to the clinical and the business enterprise.

With its CardioAnalytics® product complementing and extending its best-of-breed **ASCEND CV™** reporting products, Frost & Sullivan analysis confirms that ASCEND is clearly at the forefront of industry efforts with respect to quality and analytics in cardiology. The company is being extremely proactive with respect to QA and QI initiatives in cardiology supporting customers meet various clinical, business, regulatory and quality requirements.

## Demonstrating a Leading Edge Including in the Catheterization Lab

The cardiology discipline has already made significant advances on the standardization front. In fact, it can be deemed being several years ahead of its radiology counterpart as far as its conversion to structured reporting, particularly in echocardiography where standardization efforts started in the early 2000's. However, owing to higher intrinsic complexity of the modality, catheterization has lagged behind other modalities in terms of standardization of the various procedures and reports.

However, a major and long-awaited initiative is currently underway in the cardiology community which will define best practice workflows for data acquisition, processing, and reporting in order to develop a standardized, structured report format for diagnostic and therapeutic cardiac catheterization procedures<sup>1</sup>. In this context, **ASCEND CV™** reporting technology, already in its third generation, gives the company an edge in the catheterization laboratory in particular. Indeed the Cath Lab, which constitutes a high-investment, high-profit area for the cardiology enterprise, today offers vendors a market opportunity for the replacement of legacy reporting solutions. In the wake of upcoming regulatory initiatives, such a market will favor mature products and proven technology.

## Leveraging a Unique Market Strategy with High Customers Benefits

There has been considerable movement from electronic medical records (EMR) and hospital information systems (HIS) vendors in the past three years, to grow downstream starting from the enterprise level and going into the various clinical specialties, including imaging. For example in radiology, new modules associated with the new generation of EMR systems are now capturing much of the scheduling, billing and other workflow functions traditionally associated with radiology information systems (RIS). However, the same cannot be said about efforts of the EMR industry as a whole in cardiology. EMRs have not advanced as significantly within cardiology, as they have in radiology and other clinical areas, even though the demand for a workflow-driven, EMR-based reporting process is already tangible in the cardiology marketplace today.

It's Frost & Sullivan's opinion that ASCEND is uniquely positioned to deliver, today, and with an integrated solution, on this EMR-centered demand and the overarching desire of providers for end-to-end information environment. The company is able to meet this challenge by partnering and polishing its integrations with leading EMR and HIS vendors, by integrating in a vendor-agnostic manner with best-of-breed image management solutions. Beyond its best-in-class reporting and analytics products, it is ASCEND's expertise with device interfaces and enterprise integration in cardiology that makes its value proposition such an attractive one for the modern-day cardiology enterprise.

<sup>1</sup> Bashore et al. "Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory Standards" June 12, 2012:2221-305  
JACC Vol. 59, No. 24, 2012

## Conclusion

Recognizing the extensive value enhancement that ASCEND delivers to its industry partners and provider customers through its best-of-breed products and its longstanding experience with cardiology workflow coupled with a highly proactive attitude and sound market strategy, Frost & Sullivan is proud to present ASCEND with the 2013 North American Customer Value Leadership Award in Cardiology Informatics.

## The CEO 360-Degree Perspective™ - Visionary Platform for Growth Strategies

The CEO 360-Degree Perspective™ model provides a clear illustration of the complex business universe in which CEOs and their management teams live today. It represents the foundation of Frost & Sullivan's global research organization and provides the basis on which companies can gain a visionary and strategic understanding of the market. The CEO 360-Degree Perspective™ is also a “must-have” requirement for the identification and analysis of best-practice performance by industry leaders.

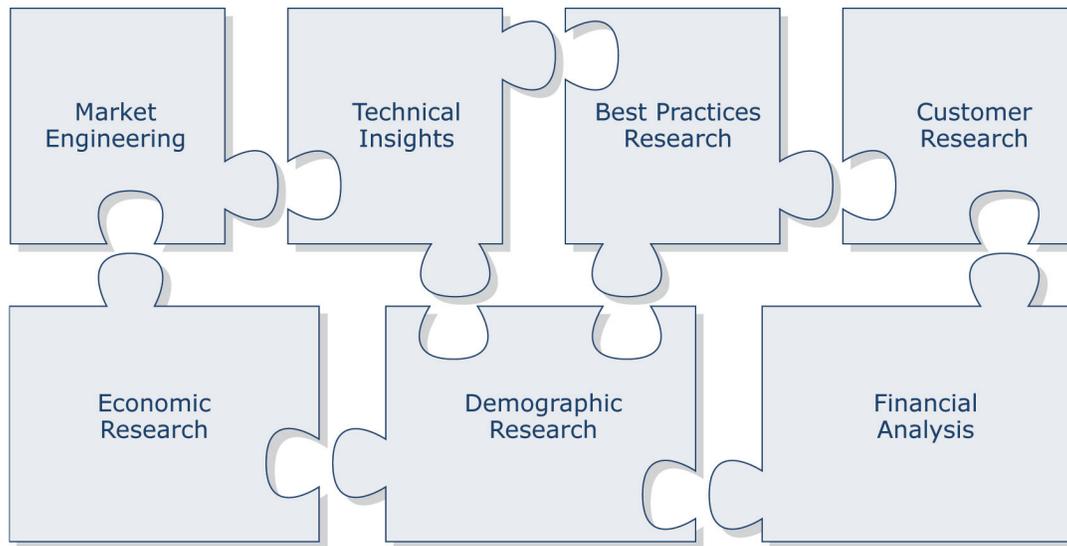
The CEO 360-Degree Perspective™ model enables our clients to gain a comprehensive, action-oriented understanding of market evolution and its implications for their companies' growth strategies. As illustrated in Chart 1 below, the following six-step process outlines how our researchers and consultants embed the CEO 360-Degree Perspective™ into their analyses and recommendations.

**CEO's 360-Degree Perspective™ Model**



**Critical Importance of TEAM Research**

Frost & Sullivan’s TEAM Research methodology represents the analytical rigor of our research process. It offers a 360-degree view of industry challenges, trends, and issues by integrating all seven of Frost & Sullivan's research methodologies. Our experience has shown over the years that companies too often make important growth decisions based on a narrow understanding of their environment, leading to errors of both omission and commission. Frost & Sullivan contends that successful growth strategies are founded on a thorough understanding of market, technical, economic, financial, customer, best practices, and demographic analyses. In that vein, the letters T, E, A and M reflect our core technical, economic, applied (financial and best practices) and market analyses. The integration of these research disciplines into the TEAM Research methodology provides an evaluation platform for benchmarking industry players and for creating high-potential growth strategies for our clients.

**Chart 2: Benchmarking Performance with TEAM Research**

### About Frost & Sullivan

Frost & Sullivan, the Growth Partnership Company, enables clients to accelerate growth and achieve best-in-class positions in growth, innovation and leadership. The company's Growth Partnership Service provides the CEO and the CEO's Growth Team with disciplined research and best-practice models to drive the generation, evaluation and implementation of powerful growth strategies. Frost & Sullivan leverages 50 years of experience in partnering with Global 1000 companies, emerging businesses and the investment community from more than 40 offices on six continents. To join our Growth Partnership, please visit <http://www.frost.com>.