
Healthcare InfoTech

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Business Report

Accounting problems 'deliberate'?

McKesson HBOC fires McCall, lets other top execs resign

A Healthcare InfoTech Staff Report

For the second time in a month, the bubble has burst for key managers of a high-flying healthcare/Internet firm.

McKesson HBOC (San Francisco) on Monday fired Chairman Charles McCall, a move putting him at the center of the company's recent accounting problems and subsequent plunge in share value. Additionally, the company said that two other officers, CEO Mark Pulido and CFO Richard Hawkins, would be resigning from the company, effective July 15.

The three were key people at the helm of the company's healthcare IT unit, created through the acquisition of HBOC by McKesson earlier this year.

Coincidentally or not, the dismissals come on the heels of WebMD's recent release of Jay Gilbertson, the company's president and COO – and formerly HBOC's chief financial officer. Gilbertson resigned from HBOC after its purchase

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Healthon, WebMD add to string of Internet alliances

By DON LONG

Healthcare InfoTech Managing Editor

While waiting to partner in the big Internet dance, Healthon (Santa Clara, CA) and WebMD (Atlanta) are continuing to entice others into their growing ballroom of healthcare products and cross promotions.

Healthon said Thursday it has contracted to provide healthcare information to Yahoo! (Santa Clara, CA), calling the deal a "premier content and online marketing agreement designed to give consumers research capabilities and access to some of the most respected healthcare information on the Internet."

For its part, WebMD earlier this week said it had formed an agreement with the Reader's Digest Association (Pleasantville, NY) to help that company develop a health site and exchange health-related con-

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PHT device keeps close tabs on info from trials

By DON LONG

Healthcare InfoTech Managing Editor

What happens to clinical trial data? That's what drug and device companies – and certainly the Food and Drug Administration – must ask themselves when checking the reliability of clinical trial information, especially when that information doesn't seem to add up.

But it's a question that now can be answered easily and quickly with the PlexxNet Patient LogPad from PHT (Boston), to be rolled out at next week's annual meeting of the Drug Information Association in Baltimore.

The device is designed to take most of the paperwork out of clinical trial work so that, rather than a paper trail of clinical data, companies can produce a clean, clear, online trail to maintain continual quality control. This, in turn, will speed their products through difficult regulatory hoops. The problem with paper data, according to Jim Becker, chief operating officer of PHT (which stands for

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Cambridge, MA, to be center

Bayer, LION team up in IT, genomics drug discovery

A Healthcare InfoTech Staff Report

Bayer AG (Leverkusen, Germany) has signed a five-year research agreement with LION Bioscience AG (Heidelberg, Germany) to make more efficient use of leading-edge genomics and information technologies in the life science field. The pact will seek to identify and develop innovative drugs and diagnostic markers.

Payments under the agreement will be performance-related, and could eventually total \$100 million, according to a statement by Bayer.

The agreement calls for LION to establish a bioinformatics center, LION Bioscience Research Inc. (LBRI), in Cambridge, MA, which Bayer will have the option of spinning into the Bayer Group in the final year of the agreement. Meanwhile, Bayer is developing Bayer SCOUT, a

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ACQUISITIONS & AGREEMENTS

- **ALI Technologies** (Vancouver, CAN) has acquired **Olicon Imaging Systems** (Aliso Viejo, CA) for a cash payment. Olicon is a radiology image management company that markets multi-modality image management film digitization and teleradiology systems directly to end-users, and through an alliance with Shared Medical Systems.

- **Andrx** (Fort Lauderdale, FL) has reached agreement with **Geneva Pharmaceuticals** (Denver) for sales and marketing of some products. The agreement includes development and funding of controlled-release dosage forms of existing products that Andrx is developing for submission as new drug applications.

- **Eclipsys** (Delray Beach, FL) has completed its acquisition of **MSI Solutions** (Atlanta), a web application integration company. Eclipsys has acquired all of MSI's stock in exchange for 2.375 million shares of Eclipsys common stock. Eclipsys will use MSI's products in Enterprise Application Integration to provide web-enabling and integration of new and heritage Eclipsys solutions as well as that of Eclipsys customers' existing information systems.

- **IMS Health** (London) has reached an agreement with **Federfarma**, the Italian Association of Pharmacies, to track drugs dispensed by about 16,000 Italian pharmacies. IMS plans to launch its Xponent database service in Italy which will allow it to track drugs by therapy and brands to help companies better deploy sales, marketing, and information resources. IMS also announced that **NV Organon** (the Netherlands) has renewed its sales management contract for IMS Health's line of sales management services in the U.S. The agreement provides for delivering sales support products to the pharmaceutical company. In addition, IMS Health has signed an agreement with **Brio Technology** (Palo Alto, CA) to develop next-generation sales optimization tools for the global

pharmaceutical industry. The agreement will deliver a suite of end-to-end business products that increase targeting accuracy, sales effectiveness, and business productivity.

- **Incyte Pharmaceuticals** (Palo Alto, CA) and **NV Organon** have expanded their genomic partnership. Organon will receive access to the LifeSeq Gold assembled database, the ZooSeq animal model database, and data from Incyte's GEM microarray technology in exchange for annual access and per array fees. Incyte also could receive future milestone payments and royalties on sales of products developed with Incyte technology and database information.

- **Medsite.com** (New York) said that it will acquire **CreativeAspect** for an undisclosed sum. As part of the acquisition, CreativeAspect co-founder Brian Shin will join Medsite.com as general manager of technology. CreativeAspect provides web-based calendar, e-mail, and collaboration software, and has a membership of more than 25,000 registered users.

- **Netpulse Communications** (San Francisco) has completed a marketing partnership and sponsorship agreement with **HealthCentral.com** (Berkeley, CA). Under the agreement, HealthCentral.com, a provider of health news and content, will integrate its brand, content and services in Netpulse's Health Channel.

- **Pointshare** (Bellevue, WA), an online service provider for healthcare concerns in the Northwest, has partnered with **U.S. West** (Denver) to provide access to its online services via a direct subscriber line. Executives from both companies described this as the first secure DLS-based healthcare network in the U.S. DSL uses existing telephone lines to bring digital connections to homes and offices. A DSL line can carry both voice and data signals, meaning customers can use one phone line for both conventional telephone service and high-speed access to the web. Pointshare also has reached agreement with **MD Consult** (St. Louis) to distribute MD Consult's online medical content site to physicians and hospitals.

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PlexxNet

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Personal Health Technology), is "degradation," meaning, "all the things that can happen to paper as it passes from hand-to-hand." He told *Healthcare InfoTech*, "Humans are inherently error-prone," a fact that creates a large margin for losing information and recording data incorrectly, possibilities which are compounded each time paper moves from one hand to another.

That problem becomes even larger when you consider the stakes – a total of \$2.5 billion spent on clinical trials, a figure Becker predicts to explode to at least \$5 billion in just a five-year period.

PlexxNet provides a solution by allowing electronic input of patient data with a device so compact that it can be held in the hand. With the PlexxNet LogPad technology, information can be input either by physician/clinicians or by patients themselves. The data gathered can begin with patient enrollment and then be collected throughout the entire trial continuum – including analysis – through to transmission to the FDA via its new electronic data collection processes. "The system tries to eliminate as many transcription steps as possible," says Becker, while also providing an ongoing opportunity for "edit-checking" for errors as it moves throughout the data continuum.

The initial version of the company's PlexxNet technology comes in two versions, an Investigator logpad and a patient logpad, the latter allowing the clinical trial participant to record his or her own data, such as symptoms, drug or device use and other significant elements required by the protocol. By allowing patient input, the patient logpad provides additional levels of accuracy in collecting trial information. Besides helping to increase patient involvement in the trial, the logpad is interactive, allowing nurses or other clinicians to observe data input in real time and contact the trial participant if data isn't entered appropriately, a problem that often crops up in paper diaries, Becker notes. "It's a matter of taking attendance, you might say," says Becker. Trial participants "learn they're being watched every day, and if they don't provide the data they hear about it quickly."

PlexxNet is currently being used by one Big Pharma company and another smaller firm, Stan Erck, president and CEO of PHT, told *Healthcare InfoTech*. And its rollout at next week's DIA conference will mark a foray into broad distribution. Erck reports that PHT was formed as an incubator company in the mid-1990s and completed development of the PlexxNet system late last year with the help of institutional and "angel" investor funding that totaled approximately \$3.5 million. The company is developing a second round of financing that will take it through the year 2000 – and hoped-for profitability.

The PlexxNet LogPad system has met the FDA's guidelines for electronic data capture and transmission, and the company has also developed the PlexxNet Clinical Network,

a web-based system for data capture, data management and trial management. The network thus completes and complements the continuum of data accuracy, a cycle that too often breaks down and slows a product's path to commercialization, according to Stephen Raymond, PhD, co-founder and chief scientist for the company. Raymond says that the primary concept of PlexxNet technology is to validate data accuracy with the study subject. "The PlexxNet LogPad raises the bar," he says, "because it ensures that patients report information every day and enables researchers to begin evaluating data the instant it is transmitted." ■

HBOC

Continued from Page 1

by McKesson and shortly before the merged company's accounting strategies began to unravel and the company acknowledged finding a total of \$42.2 million in sales improperly recorded.

Release of the top McKesson HBOC executives comes in the rough wake of the company's April earnings restatements, a nearly 50% plunge in the firm's share value and a flurry of class action filings alleging fraud.

With the firing, McKesson leadership charged that HBOC had not offered full due diligence disclosures preliminary to its being purchased. And analysts' statements, as reported by the *New York Times*, indicate the belief that the accounting problems were not honest mistakes but part of a deliberate fraud.

In announcing the release of McCall, Pulido and Hawkins, plus four others associated with the accounting glitches, McKesson spokesperson Larry Kurtz declined to say whether Gilbertson also had been associated with them. However, in comments made to the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, Kurtz did offer more information about the accounting difficulties, saying that contingency sales – proposed but not satisfied – had been improperly recorded as finalized and then apparently hidden from auditors. The auditing woes aren't improving, since McKesson HBOC also said on Monday that it has not been able to complete the revised audit and will miss its June 30 annual report deadline.

McCall will not walk away from the company empty-handed. He owns 1.7 million shares of HBOC stock and has been considered a key to the company's growth. That growth was one factor in making the company a prime acquisition target for McKesson, but the purchase came with a good-sized question mark as well. Analysts questioned the fit between the two companies, and that issue still must be resolved. Meanwhile, industry watchers are saying that McKesson's release of the IT unit's executives is an attempt to produce a clean slate for shareholders and allow it to move forward. ■

Alliances

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tent. The deal also includes the promotion of both parties' sites and health-related products across the Reader's Digest family of magazines, WebMD's site and the co-branded online and on-air properties of WebMD partners.

As part of the deal, Reader's Digest said it has made a \$13 million strategic investment in WebMD.

In the Healthon/Yahoo! pact, Healthon will have an "integrated presence" on Yahoo! Health (www.health.yahoo.com), Healthon said, as well as targeted advertising and promotional activities throughout the Yahoo! network of web properties as part of Yahoo!'s Fusion Marketing Online program.

Healthon is a sponsor of the health channel on Yahoo! Chat (www.chat.yahoo.com) and appears on health-related areas of Yahoo! News (www.dailynews.yahoo.com), where Yahoo! users have access to Healthon's Medical Library, a search tool providing quick and easy access to reliable sources of consumer health, pharmaceutical, nutrition and fitness information.

Healthon also sponsors the Yahoo! Health daily consumer poll, on topics ranging from recent immunization records to current healthcare issues.

Besides providing health information and services, Healthon will sponsor four promotion sweepstakes on Yahoo!'s front page, offering major money and vacation prizes.

Matthew Moore, general manager of consumer services for Healthon, said his company's medical expertise combined with Yahoo!'s global reach and recognition among consumers "pushes the standard for healthcare information on the Internet to a new level. Together we will provide engaging healthcare resources and tools that help consumers manage their personal healthcare information online – just as many are doing with their personal finances."

Reader's Digest's alliance with WebMD gives the popular magazine a health presence on the Internet, while WebMD will receive a higher profile with the general public. Reader's Digest has the largest paid subscribership of any publication in the world.

Under the agreement, WebMD is scheduled to launch a Reader's Digest health site by fall. Site content will be taken from the *Reader's Digest* magazine and the company's health-related books. Reader's Digest health-related content, in turn, will be featured on WebMD's consumer site, www.webmd.com. The two companies will cross-promote the sites and WebMD will purchase advertising in the magazine. Each issue of the U.S. edition of *Reader's Digest* will contain WebMD "advertorial" pages, including an Ask WebMD column and a calendar of online events that will occur on both the WebMD and Reader's Digest sites. ■

BRIEFLY NOTED

AmericasDoctor files for IPO

AmericasDoctor.com Inc. (Owings Mills, MD) has filed a registration statement with the Securities and Exchange Commission for a proposed initial public offering of the company's common stock in a primary offering. Warburg Dillon Read is acting as lead underwriter for the offering. AmericasDoctor.com operates an interactive Internet healthcare information destination for consumers, featuring a free, 24-hour service that enables consumers to have live, on-line, chats with doctors and other health care professionals. The site also offers interactive chat services in several condition-specific areas, along with a library of health care information and news. AmericasDoctor.com launched its service on the Internet last September, initially only to America Online subscribers. It launched its service at the www.americasdoctor.com site in February.

Ormed receives Texas hospital OK

Ormed Information Systems (Dallas, TX) reported receiving an endorsement from HealthShare/THA, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Texas Hospital Association. Established to find products and services that can help its members save money, avoid costs, and improve operations, Ormed is one of only 40 companies that has received this endorsement, according to Vicki Pascasio, chief operating officer of HealthShare. She said, "Our evaluation and comparison of Ormed's products to others, as well as comments about Ormed's Material Management Suite, were highly favorable from an evaluation group. They all thought this was a great product." Ormed's Materials Management Suite, part of the Presto Healthcare Business Management System, includes materials management, inventory sales, remote requisitioning and receiving, and vendor contract management. It is installed in more than 500 hospitals.

Caredata.com to trade under new symbol

Healthcare intelligence provider Caredata.com (Atlanta) began trading this week on the Nasdaq National Market under a new stock symbol, CDCM, which the company said reaffirms its commitment to becoming a leader in the digital healthcare marketplace.

"We are creating more powerful solutions for our existing communities of users and leveraging the Caredata.com brand to create new growth opportunities that would not have been possible without the Internet," said company Chairman and CEO Mark Kaiser. Kaiser noted the company has integrated proprietary healthcare-related content and research and analysis tools and the technology for Web information access, and has made them accessible via the Internet.

INSTALLATIONS

• **Axolotl** (Mountain View, CA) has signed a contract with Daniel Freeman Hospitals, members of the Carondelet Health System, to deploy its Elysium Access, Elysium Workstation, and Elysium Prescription Writer software to affiliated physicians in Southern California. The Elysium family of products is a secure Internet-based solution for clinical communication between independent providers and their healthcare partners. Elysium Access is a browser-based clinical information system that delivers data to physicians either over the Internet or an intranet and provides electronic management and manipulation of the data. Elysium Workstation, an upgrade to Elysium Access, provides workflow and automation capabilities to physician offices. The Elysium Prescription Writer module allows physicians to use a standard Web browser to prescribe and renew medications, review interactions and contraindications, and produce patient information.

• **CCD Online Systems** (Arcadia, CA) said it is using its automated Beyond 1999/Validate software to provide independent year 2000 compliance verification to the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA; Baltimore, MD), which administers the Medicare and Medicaid programs. The first phase of the project encompasses the review of more than 24 million lines of COBOL and Assembler code. CCD will perform the evaluation in conjunction with VII (Vienna, Virginia), a consulting and engineering services firm.

• **CareFacts Information Systems'** (St. Paul, MN) Scheduling and Billing software has been licensed to Illinois' Ford-Iroquois Public Health Department for integration with the company's Clinical software, which is already in use. In addition, Gunderson Lutheran Home Care licensed CareFacts' Billing software to complement the Scheduling software already in place.

• **Health Patterns** (Oak Park, IL) has completed the initial installation of its Master Files Manager at HealthSystem Minnesota (St. Louis Park, MN). The Windows NT-compliant software synchronizes the content of master files across a network of healthcare information systems, without requiring programming expertise. Its graphical interface advances the user through the steps needed to design and create a new database and automatically creates the browser-based input screens. It also steps through the functions of building business rules for data validation and mapping data fields across multiple applications.

• **Norstan Consulting**, a unit of Norstan (Minneapolis), has designed, developed and installed new information systems for Invacare (Elyria, OH), an international manufacturer and distributor of home medical

equipment. Valued at \$15 million, the new system will serve Invacare's 4,800 employees and the company's customers worldwide. David Pessel, Invacare's chief information officer, said, "We asked Norstan Consulting to work with our staff to design a system that would provide new applications for finance and manufacturing; address all Y2K issues; and give us a solid platform for new applications." The system includes applications for general ledger, accounts payable, human resources, payroll, and general ledger desktop in a network computing environment. Norstan also is implementing order entry, accounts receivable, inventory and purchasing, and is assisting in installing OptumNet, a warehouse management solution for tracking inventory and shipments and a data warehouse application for both legacy and Enterprise Resource Planning data.

• **3M Health Information Systems** (St. Paul, MN) has received a contract from the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) to maintain and update software systems and related documentation for processing Medicare claims for hospital inpatient and outpatient services. The contract includes software for diagnosis related groups (DRGs), Medicare Code Editor (MCE) and Outpatient Code Editor (OCE). In addition to developing software, 3M will perform data analysis, provide clinical input and recommend changes to the definition of DRGs and the MCE and OCE. The contract also includes maintaining and updating the ICD-10 Procedure Coding System, which was developed by 3M under a contract with HCFA. 3M also has received a contract from HCFA to provide analytical and clinical services associated with the development and implementation of a Medicare prospective payment system for hospital outpatient services and the rebasing of prospective rates for ambulatory surgical centers, according to a company statement. The proposed system consists of about 340 clinically similar groups of services that require similar levels of resource use.

TriZetto offering garners \$4.5M

The TriZetto Group (Newport Beach, CA) has raised \$4.5 million in a private financing of Series B preferred stock. The healthcare information company intends to use the funds to expand its outsourcing business and for strategic capital purchases, including equipment and acquisitions.

HLM Management (Boston) led the financing, followed by Delphi Ventures and Fidelity Ventures, which funded a Series A placement that raised \$6.5 million for TriZetto less than a year ago. Al Wiegman, research analyst at HLM, said in a statement that "TriZetto's breadth and depth across a variety of healthcare entities, its unique total package solution and its strong management team" make it "the ideal company in which to invest." ■

PEOPLE IN PLACES

- Richard Keatinge, PhD, has been named vice president of business development at **Digital Gene Technologies** (La Jolla, CA), a firm which combines genomics technology with advanced bioinformatics to identify and determine anatomical distribution and expression patterns of the genes contained in any cell or tissue sample. Keatinge was president of his own technology-related consulting firm before joining Digital Gene.

- **Medsite.com** (New York) has named Steven Novick senior vice president and head of business development and John Eastman executive vice president and publisher of the site. Prior to joining the company, Novick served as senior associate in the Private Equity Group at Lehman Brothers. Eastman, who will lead the digital content offerings generated by and distributed through the Medsite.com hub, most recently served as president of Teton Ventures. Medsite.com serves more than 300,000 medical professionals, including 200,000 physicians, with online medical information, communication and commerce solutions.

- Douglas Brutlag, PhD, an expert in computational biology, has been named acting chief scientific officer of **Pangea Systems** (Oakland, CA). Brutlag is a professor of biochemistry and medicine and director of the bioinformatics resource at Stanford University School of Medicine. Brutlag will continue to hold his full-time positions at Stanford while acting as Pangea's chief scientific officer. He has been a member of the Stanford faculty since 1974. Prior to that, he was a research scientist at the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization in Canberra, Australia.

- James Steeb has been appointed president and CEO of **Salu.net** (Portland, OR), an Internet service provider for physician specialists. Steeb previously served as executive vice president and chief operating officer of CareWise. Additional appointments to the company's management team include Bob DeBartolo, executive vice president of industry sales, formerly of Corbett Healthconnect, a division of Omnicom; Jerry Kelly, executive vice president of physician sales, formerly of Transamerica Intellitech; and David Pincus, vice president of marketing, most recently executive vice president of marketing at Hearing Science.

- **Spotfire** (Cambridge, MA), a provider of software solutions for research and development for the life sciences, has made three new appointments: Michael Akillian, vice president, corporate marketing; Dan Hebert, director, business development; and Ed Tobin, director, professional services. Akillian will oversee all product marketing and corporate and marketing communications activities. Hebert most recently held the position of director of enterprise systems at Parametric

Technology for its Windchill division. Tobin joins Spotfire from IBM, where he served as principal for the DaimlerChrysler account.

- Trisha Thompson, has been named executive editor of the two web site enterprises of **yourPharmacy** (St. Louis, MO): yourPharmacy (www.yourPharmacy.com) and DrugDigest (www.DrugDigest.org). Prior to joining the company, Thompson held senior positions at a variety of Time-Life publications, including *Parenting* and *Health* magazines.

Genomics

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new bioinformatics product that will be used to access a variety of global databases, analyze the information and then identify new drug targets.

The new alliance is part of Bayer's strategy to beef up its drug discovery abilities in a sector where it has fallen behind some of the Big Pharma players. That strategic focus was signaled last year with the company's genetic research partnership with Millennium Pharmaceuticals (Cambridge, MA) in a \$465 million deal.

The SCOUT integrated package of hardware and software will allow LION to target at least 500 new, disease-associated gene sequences potentially suitable as a starting point for new drug therapies. LBRI also will identify genetic diagnostic markers for the early detection of diseases and supply them to Bayer.

The contract specifies that LION will seek to discover at least 500 new genetic targets.

Dr. Manfred Schneider, chairman of Bayer AG's board of management, said that while Bayer had selected LION as a "competent partner in Germany," the decision was made to locate LBRI in the U.S. because "the U.S. is still the leader in this sector," and puts it "in proximity to worldwide leading research groups. The policy of acquiring external intelligence, implementing it within Bayer and applying it to our life science research will strengthen our competitiveness."

Dr. Wolfgang Hartwig, head of biopharmaceutical research at Bayer, said the use of bioinformatics "helps us to analyze the flood of data and to identify correlations between normal and pathologically modified gene sequences. Our alliance with LION Bioscience AG will enable us to make vital progress in this field." He pointed out that Bayer also cooperates with a large number of other industrial organizations.

"We are happy to enter this challenging partnership with Bayer AG, which represents the attainment of a major milestone in LION's young history," said LION's CEO, Dr. Friedrich von Gohlen und Halbach.

Founded just two years ago, the company has grown rapidly and currently employs 150 people. ■

PRODUCT BRIEFS

- **Automating Peripherals'** (API; Hartford, WI) EdTrack employee education tracking system is now available for use with a Microsoft Windows NT server. The offering demonstrates the company's commitment to providing customers with "a consistent end-to-end solution based on Microsoft technology that includes SQL Server, BackOffice and now Windows NT," according to Luis Garcia, API's CEO. EdTrack allows healthcare organizations to monitor education requirements and schedule training to keep employee credentials up to date. It operates as a stand-alone system or with API's line of payroll, human resource and other system solutions.

- **Mercy Health Plans** and parent organization **Mercy Health Services** (Farmington Hills, MI) have released a Drug Pricing Guide for physicians to help control prescription costs. The guide provides a composite of the drugs prescribed most frequently and those that have generic equivalents. The copyrighted guide will be updated several times each year and has no affiliation with a pharmaceutical firm, according to its developers, Stephen Lash, PharmD, chief pharmacy officer for Mercy Health Services, and Bruce VanCleve, MD, executive vice president of professional services for Mercy Health Services.

- **Owens & Minor** (Richmond, VA) has introduced WISDOM, an Internet-based decision support tool to help healthcare customers standardize product lines, save money through better contract compliance and consolidate information within an integrated healthcare network. The technology connects Owens & Minor's subscribers to its data warehouse, where it offers secured access to in-depth account information about their medical/surgical product purchases, inventory and usage, contract compliance and other customized data. WISDOM is the first electronic business intelligence application of its kind within the industry, according to Owens & Minor's chairman and CEO, G. Gilmer Minor.

- **PE Biosystems'** PE Informatics division (San Jose, CA) has introduced Version 4 of its SQL*LIMS automated data management and analysis software. The new version features a quick-method builder, a Windows Explorer-type interface and quick links between data and SOP information. Full versioning, audit trail and electronic signature also have been added. The software is installed in more than 1,000 laboratories worldwide.

- **ProxyMed** (Fort Lauderdale, FL) has released the Prescribe 2000 physician's office-based prescription management system. The product features online prescription writing and refill authorization management, point-of-care-based drug interaction and plan-specific formulary screening, and the functionality for online prescription mail-ordering. Prescribe 2000 interfaces with ProxyNet, ProxyMed's national healthcare information network, for

connectivity to the company's leading online pharmacy network. Initial rollout includes Merck Medco Managed Care and Mobil Oil.

- **Symbol Technologies'** (Holtsville, NY) SPT 1740 palm computer has been incorporated into Autros Healthcare Solutions' (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) Point-of-Care Medication Management System, which links physicians, nurses and the pharmacy to information at the point of care. The pocket-sized computer is based on 3Com's Palm OS architecture and features Symbol's Spectrum24 wireless local area network (WLAN) for voice and data communications. The system allows caregivers to enter vital statistics and medical administration events, view electronic medication administration records and scan a patient's wristband and medication at the point of care. Symbol's SPT 1700 product family was introduced in May.

WEB SIGHTINGS

- **Bergen Brunswig's** (Orange, CA) Bergen Brunswig Drug Co. subsidiary has launched www.myGNP.com, a site that establishes an Internet presence for qualified members of the company's 4,000-plus network of independently owned and operated Good Neighbor pharmacies. Bergen has signed a preferred systems agreement with software provider PDX to provide centralized Internet capabilities for pharmacies in the network.

- **FaxWatch** (Scottsdale, AZ), a provider of specialty information services to the healthcare industry, has launched a web site designed for managers and executives in the pharmaceutical, biotechnology, managed health care, retail pharmacy, wholesale drug distribution and diagnostic equipment industries, as well as physicians and other industry professionals. FaxWatch Online provides subscribers access to an extended version of FaxWatch's flagship publication, Health Care Business Daily, which is updated throughout the day, as well as links to searchable archives of business news, clinical research updates and industry intelligence.

- **MD Inc.** (Beverly Hills, CA) now offers free, permanent e-mail addresses for physicians on its web site, www.internet.md. The addresses end in "@internet.md" so as to easily identify the owner as a professional medical practitioner.

- The DataPassportMD laboratory interface system from **Specialty Laboratories** (Santa Monica, CA) now is integrated into PhysicianLINK Online, the physician portal of VHaseCURE.net, VHA's healthcare network utility. The password-protected system provides VHA members and affiliated physicians customized test ordering, centralization of hospital and physician data, and timely access to specimen tracking and lab results without manual requisitions. Specialty Laboratories, a clinical reference laboratory, serves more than 10,000 clients throughout the U.S.