



## Inside Healthcare Computing

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Dear Hospital Information Systems Professional,

Security...It means:

- ...keeping up with developments in clinical information systems and bedside technologies;
- ...deciding whether to believe the hype about savings from electronic data interchange;
- ...understanding the benefits and pitfalls of downsizing;
- ...knowing about Unix operating systems and RISC hardware;
- ...interface engines...graphical user interfaces;
- ...executive information systems...optical imaging systems...

And knowing what others are doing to solve the problems you share.

This kind of security is one reason you need Inside Healthcare Computing, the only truly independent bi-weekly healthcare information systems newsletter.

But face it: keeping up with trends and technology is only half the story. You know that the fastest way to see your career go down the drain is not knowing which vendors are in trouble before you buy.

Take the Gerber Alley sale to First Data

Our September, 1992 Special Report on Gerber Alley revealed the shaky finances that forced this leading vendor to sell. We revealed that Gerber Alley privately borrowed from banks while its financial reports said it was making a profit.

And that report named the companies interested in buying. When the list narrowed to First Data, we revealed that, too.

What did you learn from the other news publications covering hospital information systems? Not a peep until the deal was done. One newsletter ran one paragraph about Gerber Alley status during that entire period--quoting the official company poppycock that it wasn't for sale.

So what? Well, if you're a decision-maker, your job depends on having better information than that. Information like...

We think you need to know things like:

! which two vendors' new releases caused \$100,000+ hardware upgrades.

! the hidden price of Unix systems.

! which clinical information systems are winners and which are losers.

! which vendors won't survive the recession.

! which bedside terminal users rejected.

## What To Do if Your Software Vendor Files for Bankruptcy

DON'T send that "or else" letter telling the vendor to keep up maintenance or face contract termination. "Be careful," warns a lawyer...

That's another excerpt from a recent story. Times are tough, and getting tougher.

Sure, we carry the happy news on vendor product advances, but in perspective. Maybe this no-nonsense attitude is the reason that one vendor sympathizer regularly mails back our advertising literature covered with hate notes in a felt-tip scrawl.

So be it. We're not in business to be his pal. We're here to keep you informed of what is going on behind the scenes as well as in the public pronouncements. At times, the truth is painful.

Take Datacare, for example.

Our Special Report warned readers 'way last summer it faced an uphill battle after years of decline. Prophetic? Datacare filed Chapter 11 in November. We were first to report that, too.

### ***Special Report: How To Deal With Meditech***

This vendor has a reputation for absolute inflexibility. But we interviewed client hospital MIS executives and consultants who've negotiated contracts with Meditech to unlock the secrets of how you can win the best deal on Meditech's best-selling HIS.

In our **Special Report on LANS and WANS**, experienced users give seven must-do tips for LAN success...tell the two absolute no-nos for an IBM token-ring LAN backbone...and tell how to expect and deal with the unexpected, like one hospital's 7 p.m. LAN "feeding frenzy." We give five ways to make a hospital LAN more valuable by saving money elsewhere. Also, we just revealed these LAN secrets: which operating system makes a LAN a must...and two ways to save enough on hardware to pay for a LAN.

Is there any way to reduce the headaches of RFPs?

L.A. County-USC Medical Center did away with an RFP altogether and learned everything it needed to know to choose a patient care system vendor in nine days. We tell how electronic RFPs are knocking 6-10 weeks off the evaluation process...and how EPIC Healthcare devised its own "live" tests before selecting its HIS.

And how do you get physicians to enter their own orders and get results?

- ! Recently we told how NYU Medical Center gets 100% physician order entry;
- ! And why MDs at the NIH Clinical Center are willing to enter 4,500 orders a day;
- ! Plus Deaconess Hospital's eight keys to getting MDs to enter discharge data.

What about Bedside Computing?  
And physician workstation systems?

We wrote and published the 220-page reference, The Book on Bedside Computing. We've published more information on the emerging clinical systems than any other publishing company.

And Wireless Terminals...

We tell which hospitals, vendors, and HIS consultants are experimenting with this breakthrough approach to capturing point-of-care data--and what its problems are.

Inside Healthcare Computing helps you grab opportunities like these:

- ▶ how McLean Hospital used Kurzweil voice recognition to cut transcription turnaround three days...but uncovered the hidden costs of voice systems.
- ▶ how Harris Methodist ensures security of clinical data in a system with remote access for over 400 physicians.

► how Toledo Hospital gives physicians an updated patient census at the hospital door with the swipe of a card.

**Independence means we can call the shots as we see them.**

We don't tailor the news for advertisers or clients because we don't have any. We're the only hospital information systems newsletter that refuses to have cozy relationships with, or endorsements from, any professional or trade association. Does that really matter? Ask yourself: if a trade association is helping a newsletter boost its sales, how independent can it be?

We invite comparison with any other subscription newsletter covering hospital computing:

Prices? See our Shop and Compare chart on the next page.

News coverage? One of our higher-priced competitors recently tried the old publishing "spinoff" game: culling some of the information systems news into a second high-priced newsletter. Why buy two? We cover the whole field better in one newsletter.

Quality? Inside Healthcare Computing...

...includes a comprehensive reference of vendor and consultant products and services;  
...is backed by many more years of editorial experience than the competition has;  
...is clear, concise, brief--and complete: more pages, and more tightly written;  
...is the one truly inside publication with a nationwide network of HIS news sources;  
...includes our Back Issues on Diskette (\$79 extra for a bound paper copy).

Sincerely yours,

William Donovan  
Editor

P.S. Don't miss our Special Report on Ibox, coming up in January. Learn what clients and consultants have to say about this "Big Four" information systems vendor...why some see its ties to IBM as a drag on its potential.

### Shop and Compare

Two newsletters cover hospital information systems. As information systems professionals, you're accustomed to comparing specifications. We invite you to compare ours with theirs:

	<b><u>INSIDE HEALTHCARE COMPUTING</u></b>	<b><u>NATIONAL REPORT ON COMPUTERS &amp; HEALTH</u></b>
Length per issue:	8 to 18 pages	6 to 12 pages
Frequency:	25 issues/year	24 issues/year
Special reports:	24-30 pages/year	yes-occasional
Back issues:	full set on your own diskette	download from Dialog
Editor's experience covering HIS:	8 years	one year
Latest prices:		
prepaid:	<b>\$287/year</b>	<b>\$317/year and up</b>
'bill me':	<b>\$307/year</b>	<b>\$327/year and up</b>
renewal:	<b>\$287/year</b>	<b>\$387/year (\$100 higher than ours!)</b>

#### Special Bonus:

Back Issues on Diskette, a 550-Page Reference

Did you see in this mailing a tantalizing reference to an item you've already missed? With Inside Healthcare Computing, you don't have to miss anything. Our Back Issues on Diskette give you the full text of every hospital information systems news story, report, survey, vendor product announcement, and special report since the day we began publishing.

"So what?"

! Well, do you know the four hidden HIS software contract clauses to avoid so that you don't prematurely "accept" modules that don't work, losing your recourse?

! Do you know which seven key protections to fight for in a software contract?

! Where to get a list of hot site vendors, and how tips on to set one up? Tips on buying used computers? Where to learn about electronic data interchange? Names of the new "interface engine" vendors?

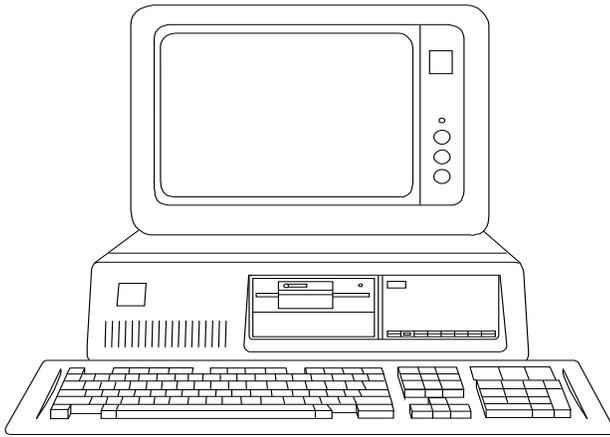
Every news story and vendor product announcement. Every "how-to" idea mentioned in this mailing. Hundreds more. In a form that lets you retrieve it in seconds. A growing, living, self-updating, ever-expanding, currently 550-page resource.

That's our Back Issues on Diskette. No one else--not Sheldon Dorenfest, not the National Report on Computers in Health, not Healthcare Informatics or Computers in Healthcare, not HIMSS or any HIS consulting firm--offers a resource like it at any price. And it's free with a full-year subscription. Plus a free-year end update.

Plus:

How To Get Your Vendors' Financial Secrets.

It's a special report. It's coming soon. You'll miss it if you don't subscribe now.



# inside

# HEALTHCARE

# COMPUTING

EXCERPTS FROM RECENT ISSUES  
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Dear Potential Subscriber,

Here's a sampling of the news and reports you'd have received in the past few issues of Inside Healthcare Computing (and which you can get in our Back Issues on Diskette if you subscribe now):

! HCFA concedes that its claim of \$114 billion in savings from electronic data interchange is bull. Page...

! Clunk: where are those cynics who said the IBM 7690 Clinical Workstation was the second coming of the Edsel? Let them come out and admit it...They were right. Page...

! In the bank: each of three ideas saves over \$500,000...

! Black eyes, blue ribbons: the VA ended an HIS contract with Science Applications International Corp. But DOD wants to roll out SAIC's software...

Also inside:

! "touch memory" chips that go on a wristband or vial; ! Data General users fix disk drives on the fly.

Coming January 11:  
Software, chicken, and death.  
What's the connection?

## **4,500 MD Orders On Line Per Day-- and 'We Could Raise It Higher'**

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Clinical Center averages 5,300 daily orders, and 85 percent are entered directly by physicians. Thomas Lewis, M.D., associate director for Information Systems at the center said, "even though physician participation is high, we could raise it higher and raise the satisfaction level higher if we had more integration."

## **Hillcrest: \$10 Million Savings Expected Downsizing Hardware All The Way**

Hillcrest Medical Center of Tulsa, Okla., expects to reduce HIS operating costs \$10 million over the next five years by switching from homegrown software on old IBM mainframes to an entirely PC-based system. The clinical system was co-developed by the hospital and 3Net Systems of Rancho Cordova, Calif. Its CPU is an array of 486-class PS/2s linked by a high-speed Novell Netware LAN and proprietary software developed by 3Net. The LAN network will replace IBM 4381 and 4341 mainframes..

## **Gerber Alley Debt Was \$16 Mil; Layoffs: 300?**

New information, given to Gerber Alley stockholders in December 1992 for their vote on whether to accept the First Data offer, shows that by mid-1992, Gerber Alley had outstanding loans of \$16 million, plus debts to some shareholders totaling almost \$9 million.

## **Datacare Files Chapter 11; Users Called to Tampa**

Tampa-based Datacare filed for protection Nov. 13 against its creditors under

## **Gerber/DEC User's Response Drops to "Almost Immeasurable" Level**

Southwest Medical Center in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, was experiencing slowness in

Chapter 11 of the federal bankruptcy law, the latest downturn for the largely employee-owned company. Datacare clients were summoned to a special users' group meeting in Tampa late last week, where they were expected to learn more about the company's future. Tom Wise, MIS director at Baptist Medical Center, Jacksonville, Fla., said CEOs received faxes notifying them of the filing, but no details were given. "That's what we're going to

### ***Ibax May Use Clinicom or Memorex Telex for Its Bedside System*** **IBM Plays Taps for the Touchscreen 7690 Clinical Workstation**

IBM has stopped accepting orders for the 7690 Clinical Workstation, ending the short career of a device that never lived up to expectations and which, in the words of one critic, brought "snickers" in HIS circles. Fewer than 1,000 of the machines were sold since their introduction in 1990. Some weren't surprised by the news. James Hauenstein, vice president for information systems at Washoe Health Network, Reno, said his six units are for sale--"as boat anchors." Consultant Bill Andrew said he saw the wall-mounted 7690s being used to "hang coats and everything else." What went wrong? 7690s were troubled from the start, using a primitive...

### **Harris Methodist Links 400 MDs to Hospital Information System**

Over 400 MDs are on line with Harris Methodist Health System; the number should pass 600 by the end of 1993, said Larry Blevins, senior VP of information technology for the system. Harris Methodist developed a system to link on with an IBM compatible PC and modem. A security device, Datalock...

its system running Gerber Alley Precision Alternative software on a DEC box. "In some cases, response time was between five and 15 minutes." But with I/O Express caching software from Executive Software, response time dropped to a few seconds, said Larry...

### **Materials Management Info System Cuts Inventory \$935,000 in a Year**

A Nova materials management system from Enterprise Systems Inc., Wheeling, Ill., at the Medical Center of Delaware's two hospitals, 300-bed Christiana Hospital and 800-bed Wilmington Hospital has cut inventory from \$1.3 million to \$365,000. It dropped \$500,000 in the first two months, twice what the system cost...Floor stock has been reduced from \$250,000 to \$100,000... Staffing was cut by over 16,000 man-hours...

### **Memorial Projects \$600,000/Year Savings with Optical Imaging**

A \$1.6 million investment by Memorial Medical Center, Jacksonville, Fla., in First Data's Image-Medrecs medical records imaging system will save \$600,000 per year, hospital officials say...An added bonus is that the hospital will be more...

### **Nintendo-like Computer Said to Slash Nursing Documentation**

A device modeled after the Nintendo "Gameboy" has reached the home health market. It also gives a glimpse of the hardware part of the bedside system an HIS vendor, Meditech, plans to introduce. Atlanta-based Patient Care Technologies is testing a hand-held 11-ounce terminal that its creators say will greatly reduce nursing paperwork. The small monochrome screens...

### **'Touch Memory' Chip in a Button Makes Bracelet A Data Repository**

An information storage device the size of a breath mint is making its way into the health industry, as hospitals search for novel ways to reduce the amounts of paper without turning to expensive optical scanning equipment. "Touch Memory," introduced last year by Dallas Semiconductor, Texas, is a memory chip in a small stainless steel container. The 4K storage capacity of the chips is minuscule by conventional computer standards, but it has 100 times the storage capacity of a bar code, and--unlike the bar code, where information is fixed--the chips have read/write capacity. Touch Memory buttons cost about \$1 each in large quantities...

### ***Experienced People It Let Go Now Compete Against Its Key Revenue Stream*** **Ibax Takes Tough Stance Against 3rd-Party Installs, Maintenance**

Ibax CEO Jeff Goodman wrote a bluntly-worded letter to hospitals Aug. 12 claiming that their software contracts forbid them from letting consultants and other third-party software installers or modifiers see source code without Ibax's written consent. The letter mentions hardball tactics if a hospital uses a third party, and the third party makes an error...The letter seems intended to pressure hospitals out of using third parties for maintenance. Ibax has lost experienced installers and...

## **First Data Developing Interface Engine, On-Line Medical Record System**

First Data Corp. (formerly American Express) Health Systems is a year into what a VP describes as a major project to develop a universal interface engine along the same lines as the SMS Open/Link (IHC, 6/15/92), and a Unix-based, fourth-generation-language, computer-based patient record (CBPR) database, along the lines of the Bell Atlantic, Cerner, and other clinical network/database/display systems, to store and display a long-term patient medical record. If the project is successful, it would thrust First Data into the forefront of...

## **Sloan-Kettering: Optical Medical Records System Saves \$465,000/Year**

Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York was bogged down in paper work with processing, storing, archiving and retrieving about 1,000,000 documents annually. Then it decided to create OSCAR, the Optical System for Controlling Accounts Receivable. Filenet was chosen as the vendor. The system, implemented in 1989, paid for itself within 22 months...More than 2.2 million pages have been loaded into the system by scanning or output to laser disk...

## **Gentlemen, Check Your Contracts Ibax Surprises Clients with Switch to Yearly Up-Front Support Fees**

What would you say if the landlord said all your 1993 rent would be due Jan. 1, instead of monthly? Most likely you'd be shocked. Ibax Healthcare Systems told its clients in a Sept. 4 letter that monthly payments for support services will now be due a year in advance. Users were briefed on the new policy at the recent users' group meeting in Orlando, he said. Immediately the question came up: Does Ibax need the money to...

## **Docs to Try Pocket Phones in Houston; Is This A Death Knell for Pagers?**

Those annoying pagers could soon be history in two Houston hospitals. They've agreed to try communicating with a new wallet-sized telephone, called the personal communications network.

### **Ntouch Healthcare Parent Files for Bankruptcy**

The parent company of Ntouch Healthcare Systems, Onecard Corp., filed for bankruptcy Aug. 13. The financial troubles are the latest in a clouded history for Ntouch, a small vendor of a client-server, Unix-based nursing information system. Ntouch employees aren't being paid...

### **Wireless Radio System Boosts Nursing Efficiency, Helps Patients**

Voice Call eliminates the need for pagers to communicate with nurses, according to Jim Sauter, marketing director for health systems at U.S. Computer. A small speaker/microphone allows two-way communications between nurses and a central communication center. The speaker/mike attaches to the user's lapel and is wired to a 10-ounce transceiver

### **'Mole' Breaks Into HIS After VA Boots Vendor Staff From Hospital**

On the afternoon of Sept. 23, the VA abruptly informed vendor Science Applications International Corp. (SAIC) that it would not continue with a troubled \$56 million contract to install a clinical information system at the Chicago Lakeside VA hospital. VA officials had police escort SAIC's staff off the hospital premises...Later that day, an unknown person entered the Lakeside clinical information system...

### **Micah Systems Struggling**

Micah Systems, Inc., a Reading, Pa., vendor of a PC LAN-based information system for small hospitals and a decision support system, is in financial trouble. Sources say it's holding off public acknowledgment of its struggle in hopes of landing a big foreign

worn at the waist. The device is about the size of a bar of soap...A prototype was beta tested at Rush Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center, Chicago, and Oschner Foundation Hospital, New Orleans.

hospital client. Most of the company's 42 employees have been furloughed or laid off...IHC has learned that several lawsuits have been filed against the company, apparently by business creditors...

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