

Click Medical – Changing the Lives of Amputees by Enabling Them to Easily Adjust the Size and Fit of Their Custom Prosthetic and Orthotic Devices



Jimmy Capra
Co-Founder & CEO

Click Medical

Interview conducted by:
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CEOCFO: *Mr. Capra, what is the idea behind Click Medical?*

Mr. Capra: At Click Medical we really concentrate only on bringing the concept of adjustability to the O&P market which enables a patient to change the fit or the size of a custom prosthetic or orthotic device.

CEOCFO: *Is that typical?*

Mr. Capra: In the prosthetic world, almost all sockets are made out of ridged materials, and once made, they never change in size. However, the human body is constantly changing, so they must accommodate for the change in the size of their body, without a rudimentary system of putting additional socks on or getting padding added to the device. It is very difficult for a patient to manage that volume easily.

But when a patient has a device with a Click reel, it becomes as simple as turning a dial to change the fit of the socket millimeter by millimeter. Therefore, Click's products really puts the power of changing fit, function and size of the device into the hands of the patient.

CEOCFO: *Is this a commonly known problem? Is this a problem that is just accepted by the industry? Have people tried before Click Medical to come up with a solution?*

Mr. Capra: For centuries people have been building prosthetic devices. They used to be made from hand-carved wood! This meant people had to adapt their bodies to those devices with rudimentary systems, such as putting socks on their limb. That progressed over time when sockets started to be made from more advanced materials. Currently, the standard is carbon fiber. It is an amazing material that is light weight and can be made into any shape. It's really incredible. However, it lacks the ability to be adjustable. Once it is made, it is that size forever.

People have become used to this. It is not that different than a person being used to tying his or her shoes. Shoe laces are a pain in the neck, but it is the way we do it and people have accommodated over the years to make it work for them. But when a practitioner adds Click's products, it is like a light bulb goes off. It is one of those super simple ideas that people have wanted for years but was not able to be manifested. But now, one of the modern materials - strong but thin laces made out of super high tension textile materials, make this innovation possible. Secondly, being able to wind those strong laces into a very small reels, has also been a recent innovation in the last 20 years.

Matching the reels plus the laces has allowed us to learn how to build these technologies into the internal structure of a carbon fiber socket to achieve the long-sought after goal of making a socket adjustable. After 8 years of building, selling and marketing these devices, more and more people say, "Finally, there is some way for us to address this on-going problem!"



CEOCFO: *What led you to create adjustable sockets?*

Mr. Capra: There are two origin stories. One was my 13-year stint at BOA® Technology. BOA was the inventor of the reel and lace concept, which they applied to all sorts of sporting goods. This experience enabled me to learn the necessary techniques to apply these technologies in ways that could be used in O&P devices.

But the real ah ha moment was when my Co-founder, Chief Clinical Officer Joe Mahon, was struggling to fit patients with these ridged sockets. He went up skiing with his wife one day and got called by one of his patients who needed an adjustment on his socket. He thought to himself that it would be so nice if there was a different way the adjustment could be done. Then he watched as his wife bent over and dialed in her snowboard boots to just the right fit! That night, much to the chagrin of his wife, he tore apart her snowboard boots and built the very first adjustable socket.

"We are lucky because every day we get to do work that makes a difference! We get to help people walk, regain their health and mobility, or alleviate depression. Such a simple concept helps people move into a healthy, active state of being, despite their limb-loss. We get to concentrate on this goal every day, and truly change the lives of so many people." Jimmy Capra

CEOCFO: *What were the challenges in creating a product that people can use easily, as well as a product you can sell?*

Mr. Capra: There were so many challenges. Number one were the application challenges, which start with the reality that a prosthetic device is used every single day. It is adjusted potentially 5-10 times per hour, and it is used for a minimum of three years. Therefore, the criteria for strength and longevity of our technology is incredibly challenging. So you have to make products that really, really work. Add to that, the fact that patient often weigh 200 or 300 pounds, and they are walking on this device, which creates a huge amount of force that gets felt by the prosthetic device. These are hard application constraints that have to be met. For context, contrast that to a snowboard boot, which is used typically about five days a year for about 3 to 5 hours each day. The difference is significant!

That meant that the product challenge for us was fine tuning the engineering and longevity of the components that go into our system, so that they could withstand such rigorous of everyday use. That took a long time, and it was exacerbated by the fact that our products are kits that are sold to a prosthetist, who then makes the device to be custom for the patient. Every single device is a little bit different, and so the integration of our parts and pieces is done a little differently for each socket.

This means that we have had to educate our customers to make sure they are building adjustable sockets in a way that will lend to long term durability and be a device that the patient can really count on. That has taken a lot of time, energy, and experimentation. As a company we concentrate on learning, growing, testing and implementing combinations of various materials and designs that allow for adjustability to really work long-term.



CEOCFO: *What about challenges in the market?*

Mr. Capra: One of the biggest challenges is that the OP& market is slow-to-change. Once a prosthetist gets their practice up and running, they have already gone to school and done their internship, so they have learned a certain way of doing things. To change the way that those prosthetists do things or change the way that they think about designing a device takes time. Prosthetists are generally very crafty and innovative people because they have to make a product from scratch for an individual patient with specific needs, which is something that takes a great deal of innovation. This makes changing what they do and how they do it, very hard.

On top of that, there are not that many amputees. There are 3 million or so in America, and maybe double that in Western Europe, making it a relatively small market. So, it's a slow process to get adjustability concept into the market, and commonly used by practitioners, because they do not see that many amputees. It is a real challenge for us.

It is a low volume business, but a really great concept that truly changes the lives of amputees. Therefore, we have had to have a great deal of patience and resilience to get to place where we have sufficient volume and uptake of our concept in the market place.

CEOCFO: *What type of training would a prosthetist need to alter the way that they make a device?*

Mr. Capra: The training is straightforward. We do a lot of online training for our customers. Within an hour they can learn the concept, the recommended designs, and the methodology of designing a device. Then it will take them one or two attempts to use their new knowledge and learn how adjustability works for their patients. It is not a terribly challenging process to get up to speed, and we have made amazing educational assets to guide them.

CEOCFO: *Where does cost come into play for creating a device using your products and technology? Is it much more expensive than the standard? Does it depend on insurance coverage?*

Mr. Capra: It all depends on which party you are talking about. The patients are not going to see much of a change at all, because of the way these devices are covered under insurance.

For the prosthetist, they are managing the cost of materials to build the device. They are typically going to incur clinical time, fabrication time, and material costs of around \$5,000 to \$7,000 to build a prosthesis. When they add our adjustability components, they are going to add another \$300 to that overall cost. Therefore, relatively speaking, it is a small financial impact.

CEOCFO: *Your recent press release show, Click Medical Beta Test Leads the Way for Improved Adjustability. What have you recognized now that you are in the final stage of the development of the new Click® Reel?*

Mr. Capra: We started our company initially by using reels that were manufactured by BOA® Technology. BOA has been in the market for about 20 years, building reels of all shapes and sizes for athletic footwear. Boa's technology was a great place for us to start because they make great reels. However, they weren't reels that were designed for the demanding use case that we needed. Their reels are made primarily out of plastic and are consumer sports oriented. They work well on snowboard boots and other consumer sporting goods. However, when we put them into a prosthetic device, they wear out fairly quickly. They also have a higher profile than patients really want, and they do not have some of the features that our patients were really asking for.

So, we decided to see if we would build a reel that was specifically made for the rigors of orthotics and prosthetics. We wanted to make a lower profile reel, be able to adjust tension forward and to relieve tension backwards. Then also have it be really, really strong. So, we made a reel made out of metal components designed to last the life of a socket. This effort took over 4.5 years, but we accomplished it. Now, our Click Reel technology will take this whole concept to the next level.

Our beta test is very near completion and our launch date is March 30, 2023. At that time, we will unveil this new reel to the market via our 3 core kits that make adjustability possible for a wide range of O&P devices.

CEOCFO: *Are there any regulatory considerations? Do you have to have FDA clearance for any of your products?*

Mr. Capra: Prosthetics in general are all labeled as Class I devices, so they are all self-certified and managed via the Class I FDA rules. Click adds a reel to a socket outside of the body, so there is nothing that is invasive provided to a patient. That allows for us to not have huge amounts of regulatory constraints, which helps us to experiment and innovate fairly quickly.

CEOCFO: *Are you seeking funding, investment, partnerships as you move forward?*

Mr. Capra: Currently, we are seeking more of the partnership angle. We are a small company of 13 people, with revenues under \$5 million, and we have penetrated about 1% of the market. We know that we can serve 25% to 50% of the market, and in order to be able to meet that goal, we are looking for different ways to help us accelerate. We are well positioned to take advantage of the brand equity and the momentum created from the "early adopters" that have truly fueled our company over the last 8 years. We aim now to move into the "early majority" of customers and establish our products as the standard of care.

A strategic partner or an influx of capital could help us hire or more staff or fuel strategic programs to help us grow into a larger market share.

CEOCFO: *Are you reaching out to medical organizations or prosthetists organizations, or even patient organizations?*

Mr. Capra: There are a couple things about working with patient groups. One is they have to be able to get the device they are asking for. Therefore, we have worked over the last 8 years to make sure there was enough availability of our products in the market so that a patient can get our technology if they ask their practitioner for it. Secondly, we have created an education system that allows a practitioner to get educated if a patient asks for the technology and they have yet to use it. Now that practitioners can build adjustable sockets with a great deal of confidence, we can take the steps to start reaching out to patients and patient groups directly.

We now speak to patients through various social media channels and various organizations like the Amputee Coalition. They are a patient spacing advocacy group, and it is a great way for us to spread our message. We hope that we can empower patients with knowledge of their options. Then they can advocate well for their needs.

CEOCFO: *Finally, put it together for our readers. There are so many new ideas to look at related to health. Why should Click Medical stand out?*

Mr. Capra: From the inside of the company, we are thinking about this every day, and pushing the limits of innovation and the market. It is always a big challenge to bring a product to market and to get recognition within the market.

We may have been adjustable sockets for 8 years and have achieved about 1% market penetration. Yet, what we find repeatedly is that our products enable patients to live their lives well, and provides practitioners a new tool that allows for them to do their jobs even better. These benefits have brought an awesome level of recognition and have built a strong reputation for Click as the true innovators in the industry. That is a pretty exciting result! We have worked really hard to create this, and it is happening.

This kind of result stands out in our industry. O&P is quite a small industry, so it does not usually get the kind of attention that Click Medical has invested into innovation. We have a lot of consumer product experience within the company, and we use that expertise to build our brand, build our reputation, and foster an innovative spirit that really stands out in this slow-moving industry. That has really been noticeable. Lastly, our products deliver a very simple concept that totally can change the life of a patient. That stands out and makes us special.

We are lucky because every day we get to do work that makes a difference! We get to help people walk, regain their health and mobility, or alleviate depression. Such a simple concept helps people move into a healthy, active state of being, despite their limb-loss. We get to concentrate on this goal every day, and truly change the lives of so many people.