

Diagnostic Solutions Laboratory Testing Advances Personalized Medicine by Using DNA-Based Testing Solutions Including the GI-MAP™ Stool Analysis and the GenomicInsight™ AI-Powered SNP Panel



Tony Hoffman
President and Chief Executive Officer

Diagnostic Solutions Laboratory, LLC
www.diagnosticsolutionslab.com

Interview conducted by:
Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor
CEOCFO Magazine

CEOCFO: *Mr. Hoffman, according to your site, Diagnostic Solutions Laboratory was founded to bridge the gap between healthcare providers and the clinical laboratory. What is the gap? Why does it need bridging? Where do you come in between the two groups?*

Mr. Hoffman: It is really information, putting information into the practitioner's hands that is easily translated for application into patient healthcare. The field of laboratory science is evolving rapidly, and many times the clinical

significance of these newer tests is not very apparent. Therefore, beyond just running lab tests, we provide a variety of ongoing educational and clinical support tools for our practitioners. In that way, we bridge the gap between testing and application in clinical practice.

CEOCFO: *Would you give us a couple of examples? What are the types of testing and why is there confusion?*

Mr. Hoffman: Take for instance our flagship test, the DNA-based stool test called the GI-MAP™. This test provides practitioners with a comprehensive, in-depth analysis of GI microbes and health markers that goes way beyond traditional lab testing. In the past, practitioners who encounter a certain set of patient symptoms have ordered a "stool culture" or an "ova and parasite" test to rule out a specific bacteria or parasite.

The GI-MAP, however, provides results on a multitude of pathogens and parasites using quantitative DNA-based technology. Practitioners no longer have to guess what infection their patient may be suffering from before ordering the test. Our DNA technology takes that guesswork out of the equation. This is particularly important for chronically-ill patients who may experience more than one gut infection at a time. Our test offers the greatest opportunity to identify the root cause of GI complaints.

And, while the GI-MAP was our initial focus, we have recently expanded our DNA technology into the area of genomics with the introduction of GenomicInsight™ – Powered by Opus23 Explorer™. This is the first comprehensive SNPs panel to include AI software, giving practitioners detailed information on over 5,000 individual genetic polymorphisms.

CEOCFO: *Is the medical community understanding of the difference and the fact that you can do so much more or is there still education to be done?*

Mr. Hoffman: There is still education to be done. However, the adoption of a comprehensive stool panel into the medical community has grown quite a bit in recent years. A tremendous amount of research on the overall health effects of the gut microbiome continues to come out, and the medical community continues to be educated on these health effects.

Now, rather than using a decision tree to diagnosis a patient with GI complaints, practitioners are seeking personalized results. The GI-MAP offers that personalization because it takes a deeper dive into a large potential of analytes that could

be contributing to a patient's chronic disease. The practitioner's traditional decision tree often doesn't work in complex cases. Our test bridges that gap.

CEOCFO: *What type of analysis do you provide? Is it clear cut? Is there a human factor and interpretation?*

Mr. Hoffman: Certainly, there is a human factor. Every patient is unique, even if their chief complaints are the same. Our test finds the point of differentiation between two similar patients by identifying the root cause of their illness. That is called precision medicine, or personalized medicine. The GI-MAP helps clinicians practice personalized medicine, and that is the future of healthcare.

It is the complex patients that are reaping the rewards. IBS is a catchall phrase, but usually, there is something at the root of the symptoms causing the digestive complaints. Without running a panel like ours, it would be very challenging to try to determine the specific cause and course of treatment, to resolve the problem.

CEOCFO: *Is it easily interpreted or is there a learning curve?*

Mr. Hoffman: There's always a learning curve, but we arm practitioners with educational tools. We have a Resource Library on our website that has articles, podcasts, and webinars. We also provide thirty-minute, thorough, consultative services with one of our experienced, on-staff clinical support team members. We don't make treatment decisions; that is always the physician's prerogative. What we can do is provide as much educational information as possible so that practitioners and patients get the most they can from the answers that the GI-MAP provides.

"We pride ourselves on our innovation. We don't want to constrain ourselves by doing something that is already being done. We always want to offer the best testing methodology to get the best patient outcomes."- Tony Hoffman

CEOCFO: *Where does cost come into play?*

Mr. Hoffman: Cost and patient accessibility are always at the forefront of our decisions. We offer affordable pricing and have a great insurance billing program. One reason we have grown so rapidly is that we have built a patient-friendly billing process.

We're very competitive in the marketplace. Our test helps practitioners with chronically-ill patients find the answers they need to get well. I think wellness usually trumps the cost of the test for most people.

CEOCFO: *How do you reach out to potential clients? Should the public know or is it really the doctors that need to know and direct their patients?*

Mr. Hoffman: Both. Our clients are medical practitioners, so we attend functional medicine trade shows throughout the year to introduce our testing to them. However, we also reach a tremendous number of practitioners through word of mouth, and, also through educational and online forums, and social media. The reputation of the GI-MAP does much of the leg work for us. Additionally, patients are very health savvy these days, so they often discover us and seek out practitioners who will order the test for them.

We certainly use sales and marketing, but don't rely solely on those for growth. We make sure that we provide the right product that produces the right results at the right cost.

CEOCFO: *We came upon Diagnostic Solutions Laboratory from a conference in February. How do you stand out when you are in an exhibition hall with so many others that have ideas they are looking to share?*

Mr. Hoffman: Even at a large medical conference with, say, three hundred other companies selling testing, we let the test compete for us. It is not uncommon for a speaker at a trade show to do a presentation based on a case study that relied on the GI-MAP's results. Questions and interest about our testing piques naturally from there.

Having influencers and key opinion leaders promote our testing is invaluable. We also use marketing efforts to grab the attention of attendees passing by our booth.

We have a strong following, and from there we naturally decided to grow our DNA technology and offer the new Genomic*Insight* testing. We have earned the trust of our customers, and that allows us to grow organically.

CEOCFO: *What surprised you as the company has grown and evolved?*

Mr. Hoffman: Probably the pace. I have been involved in multiple laboratories, both as an owner and developer over the past twenty-five years. I have launched three previous stool analysis panels. With this particular company, the growth rate

has been astounding, and it's primarily been due to word of mouth – as opposed to sales and marketing – which really tells me that we have a product that is working for the practitioner. The patient outcomes are there. Again, word of mouth and peer-to-peer endorsements are invaluable. That is the hardest growth model to achieve. If you have that, you get the fastest growth, organically, without having to rely on marketing and sales dollars to grow.

CEOCFO: *What is next for Diagnostic Solutions Laboratory?*

Mr. Hoffman: We've successfully launched our flagship test, a comprehensive stool analysis done by qPCR DNA. We pride ourselves on our innovation. We don't want to constrain ourselves by doing something that is already being done. We always want to offer the best testing methodology to get the best patient outcomes. Our passion for precision medicine is why we've chosen to launch another DNA-based test.

We recently launched an automated intelligence-based genomics panel, called *GenomicInsight*. *GenomicInsight* reports on over 5,000 single nucleotide polymorphisms, or SNPs, in one comprehensive functional DNA test. Online results include therapeutic recommendations backed by the latest medical literature. *GenomicInsight* uses the *Opus23 Explorer* platform to provide practitioners genomic information on over a dozen areas of patient health. Practitioners can use the online dashboard to drill down on methylation during one office visit, and cardiovascular health, or estrogen metabolism in the next.

Genes can be influenced by lifestyle and nutraceuticals, and we're excited to see how *GenomicInsight* helps practitioners and patients work together toward a healthier future.



**Diagnostic
Solutions**
l a b o r a t o r y