

Healthcare IT | Doctors as Technologists



Do you see yourself as a technologist? You're already a card-carrying scientist, surrounded by the tools of your trade; scales, centrifuges, and the age-old sphygmomanometer. The thing is, you need help to do more and more work with less and less time. Technology is the way you can get the assistance you need.

iHealthcare

A trip to the doctor's office can be rife with healthcare IT. It begins with the process of making or changing an appointment. Increasingly patients avail themselves of clinic websites where they

can leave a message for a nurse, request a prescription refill, and make or change their appointment. Or patients can call a [HIPAA-compliant 24/7 hotline](#) to perform these activities at any time.

Doctors are increasingly offering patients the option of video conference visits for certain situations, such as monthly or quarterly prescription checks. This doesn't only save your time and patient time, it also provides a way to prevent patients from exposing themselves to [healthcare associated infections](#). Along the same vein, patients who do come into the office may be met with a sign-in solution that's designed to prevent the spread of contagious illnesses. Meanwhile, laptops and tablets in every patient room provide easy access to patient information, current prescriptions, and test results. All of this data takes up server space and ultimately needs to be shareable, in particular, to prevent multiple layers of data entry which exponentially increases the potential for error. Thus, the [cloud storage solution](#) is a significant purchase in healthcare IT. Data security and HIPAA compliance loom large in this buying decision.

The App and I

[Gamification](#) entered the healthcare arena years ago. This is the process of using weight loss apps and fitness trackers to monitor goals and provide incentives to patients. The apps collect data that enables doctors to work with patients on dietary and fitness goals by letting the facts do the talking.

This year, to step things up a notch, the [American Diabetes Association of Illinois](#) issued the Venture to Stop Diabetes Challenge. The campaign with its \$10,000 prize is a call to “develop new strategies and technology that address the problems facing the diabetes community.” With many exciting entries, the [final six](#) were invited to present in Chicago. In addition to using apps and gamification as part of a program, some companies introduced entirely new takes on device-enabled diabetes management, such as:

1. Integrating a blood glucose meter with a smartphone
2. Combining an activity tracker with a glucometer and wireless blood pressure monitor
3. Creating an artificial pancreas system that delivers insulin to the body

These types of technologies, when adopted by patients, provide healthcare professionals with ever more powerful ways to combat nutrition-related illnesses and diseases.

I Robot?

Robots in the office can't be far behind — and we're not just talking about [telesurgery](#), which was once the realm of only the best-funded hospitals. Think smaller. Think...Tickle Me Elmo, except somewhat more expensive. The [MEDi Robot](#) with a price point of \$15,000 helps to distract kids during inoculations. Think back to the child who required three nurses and both parents to hold him down for a shot. You might give this kid-sized 'bot a nod once the cost gets below \$1,000.

Last year, with the expectation that the U.S. might “face a 65,000 shortage of primary-care physicians by 2025,” [healthcare robots](#) were seen as a necessary part of healthcare technology. Rolling robots in hospitals started their rounds, assisting with in-patient checks like a video conference on steroids. One such device at the Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center “can navigate itself between patient bedsides...and swivel its screen 170 degrees, allowing it to turn and face multiple people in the same room.”

That was a camera and screen on wheels. This year we met [Sophia](#), designed to serve in health care, therapy, education, and customer service jobs. She's just in the prototype stage at this point but already boasts 60 facial expressions.

Whether we'll come to rely on a battalion of Sophias in the future remains to be seen, but for right now you know how much work is on your plate, and whether your staff is over-extended. Let a [virtual medical receptionist](#) handle your phones, so you and your team can focus on the terrified toddler in room three. As health technology continues to expand, so will its processes and solutions making it easier for doctors and patients alike.



Tim Sistrunk writes for Continental Message Solution, a leading call center and live answering service serving the communication needs of healthcare professionals around the world.

About the Author



Manny Oliverrez

Manny Oliverrez, CPC, is a 20-year healthcare veteran and the CEO and co-founder of Capture Billing, a medical billing services company located outside of Washington, D.C. He teaches the nation's physicians, administrators, and medical practices how to maximize billing and revenue cycle management processes. Manny also frequently posts articles and videos on his [award-winning healthcare blog](#). For more information on Manny and his company, please visit [his website](#), or call (703)327-1800. And if you're on [LinkedIn](#), please look for him there too. **READ MORE**

Follow Us on Social Media



<https://www.facebook.com/CaptureBilling>



<https://plus.google.com/+CaptureBilling/>



https://www.twitter.com/Capture_Billing



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/Capture-Billing-&-Consulting-Inc.>

Capture Billing & Consulting, Inc.

Capture Billing and Consulting, Inc. is one of the top leaders in the medical billing industry. We help busy medical practices drastically reduce patient and insurance accounts receivable, and increase physician reimbursement. Capture Billing's services provides one of the most cost-effective and proficient billing solutions available to healthcare professionals. Eliminating the need for an on-site medical billing staff can allow physicians to focus on their primary passion of providing quality healthcare to their patients. Physicians can leave the stress of doing their own medical billing to us.

We help you collect more money, faster and easier.

Improve your bottom line and peace of mind with our medical billing services.