

MEDSEEK and AccessPt Merger: Delivery of an Enterprise-wide Portal Strategy

An Interview with Founder and Chief Strategic Officer, Gale Wilson-Steele

Gale Wilson-Steele founded MEDSEEK in early 1996 on the premise that the Internet could advance the communication between the caregiver and the patient. MEDSEEK recognized the need for hospitals to easily manage their content-based marketing websites without creating a burden on their already stressed Information Technology departments and created SiteMaker CMS, a web-based content management system, offering dynamic, easily maintained Intranets, extranets and portals. Now 10 years later, it is being used by over 30,000 content managers to power thousands of websites in over 500 hospitals.

MEDSEEK's recent merger with AccessPt brings significant clinical data integration expertise to the company and enables the delivery of an enterprise-wide portal strategy. The primary focus of the new MEDSEEK and its new CEO and President, Mike Drake, will be to increase its technological competitive advantages. I interviewed Wilson-Steele in her new role as Chief Strategic Officer.

1. How will the merger with Access Pt change MEDSEEKs offerings to clients?

MEDSEEKs offerings have expand by integrating the capability of clinical data access and exchange and incorporating *one contract, one vendor, one IT* to deliver a full enterprise platform that manages content, delivers secure messaging and integrates with clinical systems, such as, EHR, lab, radiology, fetal monitoring, pharmacy, transcription.

MEDSEEK now offers an array of services from IT planning to data extraction and can create a virtual EMR so a physician can look up a single patient across all an organization's IT systems and view the collection of information.

2. Describe how the merger results in a "communications channel" and why this is important in healthcare organizations.

Communication goes beyond email or verbal information exchange and communication channels extend to all stakeholders. The portal allows you to define users, rights of users and the workflow for getting the information and produces an enterprise-wide communication channel that allows you to move any written documentation and financial information around.

3. Explain the concept of "delivering an enterprise-wide portal strategy" and what does this mean for physicians and patients?

The patient is at the center and information about a patient is derived from tests and interactions. The physician's interpretation drives the development of a treatment

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plan and he/she sends it back to the patient who has to comply with it to get better. It is clear that the two have to be partners in order to be effective. The enterprise-wide portal provides an effective means of communicating results between the patient, treatment plan and physician.

4. How can this technology be applied to RHIO environments?

It is a matter of expanding the number of stakeholders involved and defining users, access levels and data standards. The process of creating the information flow is very much the same. For example, the Western North Carolina Health Network has a single viewer for all 16 hospitals -- each with different IT systems.

5. How will MEDSEEK contribute to the quality, safety, efficiency and access of patient care?

At the business level we are committed to making an investment in quality, safety efficiency & access. The goal of this strategy is to improve efficiency which in turn supports quality, safety & access.

Technically, the digital data repository enables effective organization and interpretation of information as opposed to the handwritten paper prescription put into a patient's purse with no tracking system for the physician to know whether the prescription ever gets filled or followed.

6. Are the standards for interoperability in place now?

MEDSEEKs standards are in place and where standards are different, we have been able to create interfaces to bring the technology to its clients and this will get easier over time. The new view begins with a strategy and plan to see a roadmap bringing efficiencies of digital health care then the contract management piece to move all data through interfaces.