



The Virtual Palomar Medical Center West

WEB 2.0

Real-World Hospital Makes Virtual Debut in Second Life

PALOMAR Pomerado Health last week opened a brand-new, state-of-the-art hospital — in Second Life.

The opening of the virtual hospital follows the December 2007 ground-breaking for the health care provider's real-world \$773 million, 600-bed Palomar Medical Center West in Escondido, Calif.

With completion of the first phase of that hospital still three years away, PPH created the facility and all of its technology in the Second Life virtual world to show its 900,000 clients in Southern California what is to come.

"You can show people pictures and talk about it, but this virtual world technology enables people [to] experience the environment on their own," said Orlando Portale, PPH's chief technology and innovation officer. A virtual RFID-enabled bracelet will guide visitors through floors and rooms, where "they can play with the technology," he added.

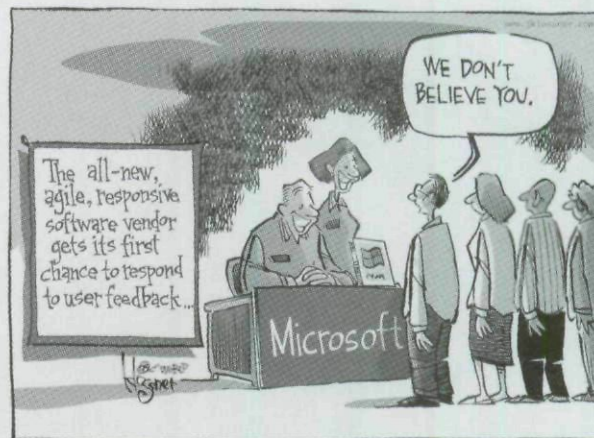
The Second Life hospital shows off operating rooms equipped with robotics technology and functional imaging systems that support medical procedures such as cardiovascular surgery.

The virtual facility uses Cisco Systems Inc.'s Tele-

Presence video collaboration technology.

Shore Communications Inc. analyst John Blossom expects that businesses will increasingly turn to virtual worlds like Linden Research Inc.'s Second Life to get user feedback on products. "It's a cost-effective method — much better than just herding people into a room for a focus group," he noted.

— Sharon Gaudin



BENCHMARKS LAST WEEK

Sun Microsystems Inc. completed its \$1 billion acquisition of open-source database vendor **MySQL AB**, six weeks after announcing the deal.

Market research firm **Gartner Inc.** reported that **Hewlett-Packard Co.** bought \$15 billion worth of

semiconductors last year, more than any other company worldwide.

ONE YEAR AGO: Oracle Corp. said it planned to buy Hyperion Solutions Corp. for \$3.3 billion, beginning a wave of acquisitions of business intelligence companies by top IT vendors.

Global Dispatches

Microsoft Hit With Another Big Fine

BRUSSELS — The European Commission last week hit Microsoft Corp. with a fine of €899 million (\$1.4 billion U.S.) for what it called a continued failure to honor the provisions of a 2004 antitrust ruling.

EC Competition Commissioner Neelie Kroes said Microsoft was fined again "for a clear disregard of its legal obligations." She called the move "a reasonable response to unreasonable actions."

Europe's top competition authority had already fined the company €777.5 million (\$1.2 billion) — €497 million (\$750 million) in the 2004 ruling, plus an additional

€280.5 million (\$423 million) for noncompliance.

Microsoft said it is reviewing the action and that the latest fines "are about the past issues that have been resolved." **Paul Meller and Peter Sayer,** IDG News Service

Wipro Plans Big China Expansion

SHANGHAI — Wipro Ltd. plans to increase its workforce in China to 2,000 over two years, Chief Operating Officer A.L. Rao said last week.

The Bangalore, India-based company currently has about 200 workers in its Shanghai-based Chinese operation.

"We would like to see China as another resource for talent and to set up development centers there and maybe go after Chinese clients," Rao said during a press conference at the Foreign Correspondents' Club

of Japan in Tokyo.

Most of the company's current business in China is with non-Chinese companies with operations in the country.

Martyn Williams, IDG News Service

BRIEFLY NOTED

The Australian Department of Defence has awarded Unisys Corp.'s Australian subsidiary a contract worth \$240 million Australian (\$225 million U.S.) to support servers, security systems and more than 100,000 desktop systems spread across 460 locations around the country.

Sandra Rossi, Computerworld Australia

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