



Business challenge

Early in its work selling analytical tools to the medical industry in Spain, Sigesa Sistemas de Gestión Sanitaria saw the need for a clinical information tool to help prescribers make better-informed decisions.

Transformation

IBM Business Partner Sigesa has been providing leading-edge analytics solutions, including the IBM® Micromedex® clinical knowledge database, to healthcare clients in Spain for many years. Today, it offers the IBM Micromedex with Watson™ tool with AI-powered natural language search to help providers find answers and make evidence-based clinical decisions.



Arantxa Unda
Chief Executive Officer
Sigesa Sistemas de
Gestión Sanitaria

Results

Offers AI-powered analytical solutions

to help providers avoid prescribing errors and improve patient results

Understands customer needs

to provide personalized product recommendations

Remains the top reseller in Spain

of the leading-edge clinical knowledge database

Sigesa Sistemas de Gestión Sanitaria

Avoid medication errors with AI-powered, evidence-based clinical knowledge

Founded in 1993 in Madrid, Spain, Sigesa develops and implements advanced data analytics solutions for clinical and healthcare management decision support. More than 400 healthcare institutions around the world place their trust in Sigesa tools. These range from hospitals and hospital groups to regional governments and national health ministries to mutual and health insurance companies. Arantxa Unda, CEO of Sigesa, topped the Forbes 30 under 30 European list in the Science & Healthcare category in 2017.

“We tell our clients, and we believe, that Micromedex is the Rolls Royce of information.”

— Arantxa Unda, Chief Executive Officer, Sigesa Sistemas de Gestión Sanitaria.

Share this



Finding the right decision-support tool

From its founding in 1993, Sigesa has sold analytical tools for the healthcare industry. After approximately five years in business, the company identified a clear need for a tool that could help its customers—which included public and private hospitals, pharmacies and insurers—avoid incorrect diagnoses, prescribing errors and medication misuse.

When Sigesa sought a reliable medical data source to enhance its customers' decision-making processes, it found the Micromedex database, a comprehensive compendium of clinical information about medications, toxicology, poisons and more.

“Associating our brand with a strong company like IBM has been beneficial for our business.”

—Arantxa Unda, Chief Executive Officer, Sigesa Sistemas de Gestión Sanitaria.

“Our clients demand information that is reliable, complete, updated and easy to access, and Micromedex was exactly that,” says Arantxa Unda, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Sigesa.

Relationship-building: a sales success key

Sigesa became the only reseller of Micromedex database solutions in Spain approximately 20 years ago, when the product was offered only on compact disc (CD). Today, Sigesa can deliver Micromedex and Micromedex with Watson solutions to its customers through several convenient channels, including web and mobile access. The Micromedex product has evolved as healthcare technology has changed, and Sigesa has continued to bring the latest Micromedex offerings to the Spanish healthcare market.

Sigesa has grown its business by building trust in the Micromedex product among its users. Sigesa works to develop ongoing relationships with its customers, ensuring that the tool meets their specific needs. The company follows up with them to ensure that they make the best use of the tool, offering training when needed. “I think one of our successes is that we're very, very close to the clients,” says Unda. “We don't just go there, sell them a tool and then come back next year with an invoice for renewal.”

Enrique Marinelli, Sales Manager for Sigesa, agrees that really understanding the customer and knowing the tool are critical to the Sigesa customer relationship. “If you

want to sell Micromedex, you need know your customer's activities very well when you go there,” he says. “The needs of the pharmaceutical department or lab or hospital pharmacy are all very different. For that reason, it is necessary that you know their activities and their needs.”

The Micromedex tool provides comprehensive information that can be integrated with multiple health information systems (HIS). This information includes:

- Drug dosing and medication management
- Detailed information about drug interactions and intravenous (IV) compatibility
- Treatment protocols and checklists for acute and chronic disease management
- Lab information to help professionals choose appropriate tests and interpret results
- Alternative medicine information for herbal and alternative therapies
- Neonatal and pediatric drug information for age- and indication-specific considerations
- Detailed protocols for toxicology and exposure management

Sigesa's customers primarily use the tool's pharmacological information for decision-making support. The tool also allows medical professionals to collaborate with other colleagues, provide advice and information to patients and prepare scientific reports and papers.

Since acquiring the Micromedex product, Watson Health has added the power of IBM Watson® AI to the tool. With what Unda calls the “Watson Searcher” function, Sigesa's customers can now conduct searches using natural language inquiries and are no longer restricted to keyword-based searches.

Trusted advisor with a gold-standard product

Over the years, Sigesa has become a trusted advisor to its healthcare customers. And the company has become a premier reseller of the Micromedex clinical decision tool, a known gold-standard in the medical community. Sigesa customers have always placed a high degree of trust in its content, which Unda believes is the best on the market. “We tell our clients, and we believe, that Micromedex is the Rolls Royce of information,” she states.

Today, Watson Health owns and delivers the Micromedex solution through IBM Business Partners such as Sigesa. As with other acquired products, IBM continues to invest in and improve the Micromedex tool. An international team of researchers regularly updates the drug information in the tool, while expanding its functionality to meet more use cases.

The addition of the Watson-powered search functionality is probably the most obvious IBM update to the Micromedex tool thus far. According to Enrique Marinelli, unlike databases where users must enter a specific keyword or phrase, “With Watson Searcher, you can easily search for information because you can use natural language to get the information you need.” Users can phrase their searches in the form of a question, making it easier for them to find the specific information they’re seeking, especially if they are unsure of the exact clinical search terminology.

Arantxa Unda believes that as IBM applies its expertise in healthcare technology and its resources to the Micromedex solution, the product will become even stronger. In addition, as Sigesa and IBM share client opportunities with each other, they can expand the market for the tool in Spain. For Unda, working with IBM is a winning situation. “On the product side and on the marketing side, we see it as very positive,” she says.

Sigesa complements the IBM technological and marketing investments in the tool with its long experience with and understanding of its customer base, helping make the

“The combination of the product quality of Micromedex with the reputation and horsepower of a company like IBM has resulted in a much stronger product and brand.”

—Arantxa Unda, Chief Executive Officer, Sigesa Sistemas de Gestión Sanitaria.

Micromedex product relevant and useful to the Spanish market. “We see a lot of growth potential in integrated services as well as in new tools that we are sure will come thanks to the R&D capabilities of IBM,” says Unda. “Our expertise in the needs of the Spanish market, built over many years of building trust with our customers, will surely be crucial to ensuring that this growth potential materializes.”

Behind the scenes, IBM has backed the tool with dedicated marketing and technical resources in Spain, which Sigesa never previously had. This eases the logistics of working together with IBM on new marketing campaigns, integration projects and

customer support. IBM invited all Sigesa customers to the IBM Client Center in Spain and brought additional product specialists from the IBM London office for a customer support event. Sigesa is also working with the IBM marketing team in Spain on a marketing campaign for a new version of the Micromedex tool that can be integrated with electronic health records (EHRs). IBM will use its call center to support that campaign.

“We see that IBM is investing more and more in helping us develop the business in our region,” says Unda. “For example, they have helped us to access bigger client accounts and they also share other client opportunities, so we work together more closely to make the market as big as possible.”

Sigesa anticipates many more years of building a successful relationship with IBM, and by extension with its customers. “Our experience with IBM has been very positive,” concludes Arantxa Unda. “The combination of the product quality of Micromedex with the reputation and horsepower of a company like IBM has resulted in a much stronger product and brand.”

Solution components

- IBM® Micromedex®
- IBM Watson Health™

Take the next step

To learn more about IBM Cloud solutions, please contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner.

About Watson Health

Watson Health is a business unit of IBM that is dedicated to the development and implementation of cognitive and data-driven technologies to advance health. Watson Health technologies are tackling a wide range of the world’s biggest health care challenges, including cancer, diabetes, drug development and more.