

## How to Strengthen Simulation Center Operational Efficiency



### THE PROBLEM

Just as cars need fuel, regular oil checkups, and upkeep, a sim center requires ongoing support and maintenance. Technological issues must be addressed. Without proper IT training and knowledge, however, this complex technology may be used incorrectly, under-utilized, or used beyond its intended purposes.

Yet when educators are tasked with both the education of students and the operation of the technology, there is a high chance of “burnout,” with staff turnover occurring approximately every two years. How do you prevent educator burnout while still making the most of the technology?

### THE SOLUTION

Drexel University College of Nursing and Health Professions’ Center for Interdisciplinary Clinical Simulation and Practice (CICSP) has solved this problem by hiring a multidisciplinary management team. Here, educators and IT staff work together to yield a high degree of operational efficiency while also providing an excellent education for the students.

In addition, Bob Feenan, IT and AV Manager at Drexel Nursing believes that access to support and maintenance from a company such as EMS is important. “Having a knowledgeable support team at the vendor site gives a very comforting feeling when it seems like the sky is falling and it is up to you to fix it. Having the various peripherals covered under a maintenance agreement means a quick fix for any issue, and a return to normal operation,” he says.

### THE RESULTS

What can other institutions that are looking to run a simulation center learn from Drexel Nursing’s example? “If your program is low volume, say a class size of 50 or 70, you might be able to get away with ‘bridging’ if you are a person that knows a little bit of tech,” suggests John Cornele, MSN, RN, CNE, EMT-P, Director at the CICSP. “But as soon your volume increases, you can’t watch everything. So you really need that support from the other [IT] side.”

“If you don’t want to hire someone like me to be the first line of defense when something’s broken, then generally vendors like EMS will offer all kinds of services,” adds Bob. “Somebody to call when there’s a problem.”

Remember: an effective simulation center is like a car. They both require operational knowledge, ongoing maintenance, mechanical expertise, and access to the manufacturer.

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