

Inside Perspective

Helping you unleash the full power of MEDITECH

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JJWild consultants partner with MEDITECH hospitals

An Interview with Paul Peck, Vice President of Consulting

The editors of Inside Perspective recently had an opportunity to speak with Paul Peck, JJWild's Vice President of Consulting, and ask a few questions about his group's experience assisting MEDITECH hospitals as they confront the many challenges and opportunities of 2008.

Q: How much emphasis do MEDITECH hospital executives place on the strategic IT plan?

A: Most every executive we speak with understands the value of the strategic IT plan and how it must be aligned with the overall mission and strategy of the hospital. They also realize that the strategic plan must be reviewed and refreshed regularly to adjust to a dynamic environment... the "agility factor." Short interval reviews of the plan allow executives to make critical decisions swiftly based on what is working and not working and to ensure consistency with the institution's goals and priorities. I've found that successful executives also realize that the strategic IT plan isn't something that resides solely in the IT department, but rather is shared by the operational managers. This is one of the areas where our consultants have provided so much value. With their cross-operational expertise, our consultants have the knowledge to identify the various stakeholders that affect the strategic plan and to help identify and communicate the value propositions in each area of enhanced IT assets.

Q: What is one of the critical success factors during a typical consulting engagement?

A: It has become increasingly apparent that facilitating collaboration between the many parties, both internal and external, involved in implementing an IT solution is a vital role played by our consulting group. It is our responsibility to work closely with the hospital staff, MEDITECH, our own technology consultants, and external partners to ensure all of these entities blend together efficiently. Whether the solution involves calibrating network topologies, setting up a data center, designing a disaster recovery strategy, integrating mobile communications, or transforming clinical processes, our consultants are involved in every step and with every contributor. By acting as the central resource, our consultants can ensure that the project comes together smoothly on all fronts.

Q: What types of challenges does your group face as you help hospitals go live with new applications?

A: With the rollout of each new MEDITECH application, one of our greatest challenges is to ensure that the application interoperates seamlessly with existing systems (MEDITECH and non-MEDITECH). To make this happen efficiently, it is critical that we understand the big picture. We need to look beyond the specific application and gain an understanding of the impact on all affected operations and processes, whether it be clinical, financial, or some other functional area. To do this, we must identify and manage the information sharing points and facilitate collaboration between all of the data sources and consumers involved. We also need to drive standards, develop common vocabularies, and create the integration links that ensure interoperability of the MEDITECH system within the hospital as well as with the critical services provided outside the hospital, such as sharing of electronic patient records.

Q: How are MEDITECH hospitals seeking to achieve better patient care?

A: MEDITECH hospitals have placed a major emphasis on improving and managing the quality and safety of patient care. To help achieve these uplifts, more and more hospitals are implementing MEDITECH's Advanced Clinical System suite of applications.

In 2007, we were engaged in several successful implementations of MEDITECH's Advanced Clinical System applications within acute care settings. We gained valuable experience during the course of these projects and continue to work closely with MEDITECH to record best practices, to perfect the methods and operational modeling. We are confident in our ability to deliver MEDITECH applications that will make a strategic difference in any hospital setting.

Q: What is one of the most significant issues faced by hospitals today?

A: The financial health of a hospital is always of great importance. Just as hospitals continue to seek improvements in the quality of their healthcare delivery systems, they are also looking for ways to operate more efficiently, cut costs, and find the means to finance the new technology initiatives. This is an area where the in-depth organization expertise of our consulting group provides great value. Our consultants offer the unique capability to go back and review basic applications and processes in order to find ways to improve efficiency. Our efforts towards maximizing ROI on existing systems can directly impact bottom line savings and I encourage our clients to leverage our expertise in this area.

Q: What impact has the acquisition by Perot Systems had on the JJWild consulting group?

A: The acquisition has greatly strengthened our consulting services organization. With Perot Systems' demonstrated expertise in clinical transformation, revenue cycle solutions, and application hosting, combined with our organizational knowledge and expertise in MEDITECH applications and operations, we have greatly expanded and enhanced our consulting offerings.

Q: Where will you and your group focus your efforts in 2008?

A: Our focus will remain unchanged. We will be focused on continuing to deliver measurable value while we enable hospitals to achieve the greatest benefits of their MEDITECH system. Our organization, people, and priorities are all geared toward building a successful, long-term relationship with our clients.

Paul Peck joined the company as Vice President of Consulting in 2003 and has over 25 years of healthcare experience. Paul's areas of expertise include IT strategic planning, project management, administration and financial management, patient care, clinical decision support software applications, and technology infrastructure.