

2010

# newsmaker

gloStream™

*“gloStream has demonstrated that they are one of Michigan’s most innovative healthcare companies and have the capability to spur job growth locally while also transforming health-care nationally.” - Michael Gross, Managing Director, Beringea*





## HIMSS Preview: 10 Health-Care Partnerships To Watch

February 26, 2010

### Microsoft + gloStream

Plenty of health-care information systems and medical software are compatible with Microsoft tools, but gloStream, which makes gloEMR, gloPM and gloSuite, claims it has the only medical practice software applications with Microsoft Office built right into them.

Channel Impact: gloStream is a 100 percent channel company with a growing partner program. The company has been active in touting its products in line with stimulus opportunity, and its alliance with Microsoft -- now a few years old -- has been crucial to its ongoing partner recruitment. Watch for gloStream to continue to gain traction among EMR-savvy solution providers.



## GloStream To Integrate Microsoft Office 2010 Into Software

By Matt Roush

March 2, 2010

Bloomfield Hills-based gloStream Inc., maker of gloEMR, gloPM and gloSuite, today announced that it will integrate Microsoft Office 2010 into gloEMR upon the general availability of the new Office suite.

The announcement was made during the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society Conference this week in Atlanta, Ga.

GloStream solutions are built on the .Net Framework and use Microsoft SQL Server and come standard with Microsoft Office embedded within the application. The outcome for gloStream's physician clients are solutions that are powerful, familiar, easy to learn and use, and fully customizable.

"From our founding we've been dedicated to Microsoft technology because it has always allowed us to build unique functionality into our products that can truly impact quality at the point of care," said gloStream CEO Mike Sappington. "For example, our dashboard gives doctors single-click access to every piece of patient information in the chart and all of our templates are built using Microsoft Office. This means doctors can dictate, type or even draw into their documents. The versatility and customizability of Microsoft technology is unmatched."

GloStream's product development teams are working with Microsoft to integrate Microsoft Office 2010 functionality and develop future versions of gloEMR that give doctors and their staff the tools and resources needed to realize even greater levels of productivity and efficiency.

"The integration of gloEMR with Microsoft Office allows physicians to access their EMR using the familiar tools and user-friendly interface of the Microsoft platform," said Chris Sullivan, U.S. health provider industry solutions director, Microsoft. "We're pleased to be working with gloStream to provide technologies that help E-medical record firm gloStream makes 50 hires over last year physicians increase productivity and ultimately improve the delivery of care."

More at [www.glostream.com](http://www.glostream.com) or call (877) 456-3671.

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## **gloStream Announces 100% Success Rate: HIMSS10**

March 3, 2010

gloStream announced its 100 percent success rate at the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS 2010) Conference.

gloStream, maker of gloEMR, gloPM and gloSuite medical practice software applications with Microsoft Office built in, announced it has maintained a 100 percent success rate, even while rapidly increasing the number of medical practices it helps to convert to electronic medical records. Every single practice that has installed a gloStream product continues to use it today. The announcement was made during the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS 10) Conference.

gloStream attributes its industry leading success rate to its proprietary process known as gloDNA, its community of certified Partners and its products. gloDNA, which stands for "gloStream Detailed Needs Analysis" is an exclusive process that allows gloStream to gather information about a practice, and then tailor a unique solution that matches the specific needs of the doctors. gloStream's local technology Partners who sell and support gloStream solutions use gloDNA to customize the software when working with physicians.

"I think the gloDNA process is a huge part of the reason that our implementation was so successful," said Dr. Julio Sosa, M.D., a Michigan-based plastic surgeon and gloStream client. "gloStream didn't just show us a demo and shove a contract at us - they took the time to understand our practice and the needs of every doctor here. We couldn't be happier."

A 2009 report in Healthcare IT News found that doctors were de-installing non-gloStream software because of training issues, functionality or financial concerns. Industry experts suggest a nationwide de-installation rate that could be as high as 40 percent.

With a perfect 100 percent success rate, gloStream is bucking the industry trend.

"One of the largest hurdles to improvements in the quality of care is the inability to make health information easily available to the right people at the right time," said Chris Sullivan, U.S. health provider industry solutions director, Microsoft. "Microsoft is focused on working with companies such as gloStream to improve access to information with offerings that connect different systems, processes and people across the health ecosystem."

To learn more about gloStream's 100 percent success rate, visit gloStream at station 12 in the Microsoft booth (#6733).

Source: gloStream

You can discuss about gloStream and its products & services in the gloStream Company User Group

## **streamlined: gloStream helps health care workers track medical information electronically**

By Joe Szczesny

March 19, 2010

Electronic medical records are one of the next big things in information technology and Bloomfield Hills-based gloStream is in on the ground floor.

Michael Sappington, gloStream's president and chief executive officer, said there are many eager to get into electronic medical records.

In addition, gloStream is on its way to becoming a Michigan success story. Founded in 2007, gloStream already has 100 employees and expects the number to double during 2010. The gloStream software was created and refined here, he said.



The financial rewards for developing better ways of keeping track of medical records are substantial, he said.

The Obama administration has set aside close to \$17 billion as part of last year's stimulus package to jump start the move toward putting the medical records of every American in digital form.

Proponents of electronic records, including Republicans such as Newt Gingrich, maintain the electronic records could eliminate costly, repetitive testing and help curb the medical errors that kill an estimated 100,000 Americans every year.

However, for several reasons, ranging from fear of job loss, very real concerns about costs and technical concerns such as premature obsolescence and incompatibility, physicians and health-care professionals haven't been swept up in the digital revolution embraced by other sectors of the economy.

Sappington said nobody could tell physicians, with any real degree of certainty, which electronic record keeping would prevail.

However, Yaw Kwakye, gloStream's chief software architect and one of the company's founders, devised a record-keeping system that uses a basic Microsoft platform and is thus compatible with Windows system used by physicians and hospitals for basic office work and communication.

Sappington also said the federal stimulus money is making the initial start up costs less onerous for medical practices such as The Institute for Athletic Medicine in Auburn Hills, where Dr. Thomas Perkins, a board-certified orthopedic surgeon, has embraced electronic records.

The use of electronic records changes the nature of medical practices. Fewer employees are needed to keep and chase records, so offices are quieter and personnel can be re-deployed to other tasks while productivity improves.

Higher productivity is one of the keys to blunting the rising cost of health care, Sappington said.

Right now, there are a number of practice management technologies that are not meeting the expectations and needs of doctors, gloStream officials said. But gloStream has achieved a 100 percent success rate by consistently delivering a product that doctors find easy to use, learn and implement.

Also, doctors need to meet “meaningful use” standards in order to be eligible for the federal stimulus funds earmarked for health-care IT adoption. Any physicians implementing electronic medical record software, to take advantage of available funds, are looking for providers with high user-success rates so they won’t fall victim to implementing an EMR product that cannot meet any kind “meaningful ” use standard.

A 2009 report in Healthcare IT News found that doctors were deinstalling non-gloStream software because of training issues, functionality or financial concerns. Industry experts suggest a nationwide de-installation rate that could be as high as 40 percent. Chris Sullivan, U.S. health provider industry solutions director of Microsoft, said with a 100 percent success rate, gloStream is bucking the industry trend.

“One of the largest hurdles to improvements in the quality of care is the inability to make health information easily available to the right people at the right time,” Sullivan said.

“Microsoft is focused on working with companies such as gloStream to improve access to information with offerings that connect different systems, processes and people across the health ecosystem,” he said.

So far, gloStream has maintained a 100 percent success rate, even while rapidly increasing the number of medical practices it helps to convert to electronic medical records, Sappington said.

Sappington said gloStream attributes its success rate to a proprietary process known as gloDNA, which stands for “gloStream Detailed NeedAnalysis.” The process allows gloStream to gather information about a practice, and then tailor a unique solution, matching the specific needs of the doctors.

Sappington also has developed a system of IT providers around the country who service the system. Any partners who sell and support gloStream solutions use gloDNA to customize the software when working with prospects, he said.

“I think the gloDNA process is a huge part of the reason that our implementation was so successful,” said Dr. Julio Sosa, a Michigan-based plastic surgeon and gloStream client.

“Also gloStream didn’t just show us a demo and shove a contract at us — they took the time to understand our practice and the needs of every doctor here. We couldn’t be happier,” he said.



## 10 Collaborations That Will Impact The Health-Care Space This Year And Beyond

By Chad Berndtson

March 26, 2010

Thanks to the effects of the federal stimulus and the mainstream emergence of electronic medical record systems, health-care opportunity is top of mind for not only solution providers and integrators looking to expand their capabilities, but also vendors and distributors that want to leverage the channel to grow their own health-care interests.

With all those colliding forces, the space is seeing a substantial level of strategic partnering and even mergers and acquisitions, many of which have big implications for the health-care channel. Here are 10 of the more recent to keep an eye on, and there are plenty more.

### 1. HP (NYSE:HPQ), McKesson And Tech Data (NSDQ:TECD)

HP in January unveiled a partnership with electronic medical record systems giant McKesson. HP and McKesson will bundle McKesson EMR and practice management systems with HP hardware, and sell those bundles to the channel through Tech Data. Physician practices are the target, according to the vendors, because many regional VARs that wouldn't normally be able to compete for large health-care integrations at the enterprise hospital level now have abundant opportunity in smaller settings.

**The Pulse:** Physician practice EMR integration -- and the infrastructure and systems needed to support it -- are a new opportunity for VARs that might previously have been discouraged from the health-care vertical, believing it to be the sole province of large integrators.

### 2. Ingram Micro (NYSE:IM) And NextGen

In February, Ingram Micro struck a deal with EMR applications vendor NextGen Healthcare Information Systems -- a new addition to Ingram Micro's IMstimulus program for helping VARs land opportunity related to ARRA.

Ingram Micro said it selected NextGen because of brand equity, and NextGen, like McKesson and other EMR vendors, already has its own channel in place.

**The Pulse:** Ingram Micro has one of the most expansive stimulus outreach programs of any distributor but until its NextGen agreement lacked a definitive, go-to EMR play as part of that program. Problem solved.

### 3. Dell (NSDQ:Dell) And eClinicalWorks

About a year ago, Dell said it would partner with eClinicalWorks -- another EMR stalwart that works with a number of vendors, including HP, Toshiba and Motion -- to provide turnkey electronic medical record solution sets. The hitch? They would be available through the Walmart division of Sam's Club, not through solution providers. It was a move that got Dell and eClinicalWorks roundly criticized at the time, especially from health-care channel advocates that argued an "EMR in a box" would create more problems than it solved. Dell and eClinicalWorks haven't been terribly forthcoming on how the partnership is progressing.

**The Pulse:** Given that Dell already has such a commanding health care footprint in health care, education and other public-

sector verticals that are once again hot, isn't Dell missing a golden opportunity here to leverage the channel and expand its health-care reach?

#### 4. Dell And Perot Systems

While we're on Dell, how about this long-rumored and finally consummated acquisition? Dell pulled the trigger on a \$3.9 billion deal for integrator Perot Systems in September. That Dell has designs on becoming a services power is obvious. Less so is how it will leverage Perot to help the rest of its channel.

**The Pulse:** Dell channel chief Greg Davis told *CRN* in February that Dell's indirect partner sales are on the rise, and it has made significant channel gains in its quest to leave its direct legacy behind. Davis has also talked up the ongoing expansion of Dell's services offerings, though it's still hard to say how much having Perot in house -- and its substantial health-care vertical expertise -- is going to inform those opportunities for solution providers.

#### 5. Microsoft (NSDQ:MSFT) And Sentillion

From HealthVault to clinical systems partnerships, Microsoft has been making waves in the health-care space. In February, it completed its acquisition of patient care software specialist Sentillion. What Sentillion brings is context management and single sign-on technologies, which Microsoft has indicated it will combine with its Amalga Unified Intelligence System (UIS).

**The Pulse:** Microsoft's channel leverage being what it is, any time the company brings more tools to the EMR and clinical systems competition channel partners with a health-care focus have a chance to play. Sentillion claims its technology integrates about 572 health-care applications, which should be of interest to integrators with an eye toward complex EMR systems.

#### 6. Microsoft And gloStream

Plenty of health-care information systems and medical software are compatible with Microsoft tools, but gloStream, which makes gloEMR, gloPM and gloSuite, claims it has the only medical practice software applications with Microsoft Office built right into them.

**The Pulse:** gloStream is a 100 percent channel company with a growing partner program. The company has been active in touting its products in line with stimulus opportunity, and its alliance with Microsoft has been crucial to its ongoing partner recruitment.

#### 7. Microsoft And Eclipsys

The strategic alliance between Microsoft and Eclipsys, the clinical, revenue cycle and performance management software titan, just occurred. According to the terms of the deal, Eclipsys will integrate parts of its Sunrise Enterprise suite -- a software applications bundle -- with Microsoft's Amalga UIS.

**The Pulse:** Eclipsys' knack for partnerships has helped sustain its rapid growth and, given the spotlight on health care and EMR integrations, it appears to be strengthening ties with Microsoft at exactly the right time.

#### 8. IBM (NYSE:IBM) And Initiate Systems

IBM in early February unveiled plans to acquire Initiate Systems, a privately held developer of data integrity software for health-care entities, government agencies and insurance providers. The move plays into IBM's ongoing push to align itself for EMR and broader health-care and stimulus opportunities.

**The Pulse:** Business analytics -- part of what IBM calls "high-value IT" -- have been a recent, but intense focus for IBM, which since 2005 has spent some \$10 billion on related acquisitions. IBM's massive public sector practice has been a triumph in the past few years, continuing to grow even as other parts of the company have been sluggish.

#### 9. Synnex (NYSE:SNX) And Allscripts

Synnex unveiled a partnership with Allscripts in June 2009 to distribute Allscripts' MyWay Electronic Health Record (EHR). The move wasn't much noticed in the channel immediately, but Synnex has worked to broaden its focus on health care, which CEO Kevin Murai has identified as one of the most important growth opportunities for both Synnex and the channel.

**The Pulse:** This could turn out to be one of the distributor's vanguard partnerships in the years ahead. Why? AllScripts MyWay is designed for small physician practices and is available both as an on-premise application or SaaS delivery. MyWay EHR's versatility as an on-premise or SaaS solution makes it attractive to a range of partners. For Synnex, it also means access to AllScript's robust partner community, just as AllScripts is making a big push to expand its indirect channel force.

#### **10. Xerox (NYSE:XRX) And ACS**

Xerox earlier this month finalized its acquisition of business process outsourcing specialist Affiliated Computer (NYSE:ACS) Systems (ACS), a blockbuster buy that effectively triples Xerox's services revenue. ACS has substantial reach into a number of vertical markets, including federal agencies -- ACS re-entered federal in late 2008 -- and health care.

**The Pulse:** It was a big move for Xerox, and one that could define at least the early part of new CEO Ursula Burns' run at the top. But Xerox still hasn't explained how it will avoid channel conflict between its newly welcomed ACS team and its existing partner network, especially with services opportunities so lucrative in places like, yes, health care.

## When to Go Unvirtual

*Reluctantly turning telecommuters back into office workers*

By Max Chafkin

April 1, 2010



*gloStream was founded five years ago as a virtual medical records company, selling software to doctors' offices. The approach worked well; costs were low, and salespeople had no choice but to be out in the field. But last year, Mike Sappington decided it was time to take the company physical. Here, he explains why.*

"We've gotten too big to be a virtual company. By the end of the year, we'll have 100 employees in the U.S. and another 100 in India. Setting up a conference call or arranging everyone's schedules for a meeting started to take an enormous amount of time. Face-to-face collaboration is essential when you want to get something done quickly in a large organization. That said, I'm doing this reluctantly. Our people enjoy working virtually, and we want to maintain the culture that we built. We're still going to use all the technology we used before, and we're continuing to be flexible about work schedules. Some folks are expected to come into the office every day to collaborate. But if you want to leave at 3 o'clock to pick your kid up from school, I understand."



## Virtual offices have their perks, drawbacks

By Brittany Knotts

April 2, 2010

The nine to five office job isn't as common as it once was. As communication technologies increase, working from home does also.

Recently, the business magazine, Inc. decided to publish their entire April issue without stepping foot in the office. It required planned conference calls and tools such as Skype and instant messaging, but overall, production went fine.

Jane Berentson, the editor-in-chief of Inc. magazine, talked to Patt Morrison about the experience and what she learned from it.

Berentson highlighted some of the advantages of a virtual office and suggested that new businesses try it out. "I think the last thing in the world you would need is an expensive office someplace and everything that goes along with it," she said.

"So I would say, start out in your apartment or your house. Grab a few people and take it from there and see whether you're comfortable with a virtual office or whether you need to get together."

Also joining the conversation was Kirk Aubry, Chief Operating Officer of gloStream, a company which supplies doctors with medical records software. He already runs gloStream virtually, but is looking into a permanent space for his headquarters.

Aubry put in his two cents: "There are lots of benefits to working virtually. It requires that you be flexible. There's a cost savings."


Virtual offices may save money for businesses and save hours of time lost in a commute (not to mention cut back on emissions), but there are things lost. A caller pointed out that if there were no offices, clerical and janitorial positions would be cut. So while businesses would save money, people would lose jobs.

Berentson responded, "I also think things would shift a little bit. So maybe people would have more lavish home offices. In terms of the kind of janitorial jobs or something like that, people would still have to be places. It wouldn't be big office buildings but it might be places where people congregate."

On top of that, many people were concerned with the loss of inner-office relationships and possibly productivity. Both guests and many callers agreed on one thing: it depends on the company and the staff.

"The ideal scenario is, depending on the business and depending on the business needs, somewhere in between," Aubry said. "There are certainly trade-offs."

April 20, 2010




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11,013.68	-0.05%	2,455.59	-1.03%	1,186.31	-0.49%	10-year yield	3.78%	Price/barrel	\$81.60	1 Euro =	\$1.35	



### Why AIG won't be next

1:41pm: The Justice Department is weighing a case against AIG's ex-derivatives chief. But prosecutors would face a steeper uphill battle than the Goldman case. [More](#)

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**Michael Sappington**  
GLOSTREAM INC.

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## Autotask Community Live: 13 Observations

By Joe Panettieri

April 20, 2010

As the second-annual Autotask Community Live conference wraps up in Miami, here are 13 observations and takeaways for managed services providers (MSPs) and VARs. Among the highlights on my mind...

**1. Try and Try Again:** During a hallway discussion with my business partner (Amy Katz) and me, Autotask Board Member George McNamee shared some spirited stories about various investments he's made. Among his biggest hits: Pumping money into iRobot Corp., which develops government and industrial robots, and robots for the home (including the famed robotic vacuum cleaner).

McNamee said iRobot suffered 12 various failures and setbacks before becoming a success. Why did McNamee stick with iRobot through all of those failures? McNamee believed in iRobot's intellectual property. Plus, various companies — such as a toy maker — helped to focus iRobot's R&D. A focus group ultimately helped iRobot to spot the home vacuum market opportunity.

iRobot represents an important lesson for MSPs: If you're building intellectual property and assets, it may be worth sticking around until you find your niche. Also, instead of trying to apply a technology to a specific problem, host a focus group to hear what problems customers potentially want solved.

**2. Dell Was In the House:** Yesterday I openly wondered if Dell's Managed Services team had skipped the Autotask event. But Tim Banigan, an account executive on Dell's MSP Managed Services Sales team, caught my ear earlier today at the conference.

I've openly criticized Dell in recent months for going so silent in the managed services market. But there's anecdotal evidence that Dell continues to quietly work with a range of MSPs. Plus, Dell seems to be preparing a managed print services strategy. Another source says Dell's managed services software will soon integrate with Autotask.

**3. Re-connecting with Intronis:** Quite a few attendees were disappointed to hear Intronis VP Eric Webster didn't attend the event because he's making the leap to a new technology company. During a phone call earlier today, Intronis CEO Sam Gutmann reiterated the online backup company's commitment to channel partners. Gutmann also said the Intronis partner program has delivered record results for the company in recent months. Gutmann said he wishes Webster well, and the search for his replacement is under way.

**4. Medical Marvel?:** gloStream Chief Operating Officer Kirk Aubry says 30 percent to 40 percent of electronic medical record (EMR) projects fail. But gloStream's solution mitigates all that risk while helping VARs and MSPs target the health care industry. It almost sounds too good to be true... but judge for yourself and let me know if you embrace gloStream's health care IT strategy.

**5. In A Buying Mood:** Jason Caras, co-CEO of IT Authorities, says the Tampa, Fla.-based MSP plans to make multiple acquisitions this year. Miami is one target market, but Caras is looking across the U.S. for potential buyouts of small MSPs and VARs. Caras isn't alone. Additional M&A examples at the event:

- It sounds like Dan Wilson, president of Waypoint Solutions Group, isn't done with M&A activity.
- Mike Cooch, CEO of Everon Technology Services, confirms that his company made an acquisition last week.

- VaultLogix, an online storage company, is seeking to make a few acquisitions. Target companies have to have a core focus in online storage. Zak Karsan, VP of business development, is handling the effort.

**6. Hardware as a Service:** It sounds like MSP on Demand is working on a few more strategic moves. I'll be listening closely for details in the days and weeks ahead. On a slightly different topic, Zenith Infotech is promoting Vu Telepresence with a pay-as-you-go model — though Zenith didn't use the HaaS term when I spoke with their team. I suspect Vu Telepresence will share more news at Interop, which starts April 25 in Las Vegas.

**7. An MSP Server?:** Lenovo has launched a so-called MSP server that's specifically designed for MSPs to remotely managed. Jay McBain, director of SMB for Lenovo, shared the details during a FastChat video interview earlier today. I hope to have the video online by April 21.

**8. Products and Services:** That was the key theme of the entire event... showing VARs and MSPs how to successfully sell a blended mix of products and services. Not by coincidence, Autotask promoted its PSA software (Autotask Go and Pro) and VARStreet (for products) as a one-two punch that address the services and products mix.

**9. Goodbye Recession, Hello Recovery?:** Now that I think of it, there was very little recession talk at the conference. Many of the MSPs said there's "no shortage" of customer opportunities to pursue. The real challenge seems to be focus.

**10. More Distributor Moves:** Kirk Nesbit, VP of design and support services at Synnex, says the distributor's NOC (network operation center) and help desk services are catching on with VARs and MSPs. Nesbit also hinted that Synnex will continue to strengthen its relationship with itControl Solutions, which makes the itControl Suite remote management platform. I continue to hear that former MSP Services Network CEO Amy Luby is assisting Synnex and itControl Suite, but I haven't nailed down exact details.

Synnex rival Ingram Micro was also at Autotask Community Live. But I expect a more detailed update on the Ingram Micro Seismic managed services strategy during the Ingram Micro VTN event scheduled for later this week in Hollywood, Fla.

**11. Open Source Niches:** Travis Austin, founder of Rezitech — an MSP — is quietly using Ubuntu Linux in his data center and also as a platform for many of the MSP software integrations his company is writing. Also, Rezitech is leveraging Asterisk — the open source IP PBX — within its business and sees it as a potential VoIP revenue opportunity. Austin described his Ubuntu and Asterisk strategies to me in a FastChat video that I hope to post by April 21.

**12. Cloud:** Funny, but there wasn't much cloud hype at the event. Sure, Autotask says it's the top hosted PSA software provider — though NetSuite seems to be making similar claims with OpenAir lately. But discussions at the Autotask conference were mostly about business strategies rather than cloud and SaaS hype. That was refreshing.

**13. Next Stops:** MSPmentor's road trip doesn't end at Autotask Community Live. We remain on the road for Ingram Micro VTN (Hollywood, Fla.), HP Americas Partner Conference (Las Vegas), Cisco Partner Summit (San Francisco) and SMB Nation (New Jersey).

Want to potentially meet? Send me email (joe [at] NineLivesMediaInc.com).

I apologize if our team missed you at Autotask Community Live. But we look forward to continuing the dialog online and at a lengthy list of upcoming events.



## Ready For Primetime: 10 Hot Emerging Vendors For May 2010

May 3, 2010

Step right up and get what may very well be your first look at 10 hot new vendors that are exploding onto the scene. This month we profile 10 new vendors that are looking to shake up the industry in various technology segments, from video to cloud computing, from software to hardware. These startups know the importance of the channel and are looking to align with valued partners to get their names and products out.

Take a look and get introduced to 10 vendors that we at Channelweb.com think are ready for prime time.

The screenshot shows a medical software interface. At the top, there is a table with columns: First Name, ID #, Last Name, SSN, Provider, and DOB. Below the table is a patient card for 22345 Broder, Canton, MI 48187. The card includes contact information for Dr. Shelly Corley and a group membership section. The group membership section has a box for the member name and a note: "Presidents and Members must call to verify eligibility & benefits. 419-244-8135 • 877-434-3674. Presidents: You must get certified all care as required by calling. Cuckid@877-688-2622".

First Name	ID #	Last Name	SSN	Provider	DOB
Aaron	W	Grace	278555555	Stephen Ortho	02/18/1984
Abraham		Stick		Thomas Earn	12/03/1979
Andy		Bird	278555555	Thomas Earn	03/28/1961
Anthony		Stevens		Sean Fan	05/01/1986
Case		Williamson	999555555	Thomas Earn	05/22/1950
Christopher		Anderson		Thomas Earn	03/24/1969
Drew		Lodi	278555555	Sean Fan	02/24/1926
Emily	O.	Jones	978555555	Thomas Earn	08/27/1923
Henry		Walruga		Thomas Earn	08/10/1986
James		Moore		Thomas Earn	03/18/1932
Jennifer	T	Kellogg		Sean Fan	11/30/1981
Jennifer		Thompson	278555555	Thomas Earn	08/22/2001
Jim		Grayson		Thomas Earn	03/09/1943
Joe	R.	Hingbour	222222222	GlSample Provider	06/20/2002

### gloStream

**Company Name:** gloStream

**Tech Sector:** Software

**Key Product:** gloEMR

Electronic medical records are a major opportunity for solution providers, and software vendor gloStream is helping VARs with the right skills navigate the esoteric ins-and-outs of the medical industry.

Founded in 2005, Bloomfield Hills, Mich.-based gloStream has wrapped its flagship gloEMR offering around the Microsoft Office platform because that's what the vast majority of medical practices use, according to CEO Michael Sappington.

Like Microsoft, gloStream also places great importance on VARs, and the company does all of its business through the channel. "Many medical practices are small businesses, and we recognized that the best way to go to market is by courting local partners with Microsoft expertise," says Sappington. "Doctors demand customization, and our partners are best equipped to deliver it."

With \$44,000 of stimulus funding earmarked for each and every doctor in the country, gloStream is aggressively recruiting solution provider partners. VARs don't need to be familiar with the medical industry, since gloStream provides certification training that helps partners to consult with doctors and accurately gauge their needs. All that's required is knowledge of Microsoft's server and database products.

"Partners need help when it comes to understanding the medical industry. That's where we come in with our certification courses," says Sappington.

# Healthcare IT News

## Vendors aim to take fear out of EMR choice

By Mike Miliard

May 6, 2010

More and more EMR vendors are offering confused and wary providers an offer they might find difficult to refuse: a money-back guarantee.

That time-tested pitch may seem more at home on TV infomercials, but it's gaining currency in the healthcare IT industry as vendors seek to reassure nervous docs and CIOs that their products will meet meaningful use and win stimulus money for their practices.

"In the current environment, choosing a technology that will meet meaningful use standards is paramount if a practice wants governmental assistance in purchasing that system," says Steve Emery, director of product management for Alpharetta, Ga.-based HealthPort. "We want potential customers to know we're committed to making sure our system has all the functionality that will allow them to 'meaningfully use' our product."

"We want to make sure doctors can be confident about making their choice," echoes Kirk Aubry, COO of gloStream, a Bloomfield Hills, Mich.-based maker of Windows-based EMRs. "For many of them, technology represents an unknown. The EMR space needs to be an area that's a source of comfort for them instead of a source of concern. So we introduced this guarantee to make sure there's no question about whether our solution will qualify for the stimulus dollars."

Indeed, as the recent report titled *Ambulatory EMR Buying: A Roller Coaster Ride in 2010* pointed out, the sheer number of EMR systems can be daunting to the uninitiated, with one observer likening the market to the "Wild West." Big vendors (Allscripts, eClinicalWorks) attract the most notice, but many smaller practices are intrigued by the offerings of lesser known vendors.

In that chaotic marketplace, setting oneself apart from the pack is important, say Mark Kozak, vice president of business development at SuiteMed, an Oakland, Calif.-based maker of EMR and practice management software.

"We've found that many physicians are interested in moving toward adoption of an integrated PMS/EMR product such as SuiteMed but are concerned about the somewhat unsettled nature of the industry with the final decisions on meaningful use still to be made," says Kozak. "A guarantee that our system will meet those requirements would set their mind at ease and free them up to purchase the system that they feel will best meet their requirements without the worry of applicability to the stimulus payments program."

Indeed, in recent comments filed with the Office of the National Coordinator, members of the College of Health Information Management Executives (CHIME) made the point that, given the "current instability in the health IT marketplace," especially with regard to certification, vendors should offer providers assurance that their product can help achieve meaningful use.

A doctor doesn't simply buy an EMR and plug it in, of course. They're "complex products requiring extensive training and support to ensure a successful outcome," says Kozak. That's why, in order to ensure SuiteMed eliminates any risk of forfeiting money should its products fail to net stimulus money, "we focus quite extensively on the delivery of a superior implementation and training program."

For his part, Aubrey says the "gloDNA" implementation process – from initial consult to the intensive practice-wide

evaluation to the post-installation customer support of its Microsoft-certified VARs – is crucial, not just to adoption but to retention. “

The dirty little secret of EMRs is the failure rate, depending on who you track, is somewhere between 30 and 40 percent,” says Aubrey. “Either they’ve been de-installed, or the doctor doesn’t use the product. That’s an extremely high number. Our success rate is a hundred percent. Everybody who’s ever bought gloEMR continues to use it today.” As more docs adopt EMRs once their misgivings are assuaged by pledges like these, of course, the hope is that number holds steady.

Since offering the money-back promise, Kozak says that the “interest level has increased significantly” from potential customers. “Physicians seem interested in examining alternatives to some of the more heavily advertised products out there.”

Adds Aubrey: “To a certain extent, at this stage in the development in the market, there’s a certain amount of fear: ‘Am I picking the right player?’ We’re trying to make sure they can have confidence that they did. Because we’re going to guarantee it.”



## Tech Data and gloStream Focus on Healthcare IT

By Dave Courbanou

May 26, 2010

gloStream spent much of 2009 promoting its health care IT solutions during managed services conferences. Now, the company is making a broader channel move. Indeed, gloStream and Tech Data are partnering to promote solutions that help VARs address electronic medical records, practice-management software and other health care solutions. Here's some perspective.

Quick refresher: gloStream is a developer of Microsoft Office-like (i.e. integrated) EMR (electronic medical record) and practice-management software designed for patient care.

During 2009 and early 2010, gloStream turned heads at MSP conferences hosted by Autotask and ConnectWise. Now, Tech Data is set to distribute gloEMR and gloPM (gloStream's actual software) stand-alone or bundled, along with custom-configurations with hardware (servers, printers, etc..) to certified partners as part of Tech Data's Healthcare SBU (specialized business unit).

gloEMR software has been developed to deal with patient records, reviewing medical images, paper documentation and even prescription tracking; gloPM is designed for practice-management applications for billing, insurance and more business related operations.

What's more, gloStream is offering gloUniveristy, an in-house training option for partners on the selling, support and installation of gloStream software. Starting in June 2010, gloStream is set to attend Tech Data's Technology Solutions Tour in Las Vegas. It'll focus on how resellers can work with Tech Data and build out health care IT.

In an blog late in April 2010, Joe Panettieri noted that:

gloStream Chief Operating Officer Kirk Aubry says 30 percent to 40 percent of electronic medical record (EMR) projects fail. But gloStream's solution mitigates all that risk while helping VARs and MSPs target the health care industry. It almost sounds too good to be true... but judge for yourself and let me know if you embrace gloStream's health care IT strategy.

We'll be watching to see how the gloStream-Tech Data relationship evolves.



## Tech Data Inks Deal with EMR Software Developer

By ChannelPro-SMB

May 27, 2010

### Tech Data Inks Deal with EMR Software Developer

*Healthcare software provider gloStream says its solutions qualify for some of the \$20 billion in healthcare updates allocated by the ARRA.*

Distributor Tech Data announced having reached a distribution agreement this week with software developer gloStream. Tech Data Inks Deal with EMR Software Developer

gloStream creates electronic medical records (EMR) and practice-management (PM) software applications. The company's Microsoft Office-based EMR and PM applications are designed for small to midsize doctors' offices and clinics.

"They help medical practices improve patient care and streamline operations," states a Tech Data press release submitted to EH Publishing, "and they qualify for EMR adoption incentives created by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)."

According to gloStream, ARRA provides more than \$20 billion in incentives to Medicare and Medicaid providers who implement certified EMR solutions. The company estimates the total number of physician practices in the United States tops 230,000, 95 percent of which are small offices and only 5 to 10 percent of which have adopted EMR solutions.

Tech Data's vice president of government, healthcare, and technical services Barb Miller says it's been a priority of Tech Data to "identify vendors who not only bring specialized solutions to the market, but who also understand the value of partnering with resellers."

Until this agreement, says Miller, gloStream has not partnered with a distributor. Nevertheless, it has, she says, "worked through a network of reseller partners to bring their solutions to doctors nationwide."

For gloStream, the distribution agreement comes at an opportune time. "This is a once in a lifetime opportunity for the partner community since the vast majority of doctors' offices will be converting to electronic medical record systems over the next few years," says Mike Sappington, gloStream's CEO. "Our relationship with Tech Data will be an important component in helping our partners build strong healthcare IT practices and bring complete EMR and PM solutions to the ambulatory healthcare market."



## **gloStream of Bloomfield Hills is teaming up with major IT products distributor**

By Joe Szczesny  
May 28, 2010

Bloomfield Hills-based gloStream is now working with a major distributor of information technology products.

Tech Data Cop., a leading distributor of IT products, has signed an agreement to help with the distribution of gloStream's proprietary electronic medical record and practice-management software applications.

"This is a once in a lifetime opportunity for the partner community since the vast majority of doctor's offices will be converting to electronic medical record systems over the next few years," said Mike Sappington, gloStream's CEO.

"Our relationship with Tech Data will be an important component in helping our partners build strong health care IT practices and bring complete EMR and PM solutions to the ambulatory health care market," Sappington said.

Sappington said Clearwater, Fla.-based Tech Data "has a great network of experienced partners who have the skills to be successful in health care IT. They are in the perfect position to help doctors make the required transition from paper charts to the digital world.

"We're very excited to be working together."

The gloStream Microsoft Office-based EMR and practice-management applications are designed for easy use by small and medium-sized doctors' offices and clinics.



## Going Digital Saves Medical Practice Money, Improves Patient Care

By Michael Cocanower for itSynergy, PCWorld

June 4, 2010

For three decades, a Phoenix-based medical practice of four physicians used virtually no digital communication among its three offices. The practice, Associated Gastroenterologists, lacked e-mail and an intranet, and had no system to centrally manage technology, data storage, or security.

Instead, 55 workers shared information by faxing or hand-carrying paper charts. Staff wasted time hunting for records on 140,000 patients. Dictating data from printed forms into Microsoft Word and storing paper files ran up costs. On 30 desktop PCs connected to a peer-to-peer network, Internet access was limited to accessing a remote billing system and a few managers e-mailing vendors over Windows Live Mail.

The practice wanted to reduce costs and improve efficiency by migrating to electronic record-keeping and adopting software to handle scheduling, billing, and reports.

### The Solution

To enable the offices to communicate, itSynergy—a technology consulting firm also based in Phoenix—established a Microsoft Windows Small Business Server-based network as a wide area network. We set up eight SonicPoint wireless access points across the offices, and SonicWall TZ200 and TZ210 firewall devices to provide security and a site-to-site VPN. A Microsoft Hyper-V server for the main office runs both Microsoft Windows Small Business Server 2008 and Windows Server 2008 32-bit, with Microsoft SQL Server 2005 in separate virtual machines. We added two more Dell PowerEdge T410 servers at the other offices, with each running Microsoft Windows Server 2003 R2 32-bit and SQL Server 2005.



After several months of testing and customization, we installed gloStream gloEMR software to manage medical records, and gloPM for scheduling, billing, and reporting on 45 Dell Optiplex workstations and 10 Dell Latitude laptops. Dragon NaturallySpeaking voice recognition within gloEMR lets doctors dictate exam notes that instantly become part of a patient's chart. The practice no longer snail-mails letters to a referring physician; instead, the system faxes those automatically once an exam is complete. Doctors can send prescriptions electronically to the pharmacy, saving time and potentially eliminating errors caused by messy handwriting. gloEMR's database also flags prescriptions that might react badly with other medications a patient is taking.

Laptops for the physicians, remote workers, and managers run a mix of Windows 7 Professional and Vista Professional with Office Standard Edition. Backups to servers are scheduled every 15 minutes, with the capability to virtualize a backed-up server. Backups are shipped offsite every 24 hours and replicated to two far-flung data centers. We provide software training as well as ongoing assistance with network infrastructure and support.

## The Payoff

With the new systems in place, staff members at last could communicate and view patient records electronically, getting on the same page at the same time. Reducing the costs of transcribing medical records immediately saved the business money. Longer term, as data populates the record-keeping and practice management systems, staff will be able to produce business reports that examine trends in billing and claims processing. The practice benefits from enhanced record-keeping, efficiency, and patient care.

## Meet the Pro



Michael Cocanower is president of Phoenix-based itSynergy, a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner and Small Business Specialist, and a Windows Small Business Server MVP. The top gloStream Certified Partner in Arizona, itSynergy has a health-care solutions practice based on electronic medical records and practice management consulting. Contact the firm at 602/297-2400 or [www.itsynergy.com](http://www.itsynergy.com).



gloStream software helps medical offices manage records and do scheduling, billing, and reporting.

# CRAIN'S DETROIT BUSINESS

Detroit and Southeast Michigan's premier business news and information website

## Metro Detroit doctors prepare for electronic medical records as Medicare issues final regulations on 'meaningful use'

By Jay Greene

July 19, 2010

Fabian Fregoli, M.D., chief medical informatics officer at **St. Joseph Mercy Oakland Hospital** in Pontiac, said final federal regulations that will govern the use of electronic medical records beginning Jan. 1 offer a more reasonable implementation timetable for physicians and hospitals than were originally proposed.

But Fregoli said most physicians still are hesitant to purchase an EMR system because of the difficulty in selecting among 300 competing vendors and the initial disruption they believe implementation will cause their offices.

"(The U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) relaxed the ruling and moved in the right direction to help with the connectivity with patients, health care providers and institutions across the nation," said Fregoli, who also is a member of **Oakland Physicians Network Services**, a Waterford Township-based physician organization.

Mike Sappington, CEO of Bloomfield Hills-based **gloStream Inc.**, an EMR vendor and consulting firm, said he expects more physicians, who were waiting for final regulations to be issued, will move more quickly to selecting EMRs.

"The sooner practices actively engage in an EMR selection process the better as they will be in the driver's seat for implementation and the money," Sappington said.

"As the market evolves, all EMR vendors will be creating a backlog of practices waiting to be installed," he said. "Many progressive practices are already engaged in the evaluation process and the industry expects many more in the fourth quarter and into next year."

But Rodger Prong, OPNS executive director, said many of the 415 PPNS-affiliated physicians who do not currently own an EMR or are closely affiliated or employed by a hospital still will most likely wait until next year to purchase a system.

"We have been encouraging physicians to wait because my independent doctors are very concerned about getting something that does not meet certification or meaningful use criteria," Prong said.

"This is the holdup right now. There are only two systems that have certification (through the nonprofit **Certification Commission for Health Information Technology**)," Prong said. "Smaller physician practices want to wait for a lower cost option they can be sure will be accepted (for financial incentives)."

Under the meaningful use regulations, CMS wants to provide financial incentives to encourage physicians and hospitals not just to purchase the EMRs but to use them to improve quality, safety and increase efficiency.

The final regulations, which go into effect at the end of September, also govern financial incentives of eligible physicians who must meet required objectives to receive as much as \$44,000 over five years from Medicare. Physicians who care for Medicaid patients could receive about \$64,000.

Hospitals that comply with a similar set of rules will receive a minimum of \$2 million each to help purchase EMRs. Hospitals that admit high numbers of Medicare patients could receive more funding.

The funding is part of \$27 billion in financial incentives from the **American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009**.

Under the incentive program, physicians may apply for low-interest loans to pay for the EMR installation costs.

Starting next April, Medicare will also offer bonus payments for practices that have installed the systems and comply with the new federal regulations.

Over the next four years those payments taper off and physicians who aren't using EMRs in a meaningful manner will start losing Medicare reimbursement.

After reviewing more than 2,000 comments to the proposed rules, CMS did away with one of its more onerous regulations – requiring doctors to meet 25 requirements and hospitals a similar 23 to receive the financial subsidy.

Instead, CMS will now only require 15 requirements to be met for physicians and 14 for hospitals. During 2011, physicians and hospitals must show 90 days of “meaningful use” and in 2012 show full compliance with the 15 requirements.

“After reviewing the comments, we agree that requiring that (eligible professionals) and eligible hospitals satisfy all of the objectives and their associated measures in order to be considered a meaningful EMR user would impose too great a burden and would result in an unacceptably low number of (physicians and hospitals) ... being able to qualify as meaningful EMR users in the first two years of the program,” according to the final rule.

The final rule also gives doctors a little more time to fully implement computerized physician order entry systems, including electronic prescribing.

In one of the 15 requirements, hospitals and doctors must use CPOE on 30 percent of their patients. The requirement had been 80 percent.

“We are finalizing a threshold for CPOE of 30 percent for (physicians, eligible providers and hospitals),” the rule stated. “We believe this relatively low threshold, in combination with the limitation to only medication orders, will allow hospitals and providers to gain experience with CPOE.

“However, as providers gain greater experience with CPOE, we believe it is reasonable to expect greater use of the function,” the rule said.

Fregoli said physician organizations like OPNS, the **Michigan State Medical Society** and specialty physician associations will help provide guidance to physicians on EMR selection.

“More and more physicians are starting to engage and ask the best questions,” Fregoli said. “Doctors will start to be engaged and realize there is stimulus money out there. They just don't know which one to go with because there are so many and only a few are certified.”

During the next few weeks, Ann Arbor-based **Altarum Institute** plans to launch a suite of online information for health care providers to help them comply with the meaningful use regulations.

“We are compiling government, consultant, academic, industry, REC (regional extension center) and other meaningful use resources and identifying them as particularly useful for different segments of providers,” including physicians and hospitals, said Dan Armijo, Altarum's director of information and technology strategies.



## MSPmentor 250 (2010 Edition), Part V of V

September 2010

Welcome to the fifth portion of our MSPmentor 250 list (2010 Edition). Please note that the MSPmentor 250 is not a “ranking” of managed services executives. Rather, the list is sorted alphabetically (by last name) so that you can identify potential partners for your managed services efforts.

Below is the fifth part of our list (201 through 250), sorted by:

- \* Last name with link to their personal or corporate blog (if available)
- \* First name with link to their personal or corporate Twitter feed (if available)
- \* Company name with link to corporate web site

While our online charts provide basic information, our complete MSPmentor 250 PDF report is available now from our Resource Center (registration required). It includes bios, executive locations and additional information about each MSPmentor 250 member.

About the Survey: For more information about the MSPmentor 250 report and survey methodology, please visit our main MSPmentor 250 Center.

### MSPmentor 250 (2010 Edition), Part V of V

First	Last Name	Title	Company (Web Site)
Rory	Sanchez	CEO	SLPowers
Peter	Sandiford	CEO	LPI Level Platforms, Inc.
Michael	Sappington	CEO	gloStream
Akash	Saraf	CEO	Zenith Infotech Ltd.
Bryan	Sarlitt	Founder & CEO	TechXpress, Inc.
David	Schafran	Managing Partner	Cogent Growth Partners, LLC
Brett	Schechter	Director of Sales	Blue Diamond Solutions
Walter	Scott	CEO	GFI Software
Mark	Scott	President & Founder	Utility Company
Scott	Scrogin	President	HTG Peer Groups
Bob	Seaman	CIO	Ancero, LLC
Stuart	Selbst	President	Stuart Selbst Consulting
MJ	Shoer	President	Jenaly Technology Group, Inc.
George	Sierchio	Consultant’s Coach	Action Business Partners, Inc.
Ben	Silliman	CEO	Altuscio Networks
Michael	Simon	President and CEO	LogMeln
Erick	Simpson	VP & CIO	MSP University
Lane	Smith	CEO & President	Do IT Smarter
Dave	Sobel	CEO	Evolvetech
Arlin	Sorensen	Founder and CEO	Heartland Technologies & HTG Peer Groups
Jeff	Spagnola	VP of Sales	Cisco Systems
Alex	Stoev	Chief Technology Officer	Nine Technology
Edward	Stringfellow	CEO / President	Stringfellow Technology Group, Inc.

Johan	Strömquist	CEO	Further AB
Dan	Sturgill	President	Live Virtual Help Desk
Jeff	Tam	Director, Service Ops.	Do IT Smarter
Todd	Thibodeaux	President	CompTIA
Jason	Tierney	Vice President	Corporate Network Services, Inc.
Vince	Tinnirello	CEO	Anchor Network Solutions
Paul	Tomlinson	Managing Director	Mirus IT Solutions
Ken	Totura	Chief Channel Officer	Awareness Technologies, Inc.
Richard	Trivedi	President	CadreNET, Inc
Richard	Tubb	Director	Jamescash.co.uk
Ronny	Tunfjord	IT Automation Expert	Upstream
Joseph	Vaccone	President	Excel Micro, Inc.
Jim	Van	Partner	Logicom
Phil	Van Etten	CEO	Azaleos Corp.
Raju	Vegasna	Chief Evangelist	Zoho
Sekar	Vembu	CEO	Vembu Technologies Inc.
Bob	Vogel	CMO	Autotask Corp.
Ted	Warner	President	Connecting Point
Randy	Wear	President	Decision Systems Plus Inc.
Alex	Webb	CEO	SSI Solutions
Dan	Wensley	VP Partner Development	LPI Level Platforms, Inc.
Jamison	West	CEO	JWCS
Craig	West	VP of Channels	NetSuite
John	Whittaker	President	AlertSource, Inc.
Dan	Wilson	President/CEO	Waypoint Solutions Group
Phil	Worms	Director Marketing	iomart Hosting Ltd
Pavan Kumar	Yogender	Lead Infra Services	Smart IMS Inc.



## **E-medical record firm gloStream makes 50 hires over last year**

By Jon Zemke

November 4, 2010

Troy-based gloStream is five years old, and the electronic medical records business has recorded 100 percent growth in either its customer base or employee count in each of the last four years.

The company has hired 50 people over the last year, rounding out its staff to 130 employees, 15 independent contractors, and the occasional intern. It expects to continue that pace of expansion into the next year.

"I see us continuing very aggressive growth," says Mike Sappington, CEO of gloStream. "I see us doubling the number of doctors we serve, and I see us hiring more people."

The principal product for gloStream is gloEMR, software that allows doctors to digitize their medical records and other paperwork in their offices. That software, along with its sister-product practice management system gloPM, is embedded with Microsoft Office.

Farmington Hill-based Beringea, Michigan's largest venture capital firm, has invested in gloStream and expects big things in the future as more and more medical records become electronic.

"There is a revolution happening in the health-care industry now," Sappington says. "Medical practices are modernizing their records by making them electronic."

Source: Mike Sappington, CEO of gloStream

# Healthcare **IT** News

## **Black Book Rankings names top EMR vendors for 2011**

By Molly Merrill

November 29, 2010

NEW YORK – A survey by Black Book Rankings, a division of the market research firm Brown-Wilson Group, ranks the top EMR vendors for 2011 based on key performance indicators including meaningful use.

The rankings include the top 20 vendors in 10 categories including acute care/hospital, emergency and physician groups, which are broken down by size.

The rankings are a result of a four month poll, conducted by Black Book, that surveyed more than 30,000 healthcare records professionals, physician practice administrators and hospital leaders in the information technology arenas.

Black Book Rankings employs 18 key performance indicators, including ARRA stimulus support, implementation, cost and meaningful use.

"Each physician practice and hospital has unique needs to consider when selecting the right electronic medical record software company," said Kevin Parker, MD, Black Book's EMR research director. "There's a big field of competitors and a short window of opportunity to maximize stimulus funding. Objective, independent data for EMR decision makers has been difficult to find. Black Book's 2011 survey results are a statement of proficiency that these top EMR vendors have the documented user satisfaction outcomes to demonstrate exceptional implementations, compliance and service levels."

### TOP RANKED AMBULATORY EMR SOFTWARE VENDORS – SIX-25 PHYSICIAN PRACTICE:

- \* Allscripts
- \* Aprima Medical Software
- \* Cerner
- \* ChartLogic
- \* CureMed MD
- \* eClinicalWorks
- \* e-MDs
- \* GE Healthcare
- \* gloStream
- \* Greenway Medical Technologies
- \* McKesson
- \* Medappz
- \* Medflow
- \* Meditab
- \* meridian EMR
- \* NexTech
- \* NextGen Healthcare
- \* OmniMD
- \* Sequel Systems
- \* SOAPware



## GloStream Seeks to Make Software Easy for Doctors to Use, Built on What They Already Know—Microsoft Office

Ryan McBride

November 22, 2010

Troy, MI-based gloStream calls itself the Microsoft Office of medical practice software. Yet in addition to emulating the business strategy behind Microsoft's dominant desktop applications franchise, **gloStream** has actually built its software for doctors' offices on the Redmond, WA-based software giant's (NASDAQ:MSFT) technology.

There are thousands of companies that embed Microsoft technology into their software—and many that do this for healthcare applications. Yet I'm having trouble finding an electronic medical records provider whose fortunes are as extensively tied to Redmond as gloStream's. A doctor can only buy the firm's software from Microsoft resellers and partners, Mike Sappington, the firm's CEO, says. And built on Microsoft Office, the company's EMR and practice management software actually have Microsoft Word embedded in them.

GloStream certainly isn't the first tech firm to hitch itself to Microsoft. The software behemoth owes much of its success to a network of thousands of companies that build applications on Microsoft technology platforms or provide sales and IT support of Microsoft products. But gloStream's part in this network is worth noting because the firm is providing a way for Microsoft partners to become involved in a major surge in technology adoption among **U.S. physicians**.

The vast majority of doctors in this country rely on paper-based records to store and manage patient data. The federal stimulus last year included \$19 billion to help spur adoption of electronic health records systems among physicians and hospitals. While the stimulus subsidizes doctors' purchases of the software, the money itself doesn't solve some bugaboos that have caused doctors to balk at electronic health records in the past. For one, the software can pose challenges to staff members who need to learn how to use it, and it can interrupt an office's workflow, Sappington says. And doctors themselves are obviously busy people, who didn't go to medical school because they wanted to spend a lot of time learning how to use new software that isn't intuitive.

At gloStream, he says, the firm wanted to build easy-to-use software based on Microsoft Office, with which millions of people are already quite familiar. And the five-year-old company decided early on that it would use the thousands of Microsoft partners around the country to sell and support its technology rather than trying to do these things on its own. The firm also believes its strategy allows it to benefit from the billions of dollars that Microsoft spends on Office-related research and development, Sappington says.

The firm says that it is the only provider of EMRs and practice management software that has built Microsoft Office into its applications. Yet there are other health software providers that have also found Microsoft to be a viable technology partner. **Greenway Medical Technologies**, for example, uses the Microsoft .NET platform to enable its customers to gain remote Internet access their patient records.

Still, gloStream's use of Microsoft Word has helped make its software more familiar to doctors and their staff, overcoming the major hassles that plagued earlier electronic records systems. "Where they've been successful is that the doctors install it, they turn it on, and they say 'Oh, this looks familiar,' and they go," says Bill Crouse, senior director of worldwide health at Microsoft.

In fact, Microsoft once did a survey in the 2002-2003 time frame and learned that thousands of doctors were using Microsoft Office applications such as Word as an electronic health record of sorts for their practices, Crouse says. While Microsoft doesn't endorse this specific use of Office, he says, it told the company that the familiarity of the applications was a major factor in doctors' decisions to use it for storing patients' data.

GloStream has found significant support for its strategy. The firm has raised \$15 million from investors such as Farmington Hills, MI-based investment firm Beringea, Sappington, and angel backers. (Beringea is one of the largest venture firms in Michigan.) GloStream has 135 employees both here in the U.S. and in India. The company does not publish any user numbers or performance figures because it is privately held, the CEO says, yet he did say that the business is growing.

Sappington has been around successful IT companies before. He was previously the chief of operations for Netrex Secure Solutions, which was sold to a firm that was eventually acquired by the Armonk, NY-based technology giant IBM (NYSE:IBM). The founders of gloStream are Yaw Kwakye, the firm's chief software architect, and Milind Ghyar, its managing director in India. Ghyar previously formed a firm in India to train people on Microsoft technology, according to gloStream's website.

Of course, there are risks associated with building your software on another company's technology platform. For instance, the platform could become obsolete or get discontinued. (Yet Microsoft, which launched Office 2010 in May, has clearly invested in the future of the Office franchise.) Sappington sounds quite comfortable with those potential dangers. "We believe that the benefits of partnering with Microsoft far outweigh the risks," he says.