

## Application Development for the Healthcare Industry



**Chris Henkenius**  
President

**CEOCFO: *Mr. Henkenius, what is the idea behind H4 Technology?***

**Mr. Henkenius:** H4 Technology is an application development company that is significantly focused in the healthcare industry. All of us have been affected by the growing cost of healthcare and the slow implementation of technology where it really matters. Our mission is to implement technology solutions within the healthcare industry that will help transform the industry and push transparency to a point where consumers can see, if not a reduction in their healthcare expenses, at least a slowing of the increase of their healthcare cost. We are doing that in a number of different ways.

**CEOCFO: *How are you addressing the issues?***

**Mr. Henkenius:** For the last three years H4 Technology has been an advisory consulting company assisting states in implementing the provisions of the HITECH act, helping them implement Health Information Exchanges as well as developing sustainable models for those HIEs. It has given us a good background in the industry as we are able to help doctors, payers and patients control the data, where the data goes, as well as who has access to the data and really getting that healthcare information to the point of care, so that physicians can use that in treating their patients. In the last couple of months we have redesigned our company and added an application development team. We have developed our Compass platform, which is an enterprise data warehouse, reporting, and integration platform. That application was recently purchased by the State of Nebraska to facilitate data sharing among their behavioral health providers.

**CEOCFO: *What does H4 understand that allows you to work effectively?***

**Mr. Henkenius:** The thing that we are doing, and many companies are starting to do, is placing the focus on the patient. We have to put the focus on the patient and what the patient is experiencing and what the patient is authorizing. The data that is resident at a provider's office belongs to the patient. We need to make it easier, not only for the patient to have access to that data and to get that data to their caregivers, but also use that data to transform how and when we shop for healthcare. Therefore, our goal is to place that focus on the patient where it should be and use that as the catalyst for the healthcare transformation.

**CEOCFO: *Are you surprised that the patient should first is even an issue?***

**Mr. Henkenius:** I am, but it is really no different than any other industry. Healthcare technology and healthcare data are really in its infancy compared to other industries. If you look at the financial sector, we know for years and years that you have been able to consolidate all of your data from multiple banks to multiple credit cards and to use that data to your benefit. However, with healthcare you have not been able to do that. When the financial industry started doing that it had the same issues and the same problems that we are facing in healthcare. Therefore no, it does not surprise me that we have these challenges and that something that seems like a given or seems like a no brainer is actually pretty complicated to accomplish. However, the power really lies in the patient. Many times the hurdles with sharing data is by well meaning people who are speaking for the patient; well meaning people who believe that they know better than the patient in regards to protecting their privacy and of protecting their security. Many times I talk to patients who are willing to be more lenient in who sees their data to effect better care. One example would be the state of Georgia has implemented a health information exchange and in the entire state of Georgia only seven people have opted out of the exchange. That is an amazing number. When you hear the privacy advocates talk about how we need to protect the data, because patients do not want it shown. Then you look at the information from Georgia or from Nebraska or from Wisconsin, you see conflicting information. Therefore, what we need to do is just get past the noise and focus on empowering the patients to control their data and empowering patients to control their healthcare.

**CEOCFO: *What is the key to creating systems or applications or exchanges that do the job efficiently, but are really user friendly?***

**Mr. Henkenius:** This is a problem that spans industries and spans computers in general. Since the beginning of time when people were developing web pages, if you talk to ten different people, they would give you ten different ideas on what is user friendly. It really places a burden on companies and developers to try and anticipate what is user friendly. What we have been doing as far as Compass is trying to separate our system from those other systems. Therefore, if you look for EHRs there are requirements that are part of that system, either from a billing perspective or from a federal regulation perspective or from the state Medicaid perspective. There are all of these requirements that are combined to create a very complicated system. However, what we do with Compass is we take all of that away and we basically focus on the data. We take the data from these operational data stores like EHRs and put them into a data warehouse where we can use sophisticated reporting and predictive analytics opportunities to use the data the way that it needs to be used without all of the noise from the regulations. Then, we can create custom user interfaces to access that data. So, those 10 people with 10 different ideas can all get their own custom interface.

**CEOCFO: *How do you reach out to potential customers? How do they find you? Is there an aha moment when they understand the difference in your approach and the depth of what you offer?***

**Mr. Henkenius:** I have been very lucky over the last eight years to work alongside some very talented people and some very dedicated people. In my previous roles, we were peers. I fought the same battles and achieved the same successes that they did. That gave me an insight once forming H4 Technology that would allow us to develop the products with those people in mind. As we go out and talk to people and as we answer calls from people who are interested in our services, it is really those same people and people that they know that are calling us and inquiring about our services and that we are offering our services to. We have been very lucky in that respect. Our problem is not so much generating the interest and generating the phone calls, it is responding to those as a young company. Therefore, we have increased our staff eight fold in the last three months and we are continuing to do all that we can to respond to the overwhelming demand in the marketplace at this time.

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**CEOCFO: *How do you devise a system that has got the best of what is available today, but that can withstand changes in regulation six months from now and turn around, if a new concept of technology comes up? How do you encompass the future and the present?***

**Mr. Henkenius:** Our platform is designed to have the base platform that includes an infrastructure, as I mentioned before. On top of that infrastructure we can place any number of applications that are smaller, that are flexible and that are scalable. Therefore, if you may have an application that addresses behavioral health or an application that addresses asthma or an application that addresses orthopedic care management; all of those applications are very quick to deploy and they are very scalable so that they can be deployed in a small clinic or a state government. It can be deployed many multiple times in multiple different locations. That allows us a distinct advantage in the market that we can meet our client’s specific customized needs, but do it very quickly in a way that can be scaled to their particular environments.

**CEOCFO: *How do you find qualified people that both have the skill, but also the mindset that you want representing H4?***

**Mr. Henkenius:** That is the million dollar question right there! Omaha is on par with Silicon Valley and Austin, Texas and others that really have a hard time attracting and keeping qualified technical people. That is simply because it is a seller’s market. If you are a good technical person you can pretty much name your price. What we have done is we have gone out and found some really good people and we have made them an offer that they cannot refuse. Therefore, instead of having twenty or thirty mid level people, we have five or ten senior level people. We treat them very well. We treat them as part of our family. We offer benefits on par if not better than some of the Fortune 500 companies here in town. We do that because they are our lifeblood. They are who we depend on to make the company successful. Not only have we been very good at attracting the technical people in Omaha, but those contacts that I mentioned before are continuing to reach out. We have former state HIE coordinators that have reached out to me wanting assistance in looking for new positions. I have project managers from Scottsdale to New York City looking for help. It is really good to have the contacts that I have and to have the peers that I have worked with in the past. That has really helped us to find those people that we need.

**CEOFO: *What is Bumblebee?***

**Mr. Henkenius:** Bumblebee is a code name of a new product we are working on. It is a project that I have wanted to work on for the last four and a half years. It goes back to that core mission that I talked about at the beginning--putting power of healthcare back in the patients' hands. It is one we are putting a lot of time and effort into and we are going to debut it at the end of this year. We think it will make a lot of waves and make many people excited.

**CEOFO: *What accounts for your enthusiasm, which comes through loud and clear?***

**Mr. Henkenius:** I absolutely love what I do! My parents instilled in me a confidence and ethical mindset to not only conquer the world, but do it the right way. The people in this office share those traits. I have had some great people that have been good mentors to me. I have had some people that have taught me the right way to do things and people that have me the wrong way to do things. My motivation for starting H4 and my motivation for doing this is that I want to do things the right way. One of the things that we do here at H4 that is very fun is that once a month we get together and anyone in the company, from the junior developer to the marketing director can propose a new product or service. We talk about it from a marketing standpoint, we talk about it from a business development standpoint and if this is an idea that we all think we are excited about then we will go and build it. Everyone is excited for these sessions. It is those types of things that give you energy. It is those types of things that make you want to come back to work, because you see the excitement on everyone's face as they have ownership and accountability in their jobs. That is what drives me.

**CEOFO: *Why pay attention to H4 Technology?***

**Mr. Henkenius:** Pay attention to H4 because we are changing the way things are done. Underneath our logo we have the words, Technology, Transformation, Transition and Transparency. We have those words as a part of our logo because the status quo just does not work anymore. We want to change that status quo by getting people what they want; giving them customized solutions at a fraction of the cost. We are giving them new and exciting applications that will put the power back in the patient's hands. We are doing it by having a lot of fun with a lot of good people. Therefore, come find us at the conferences. We are anxious to meet as many people as we can and find out ways to transform the healthcare industry. If you share those common goals we would like to talk to you.

Interview conducted by: Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor, CEOFO Magazine

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**Healthcare Technology. Transformation. Transition. Transparency.**

## **H4 Technology, LLC**

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