

A Handy Approach to Anatomical Data Capture

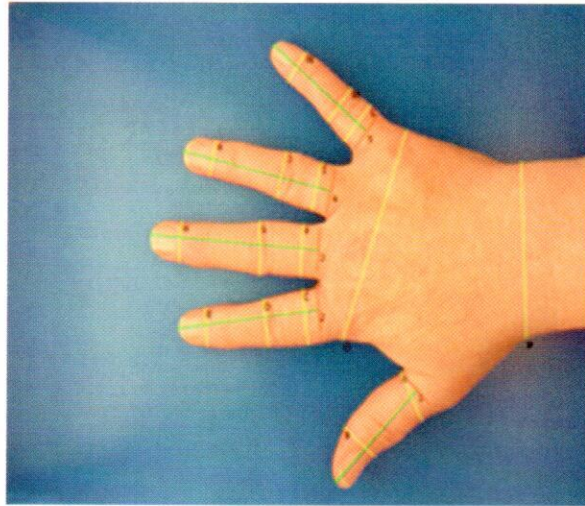
Canadian niche company offers innovative hand-measuring system

JP GIBEAULT HAS ALWAYS had an entrepreneurial spirit. He started his first business when he was 10 years old. As an adult, he continued on that track with other ventures, one of which was acquired by GE in 1999; in 2003 he purchased OrtoPed, Canada's largest O&P distributor.

Gibeault's first foray into the O&P industry yielded one surprise: He realized for the first time that his aunt had worn orthoses throughout his childhood. "She was paralyzed in both legs from polio, and I lived in the same house with her for eight years. As a child, I never really noticed she was wearing long-leg orthoses," he says. "After I bought OrtoPed, I visited a number of clinics that used our products, and one of the largest was the facility that had made her braces."

When Cascade acquired OrtoPed in 2015, Gibeault launched Anatomi Metrix and its hand-measuring system, the Manu3 system.

The Manu3 can determine the dimensions of the hand in 30 milliseconds, allowing clinicians to select or fabricate customized silicone prosthetic hand covers more accurately. Prosthetists can scan the existing hand to create a mirror image to cover the patient's prosthetic hand. The software produces a report with a color photo of the hand and the corresponding anatomical dimensions of the fingers, thumb, palmar area, and wrist. Those who use computer-aided manufacturing can feed the data directly into CAD/CAM software; others may use the information to hand-fabricate a cosmetic glove.



COMPANY:
Anatomi Metrix

OWNER:
JP Gibeault

LOCATION:
Montreal, Canada

HISTORY:
One year



The two-step process of scanning the hand and using Manu3 software to determine its dimensions takes three to five minutes to produce results.

The Manu3 system occupies a small, highly specialized niche, and the only way to make it a viable business product is to expand its applications and market it worldwide, says Gibeault.

In addition to its application in prosthetics, the Manu3 can be used to fabricate compression gloves as a treatment for burns, lymphedema, and some neurological conditions. The speed of measurement and the touch-free nature of the scan are especially useful for burn patients, says Gibeault, as it reduces the risk of infection and minimizes pain. "It's a great application" for children, he says. "Imagine trying to get a child in pain to hold still while someone manually takes measurements of his or her burned hand."

Anatomi Metrix researchers are developing additional capabilities for the Manu3, such as detecting skin color and texture. Eventually, the technology will be

able to track the dimensions of scars and monitor their changes over time. "We are talking with hand surgeons who see the benefit in this technology for monitoring postoperative results every few weeks," Gibeault says.

Team Anatomi Metrix includes 12 members. The company is based in Montreal, with manufacturing sites there and in New Hampshire and sales teams based in Toronto, Denver, and Germany. The company works with various research and development companies in the Boston area, and products intended for the United States and Latin America are manufactured in New Hampshire.

Anatomi Metrix is engaged in an intensive marketing push, attending at least one trade show a month since its inception. "Because the device is portable, we can demonstrate how it works right on the showroom floor," says Kellie-Ann Briand, who handles marketing for the firm. She also spearheaded construction of a comprehensive website, with information targeting clinicians and practitioners. "Our top priority for 2017 is to get distributors," she says. "In addition, we have ongoing protocolled trials and are always looking for motivated early adopters to study our system."

Getting a new business up and running was not new to Gibeault, but he admitted that in spite of his experience, he was surprised that it took "twice as long and twice as much money" than expected to launch the company. He is delighted with the success of his new venture so far.

"We have a phenomenal team of talented and enthusiastic people," he says. "And our product is being used in Europe, Asia, and North America." **CP**

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