

### CHALLENGE

How does a global leader and best-in-class technology provider with a rich history and legacy in technology development and innovation transform its relationship with Novation from a transactional basis to a strategic relationship that drives significant value for both members and the supplier?

### SOLUTION

Plymouth, Minnesota-based ev3 Inc. is an innovative technology provider for specialists treating a wide range of vascular diseases and disorders. ev3 is committed to the peripheral vascular and neurovascular markets and offers a comprehensive portfolio of treatment options, including interventional technologies such as PTA balloons, biliary and carotid stents, atherectomy systems, embolic protection devices, neurovascular coils, and liquid embolics.

When ev3 decided to become a Novation Signature Supplier in October 2007, they wanted more than the traditional supplier/group purchasing organization relationship — they wanted a strategic relationship and an avenue to bring exceptional, unequalled value to VHA, UHC and Provista members. As a result, ev3 became Novation's first Signature Supplier.

To be designated as a Signature Supplier, suppliers must commit, during the competitive bid process, to assist Novation in maintaining its competitive advantage in the industry by providing exceptional, unparalleled value to members by:

- providing pricing at any participation level that is superior to all other GPO agreements, as well as a superior national contract that minimizes the need for local negotiation
- providing higher member return than in other contracts in the same product category
- offering unique value beyond price alone, such as increased field support, enhanced service levels, engagement support and product trials

"We've seen tremendous value in being a Novation supplier, and the Signature Supplier concept takes that one step further," says Bruce Zajac, vice president of ev3's corporate alliance group. "Of course our agreement has provided us with access to members and the opportunity to talk about our capabilities as an organization. Being a Signature Supplier and having the backing of Novation also gives us instant credibility with members, as well as a voice and an enhanced reputation within a very competitive industry."

### RESULTS

In the second quarter of 2008, ev3's sales of peripheral products in Novation accounts outpaced sales in non-Novation accounts by 50 percent. However, Zajac says that ev3 has experienced far more than just financial benefits as a result of



### SUPPLIER PROFILE

#### ev3

**Headquarters:**  
*Plymouth, Minn.*

**Year Established:**  
*2000*

**Program Participation:**  
*ev3 has been a Novation Signature Supplier since October 2007.*

**"We couldn't have asked for a more complete dedication of resources than what Novation has supplied to help make this partnership a win/win situation. The Signature Supplier concept is unequivocally a winning brand."**

**—Bruce Zajac, ev3**

being a Signature Supplier. "There are several intangible benefits that drive this contract for us — including aligning ourselves with training and education programs around the treatment of endovascular diseases and neurovascular abnormalities, as well as the clinical resources associated with these treatment modalities. Novation's leadership is engaged in our activities in order to make this a successful partnership. We couldn't have asked for a more complete dedication of resources than what Novation has provided to help make this partnership a win/win situation."

ev3 has also benefited from working with Novation's staff on various collaborative initiatives. "Novation's marketing services to their members have added additional value to what we provide," says Zajac. "Their staff has been very responsive and professional, and we feel like we are a true partner with them."

Zajac feels so strongly about ev3's relationship with Novation that he's already spreading the word among fellow suppliers. "I've already given two or three recommendations to friends of mine throughout the country, telling them that they need to be proactive and move forward with a Signature Supplier agreement with Novation because to me, it's really an innovative partnership model," he says.

"So many times, suppliers and GPOs have two different sets of objectives, but that's not the case here," Zajac continues. "The value and opportunities between our two organizations are aligned. You have instant credibility with the membership, you have the support and recognition from Novation account executives, and you're aligned, in terms of your strategies and tactics, to achieve greater growth than you would have without such an agreement. The Signature Supplier concept is unequivocally a winning brand."