

**{Excerpt from Guide to Outsourcing
Multitasking with Multiple Suppliers, Medical Device & Diagnostic Industry,
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Finding outside suppliers and vendors is difficult—and coordinating them to work on a single project is even harder. But with good communication skills and a little preplanning, it can be done.

Your company is developing a new product—a medical device that will improve the lives of doctors and patients. It will be the first of its kind on the market and will put your company on the map. But, like many OEMs, you aren't equipped to do every piece of the project in-house. You'll need a supplier or two. But what if you need more than two? What if you need five, or eight?

As medical devices become more complex, combining new and diverse technologies, project managers become more likely to find themselves in just this situation.

Choose Your Partners Carefully

Then, when you are ready to try blending the efforts of several suppliers into one successful project, make sure they are the right ones. Susan Hart, director of development at **Inovise Medical Inc.** (Newberg, OR), says a good place to start is with an examination of the project requirements. "Think about which pieces of it are in your core competency, versus which pieces are better handled by someone else," Hart suggests. Inovise went to four outside firms for help creating its Audicor cardiograph expansion system.



Hart stresses the importance of knowing your criteria for qualifying suppliers, and understanding what each of your suppliers will bring to the project. You need to understand each company's core competencies and company cultures.

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