

Featured Partner

GEMMS is a specialized, healthcare information vendor for community-based private practice cardiology groups.



An interview with Roger Pinto, Ph.D.
Chief Executive Officer

Q: Why have you chosen MedAxiom as a way to communicate with the cardiology practices?

A: MedAxiom is one of the leading associations for cardiology practices nationwide. GEMMS is the leading provider of health information systems for cardiology. The marriage seemed to be an excellent fit. Practices who participate in organizations like MedAxiom are leaders in their field. The networking and sharing that goes on in these organizations are vital to the continued growth of cardiology. GEMMS supports these efforts and participates whenever possible in that dialogue. MedAxiom grew out of the need for cardiology administrators to become better educated about what is going on around the nation and with their peers. GEMMS grew out of the need for Cardiology groups to have reliable and quick access to specific information to make the best decisions possible whether clinical or business-related. We look forward to a long and productive partnership.

Q: How does your business currently interact with cardiology practices?

A: Since GEMMS specializes in cardiology; we are constantly interacting with cardiology practices. With over 1,000 cardiologists on our system in 40 states and 180 or more locations, we remain immersed in the issues that directly relate to cardiology. Besides our network of users, we participate in groups like MedAxiom, MGMA, America College of Cardiology, etc. We also conduct our National User Group Meeting each year and roundtable discussions on important topics. GEMMS recently held a roundtable workgroup on pay for performance that will result in a new module that will be incorporated into our GEMMS ONE product. Finally, we had a customer-wide, electronic bulletin board, however, our customers did not find it efficient enough to communicate, so we are launching a GEMMS List Server this August.

Q: What primary products are utilized by the practices?

A: GEMMS is a specialized, healthcare information vendor for community-based private practice cardiology groups. Our flagship product, GEMMS ONE, is an integrated electronic medical record and practice management solution. GEMMS ONE (formerly called ECIS) provides physicians the right information at the right time to make the right decisions. GEMMS offers several other products to further enhance the cardiologist's digital workflow. The products we develop and promote are based on the model of providing the information that a provider needs – at the time they need it – wherever they need it, whether or not the provider has high speed data connections or not. We are just as committed getting the right information to the rural office site that the provider goes to once per month and only sees 10-15 patients. GEMMS does not feel that the provider should have to give up the efficiencies they gain from an electronic computerized record just because there is no high-speed data connection.

Q: What differentiates your organization from others?

A: The obvious answer is that we concentrate only on cardiology. This single focus on cardiology permeates everything we do including our product development, our research initiatives, and the employees we hire, the organizations we belong to and how we think about the future of healthcare. No other vendor in this marketplace has this single focus. There are approximately 650,000 private practice physicians in the United States and of these about 19,000 are private practice cardiologists. Our competitors worry about all 650,000 and must make decisions that will affect the largest number of those providers. We only have to worry about the cardiologists. On average, a GEMMS system implementer has done over 25 installations of the product and these installations have all been in cardiology. We are the first vendor to offer a specific product for cardiology, built in cardiology. We are the first vendor to install a cardiology-specific product and we have installed the most systems in cardiology as compared to any of our competitors. We are the only vendor that offers a wireless portable office solution that does not require high-speed data connectivity. The fruits of this single-minded focus have paid off. We sold more systems to private practice cardiology programs last year than all of our competitors combined and we are on track to do it again this year.

Q: How do you intend to add more value to your customers in the next 12 months?

A: We have several things in the works. We have a limited release of our newly integrated PACS system. This will be the first Picture Archival System (PAC) that is totally integrated into an electronic health record. We are set for general release this year. We will be releasing a complete patient education package that allows providers to package educational materials including cardiology-specific animations that can be played, and printed for the patient from the GEMMS ONE system or provided to the patient via the internet. We will be releasing a P4P module that will not only assist the providers in being able to present good clean data to third party administrators, but also will provide them with the tools to follow the specific pathways that are required for the providers to be designated the best in their field. We have several customers in the middle of P4P projects and we are using their experience to help us put together a valuable product that will assist them in this newly emerging field.

Q: What are your long-term goals in serving the cardiology practice arena?

A: We are dedicated to continue to find methods and products to assist our customers in taking advantage of technology to improve the quality and efficiency of what they do. We have just finished the first stage of a total infrastructure restructuring at GEMMS. This includes a new data center with over 8 terra bytes of data as well as a host of servers. This infrastructure will be used to allow our network to aggregate its clinical data (over 2 million patients) to develop benchmarks, P4P parameters, and do to do research. We have not even begun to work with our customers to unlock the treasures that lay in this unique database. As mentioned earlier, this infrastructure will host a series of new products that our practices can take advantage of including specialized reporting tools, new patient education systems, and hospital billing using a portable PDA technology.

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Q: Can GEMMS keep up with its growth? How does it plan to compete with such large competitors that are in this space?

A: Managing growth is the best problem to have in business. It is a problem that needs to be addressed, however, and GEMMS has been addressing it on several fronts. GEMMS has invested in new technology including the infrastructure mentioned above and expanding our facility (we have been tearing down walls and pushing into new space). We have doubled our staff in the last 18 months and have reorganized to provide more accountability in each department. We have done all this and have remained profitable. We were just notified that GEMMS has been recognized as one of the fastest growing companies in central Indiana. As mentioned earlier we have from our beginning, as national provider of cardiology information systems, competed against companies of significant size and resources. We have been the leader in this field since we began. We feel it is due to our unparalleled knowledge of the private practice cardiology sector, our single-minded focus on cardiology, and our willingness to go the extra mile to find solutions for our customers. Our competitors have a great deal to think about besides cardiology and if you notice they all have their specialties. Some are very good at hospital systems, some are good in the academic arena and most are focused on the multi-specialty or primary care arena. GEMMS' focus is entirely on cardiology and we think it shows.

Q: Is GEMMS ONE certified by the recently released CCHIT standards for EMR?

A: Let me first tell you that GEMMS is committed to the certification process and thinks that it will be useful for a base standard. GEMMS was one of the first 7 groups to help form the CCHIT and remains a member. However, the certification that is being issued today is designed to certify primary care based EMR's. As part of the certification process there is a series of clinical scenarios that must be demonstrated and all of these are primary care-related. As of today, there is no specialty-specific certification process. We are committed to be part of this certification process when appropriate. A good place to look at this process more closely is the certification handbook that you can get from the CCHIT worksite. Presented below is an excerpt from this handbook.

4.2 Practice Specialties and Specialized Markets

"CCHIT recognizes the existence of practice specialties and vendors focusing on specialized markets within the broad spectrum of ambulatory care. We acknowledge that our first year criteria are broad-based and not necessarily appropriate for some specialty situations."

Q: Who should the MedAxiom practices contact with questions about your company or products?

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