

CEOs of growing health care companies tackle critical issues at the Health Evolution Partners CEO Forum

San Francisco, CA – October 6, 2011 – [Health Evolution Partners](#) (HEP) recently held its 2nd Annual CEO Forum, an invitation-only gathering that enables CEOs to focus on common strategic challenges and core operating issues they face in today's rapidly evolving health care market. CEOs from more than 40 companies joined HEP investors and partners from HEP's Spectrum Fund in expert-led deep dives on digital marketing and crisis management, both important issues for growing companies in an increasingly electronic, connected and publicly scrutinized industry.

"Growing health care companies must think strategically about the opportunities presented by digital, social and mobile trends, while also preparing in advance for the challenge of managing a company's reputation in today's headline-driven, real-time and viral media environment," said [David J. Brailer, MD, PhD](#), Chairman of HEP.

Digital marketing is top of mind for many CEO's today. Experts from [WCG](#) and [Altimeter Group](#) covered current trends, such as rapid growth in mobile devices, wide-spread consumer use of social media and the predicted importance of video as a medium for social and promotional interactions. Insights extended to execution considerations for growing businesses and accepted use cases for social tools, including cost-effective customer service and efficient monitoring across customer/user and diverse media channels. Key discussion points among CEOs and session leaders included the challenge of channel complexity in health care and a questionable value proposition for use of social media among companies with business-to-business sales models.

During the second half of the forum, a panel of public relations experts from [Edelman](#) and veteran operating and legal executives provided insights and direction on intelligence gathering, advance planning and best practices for issue and crisis management. Panelists shared frameworks for understanding the new realities of online crisis communications and behaviors for building trust in an era of public engagement, as well as lessons learned from collective experience across crises in 2010.

"In an environment of expanding regulatory enforcement and potential patient risk from devices and emerging technologies, executives of growing companies should anticipate the challenges they may face when awareness and adoption scale across much larger populations," said [Julie Murchinson](#), Executive Director of the [Health Evolution Partners Innovation Network](#). "CEOs can learn a lot from the experiences of companies such as Wellpoint and Merck in times of major crises...before they find themselves in a similar situation."

Key takeaways for crisis management included the importance of early response, audience-specific messaging and demonstrating compassion in both messaging and actions. However, the most important message from panelists was clear: prepare for and mitigate risk of crises in advance to avoid damaging brand value, an outcome that can be devastating to young companies who are preparing for rapid growth.

"The majority of growing companies in health care, even those bringing disruptive models to market, still operate in complex channels," said Jim Kirker, Chief Executive Officer, [Optimal IMX](#). "HEP's CEO Forum elucidated key positioning and market access issues that are critical to moving our company in the right direction and provided excellent networking opportunities with fellow CEOs and health care executives."

The annual CEO Forum is one of multiple ways that HEP works with its portfolio companies and investment partners to create value and support commercial growth in the health care industry. Each spring, 350 of the nation's top health care CEOs, executive-level innovators, entrepreneurs, investors, policy makers and thought leaders come together at the invitation-only Leadership Summit. Participants join an unparalleled group of experts and peers to probe the environmental forces driving change, discuss opportunities and risks in the health care marketplace and confront the need for innovation at all levels of the industry. [Leadership Summit 2012](#) will be held April 25-27, 2012 at the Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel.

About Health Evolution Partners

Health Evolution Partners invests in rapidly growing companies that are commercial leaders in the health care industry. We invest in all key areas of the health economy: hospitals, managed care, pharmaceutical developers, device makers and consumer products and services. Health Evolution Partners is guided by a team of exceptional health care investors and operators. We connect our companies to a substantial network of health care innovators, policy makers and thought leaders. We bring both financial resources and mindshare to our companies. Health Evolution Partners forms close working partnerships with outstanding management teams who are building important and valuable enterprises. We align our success with our companies as they grow and prosper. For more information on Health Evolution Partners, www.healthevolutionpartners.com.

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