

MEDITECH



Helping organizations focus on care, not IT: Discussing MEDITECH's cloud journey

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When we consider the many great technological advances in the last few years, one of the most profound has been the rise of the cloud for on-demand data storage and universal access.

In the truest sense of the term, cloud computing has been a disruptor for many sectors of the tech industry, providing companies and consumers new ways to enhance collaboration and optimize resources that were unthinkable just a few years ago.

Health IT is likewise in the midst of a fundamental shift in how we think about data storage and management. We're moving from buildings filled with machines that require people and resources to maintain, to the cloud's on-demand, flexible, and always-on service model.

At Onix Health & Life Sciences, [our customers have told us](#) they need cloud-based solutions (like those that MEDITECH provides) so they can focus their resources on what they do best: taking care of patients and their employees.

I recently spoke with Scott Radner, MEDITECH Vice President Advanced Technology, about how the company has [launched its own journey to the cloud](#) and added cloud to the many options it offers its customers.

I first met Scott in August at an [Expo.Health](#) panel discussion on leveraging the cloud for practical health innovation, and was impressed by his personal and forward-thinking approach to technology in healthcare.

Scott and I also had a recent phone chat about MEDITECH's decision to deliver cloud technology to its customers, and this interview has been compiled from those two conversations.

Scott, thanks so much for talking with us about MEDITECH's work toward adopting cloud technology. When and why did MEDITECH start its journey toward the public cloud?

That's a long journey which started many years ago with many friends. We were using systems internally that had gotten long in the tooth and had actually begun efforts to rewrite them ourselves, because as a software company, we figured we could do things best ourselves.

It quickly became apparent that those efforts were detracting from what we should be doing for our customers. So we looked around and at the time the easiest jump to the public cloud with minimal risk was [Google's G-Suite offering](#). As we evaluated the project we were quickly pointed to [Onix](#), and this collaboration went amazingly well.

So, we made the decision and we found that, with modest change on our side, we could embrace this technology. In all honesty, it was a glowing success. Beyond just replacing older solutions, we found a new level of access and collaboration, which allowed things to get done more efficiently.

This really changed the way MEDITECH worked as a company in all sorts of positive ways. We were paying more attention to our customers.

That is one of the best descriptions of shared responsibility that I think I've heard. How does your new [collaboration with Google Cloud Platform](#) share MEDITECH's responsibility for protecting data stored by the EHR?

We're very much comforted by the fact that Google has such a large staff with "security" in their titles and that they're using contemporary features to watch this network.

With Google, we now have a very good friend who's covering a large part of the security picture that lets us focus on our customers.

Thanks for taking us through MEDITECH's thought process in adopting cloud. With your own story in mind, why is the time right for customers to fully join MEDITECH on the journey to the cloud?

Our customer's primary mission is not IT. They're a hospital, surgery center, clinic, etc. They're supposed to focus on caring for the patient, and an on-premise data center is a distraction from the organization's goals. Cloud technology allows them to do the things they want to do, and dream of the things they never could before.

As an EHR vendor, we get involved in multiple departments in the hospital, and we see our role as [providing all the necessary data](#) where it needs to be, when it needs to be there. When a physician or caregiver is with the patient, that patient's info has to be available and accurate so that the physician or caregiver can make the right decisions. We also have to surveil that data to ensure that all facets of healthcare are coordinated so that patients get better.

No matter what goes wrong, we want to make sure the customer has access to what they need to treat the patient, and for those offerings, we took the step from infrastructure to platform, and really built the most contemporary tool set we could possibly create.

Now is the time. Vendors like Google can support us with the infrastructure, the Internet, communication systems, data systems. Everything we need to connect these devices to the back end are all there, so why wouldn't we begin now?

I think that idea is a good lead-in to MEDITECH’s mission statement, which states that “information is available whenever and wherever clinicians need it by ensuring access to a full electronic record that includes data from across the continuum.” How long ago was this mission statement written? Because it seems like it was written for the cloud. It’s a very, very forward-thinking statement.

That statement was based on all of the possible venues that care was provided, and recognizing that the hospital was not the sole place where people were treated anymore — the patient needed to be treated in a number of locations, and our software needed to support caregivers in [all of those venues](#).

Our mission statement also recognizes that those individual encounters between patients and providers are happening within a larger organization, and requires us, as an EHR vendor, to build solutions that allow the organization to function smoothly.

And so now, down the road many years, we continue to meet that mission statement in meaningful ways — the cloud is a great solution to ensure that if something does go wrong and an organization loses its on-premises environment or loses access to a hosted environment, there is yet another copy of the data that can survive and allow for safe treatment regardless of the current situation.

In [Part 2 of our conversation](#), Scott elaborates on MEDITECH’s cloud journey and his vision for leveraging cloud to ensure universal access across the spectrum of healthcare customers.

<https://blog.meditech.com/helping-organizations-focus-on-care-not-it-discussing-meditechs-cloud-journey>

Written by Sunnie Southern, Vice President of Health and Life Sciences, Onix

Sunnie Southern is the Vice President of Onix’s Health and Life Sciences division, which enables organizations to realize the power of the cloud to securely work simpler, smarter, and faster in a secure and compliant environment. Recognized as one of the “Disruptive Women to Watch in Healthcare,” Sunnie is passionate about helping health and life sciences organizations leverage technology to positively impact health where people live, work and play. Prior to joining Onix, Sunnie led Viable Synergy, a health innovation consulting firm supporting global health innovators in healthcare, pharmaceuticals, and genomics. She has worked with a variety of world-class organizations including the Cleveland Clinic, Cincinnati Children’s Hospital, Shire, Sanofi, AssureX Health and many more. Sunnie has also advised more than 500 healthcare startups through the “Innov8 for Health” global innovation program. She continues to mentor and coach startups through her involvement with the Cleveland Clinic Medical Hackathon and Medstartr.

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