

Sansum-Santa Barbara Medical Foundation Clinic



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Olympus® AU2700™ Chemistry-Immuno Analyzer Helps Multi-Disciplined Laboratory Trim TAT and Raise Productivity

Sansum-Santa Barbara Medical Foundation Clinic (SSBMFC) provides services to a diverse cross section of the population throughout central California as well as patients from out of state. SSBMFC is a large multi-specialty clinic with 10 satellites (three of which are urgent care), and physician practices that include family practice, cardiology, oncology/hematology, dermatology, endocrinology, ENT, obstetrics, pulmonary, rheumatology, urology, internal medicine, gastroenterology, geriatrics, ophthalmology, psychiatry and occupational medicine. The clinic also provides services to clinical researchers conducting Phase II, III, and IV level trials in disciplines such as endocrinology, pulmonary medicine, and hematology. In all, about 450 healthcare providers are supported by Sansum's services.

OLYMPUS®

Your Vision, Our Future

Multi-Disciplined Laboratory Utilizes the Olympus AU2700™

Strategic Objectives

Up until 1998, the community had two facilities, Sansum Medical Clinic and Santa Barbara Medical Foundation Clinic. The two were consolidated into a multi-functional healthcare and diagnostic center with two full service laboratories. Business had grown steadily over a five-year period and Sansum needed to consolidate the two laboratories to accommodate a higher workload and a broader menu of services and tests. It also needed to address a shortage of trained personnel, a growing nationwide trend further compounded by the community's high cost of living. At the same time, the complexity of testing had increased with more abnormal specimens due to the increase in early discharge of hospital patients.

In its evaluation, Sansum focused on workstation consolidation, processing speed and operator time. Reliability was also important since Sansum's budget would not support the acquisition of a back-up analyzer.

"Sansum is committed to same day turnaround time because that kind of service is important in helping physicians provide good healthcare," said Ellie Krock, DLM, CLS, Director, Laboratory Services at Sansum. "Although our three urgent care facilities may not be seeing people with life-threatening situations like hospital ERs, the patients want that kind of support."

"We wanted to increase our outreach program, broaden our test menu, and provide fast turnaround time (TAT)..."

*Ellie Krock, DLM, CLS,
Director, Laboratory Services*



"Higher quality service and lower operating costs have been achieved."

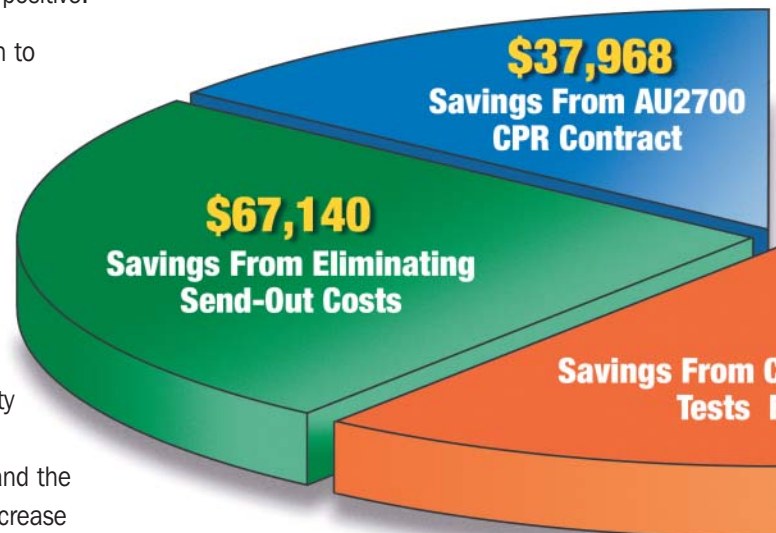
*Paul R. Jaconette,
Executive Vice President*

Lab personnel sifted through the initial candidate instruments by assessing the impact on lab operation. The assessment included an analysis of current and projected workflow improvements and savings conducted by an Olympus workflow expert and Sansum personnel. "We also conducted our own research, and made phone calls to other facilities that utilized an Olympus analyzer and asked questions regarding customer service, support, and analyzer effectiveness and functionality," said Krock. "Their feedback was positive."

The decision to select the Olympus AU2700 was driven by the projected reduction in operator time, the ability to consolidate instruments, and the potential to increase business with a broader menu and better service.

More Revenue, Better Service

"The AU2700 analyzer has given Sansum the ability to generate more revenue opportunities for our customer base," Krock said. "We're certainly more cost-effective than we were before and as such we're able to work more closely with hospitals to eliminate duplication of effort and to cut costs. It's no secret that hospitals and laboratories are facing limited financial resources for healthcare. Through collaboration we can help



TOTAL ANNUAL SAVINGS

Chemistry-Immuno Analyzer

“Our physician customers have noticed the difference in service since acquiring the AU2700.”

Kurt N. Ransohoff, MD, CEO, President and Medical Director



Economic Impact

Sansum processes about 1,000 requisitions per day. The AU2700 processes an average of 450 sample tubes per day with an average of 11.4 tests per tube. The system processes about 22% more volume than the previous chemistry system and has improved turnaround time by about 28%. “Acquiring the AU2700 allowed us to replace a chemistry instrument, a nephelometer, and a dilutor used for processing urine samples. We’re now able to process specialty tests on a daily basis rather than batch testing a couple of times per week on the nephelometer. We’ve also lowered our costs for send-out tests by consolidating high-sensitivity CRP, CRP and homocysteine on the AU2700,” said Krock.

Sansum has been able to reduce two FTEs through attrition and reassignment, resulting in a personnel savings of \$89,856. “We can walk away from the analyzer and do other things such as specialty electrophoresis, Hepatitis testing, GenProbe DNA tests and even have the time to evaluate the feasibility of adding more specialty testing for the AU2700,” said Cooper Ellsworth CLS, Chemistry Supervisor and one of the key team members. “We now have the speed and the ease of use we were hoping to achieve.

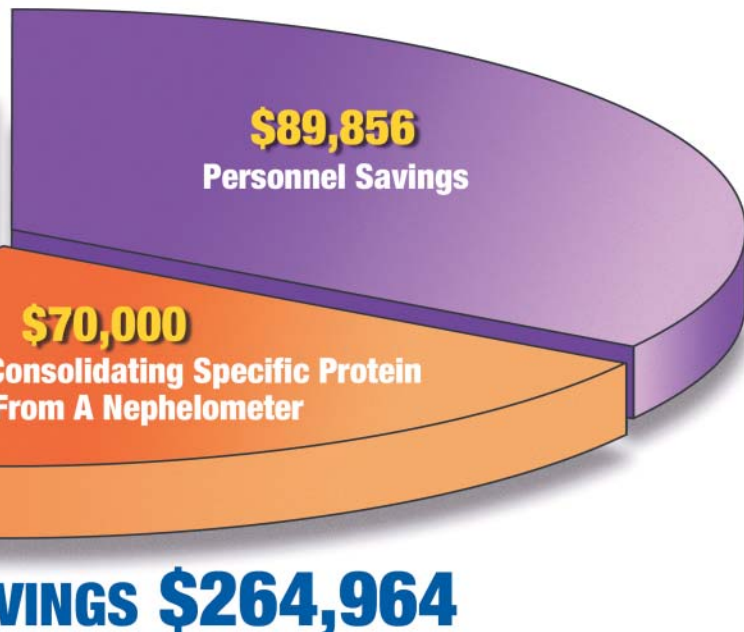
Time savings have been achieved through the AU2700 analyzer’s higher throughput, automated pre-dilution, greater specimen loading capacity and low repeat rate.

the hospital eliminate a patient stay yet retain the revenue connected to testing services.”

In fact, patients from out of town can come in the morning for their lab work and see the physician the same afternoon with results available for their summary. The same is true for Sansum’s other customers, according to Krock. “Now that we have the Olympus AU2700 system, one of the largest national labs in the area is using our lab as their local STAT testing

facility,” she said. “The feedback I have received is that our TAT is outstanding.

“The AU2700 system holds up to the demand very well, providing the versatility that enables the existing workforce to move on to other vital areas and functions while giving our physicians the kind of STAT they need in order to diagnose and treat their patients. The patient can come in for testing, go to lunch, come back to see their physician and have the test results ready and waiting by the time they’re back.”



"We usually receive specimens in large boluses, so we needed an analyzer that could handle a large batch of work," said Krock. "The AU2700 system is set up to process over 2 million tests annually."

Moving to Olympus ready-to-use reagents eliminated about six to eight hours per week of operator time. With the previous system, med techs had to rehydrate reagents and this led to delays that increased personnel overtime costs. The AU2700 has eliminated reagent preparation thus allowing the FTEs dedicated to this area to be reallocated to other areas in the lab.

Real-Time Diagnostic Support

Sansum sent one operator to the Olympus Dallas Training Center and in turn that one operator and an Olympus training service rep have helped train the other five operators and three assistants who load, start and remove specimens. "Operation thus far has been trouble-free," said



Left to right: Lynn Raber, CLS; Donald Dick, CLS; Josh Davis, Technician; Dexter Braden, CLS

Ellsworth. "When I've had questions for tech support, I've been pleasantly surprised to hear a person answer the phone. It's been my experience that most vendors provide an intermediary and operators must wait for a call-back."

Maintenance tech time has been reallocated because of eliminated or reduced maintenance on the AU2700.

In addition, Krock is impressed by the accuracy of the workflow predictions performed by Olympus personnel in collaboration with her own staff.

"Predicted cost savings from the AU2700 have been validated by actual performance," she said.

"There's been the expected savings in personnel and operational costs with additional savings in outsourced testing and consolidation of instrumentation. This gives me the credibility to go to the next steps in building our revenue and services."



Cooper Ellsworth, CLS, Chemistry Supervisor

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