



Was mobile key to Ebix's \$66M ADAM buy?

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Ebix, an international supplier of on demand software and ecommerce services to the insurance industry has agreed to acquire and merge with medical education software developer ADAM in a deal valued at about \$66 million, according to the companies.

ADAM's recent activity in mobile health may suggest one reason a company focused on the insurance industry acquired it: Just last week Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania-based health insurance provider Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield launched an iPhone app, Health@Hand, co-developed with ADAM and based on its Medzio application.

ADAM's Medzio app was once called a "super app" because it is a rollup of other popular apps and offerings from big name partners including: CallMD, Dr. Greene, Health 2.0, Healthcare Blue Book, HealthiNation, HelloHealth, Livestrong, Norton Healthcare and Organized Wisdom. Medzio offers symptom navigation, first aid info, GPS-enabled local listings for care centers (with maps and directions) and more. Medzio encapsulated ADAM's short term mobile strategy but the company had longterm plans for the mobile platform.

Here's how ADAM's SVP of Product Strategy Greg John summed up the mobile health opportunity for ADAM in an interview with MobiHealthNews back in March 2009:

"We think that with the iPhone, for the first time mobile phones are an extension of the desktop computer. They aren't the same as a desktop, though—you aren't going to use your mobile phone to research a potentially serious condition you may have. You aren't going to sit there and read volumes of information about it from a phone. We have that type of information and if you have multiple sclerosis, you can go to A.D.A.M. and read about it, but you're going to want to sit at a computer and do that instead of thumbing through a little

screen. What a mobile phone is for is really convenient access to health information wherever you need and wherever you are—we all understand that.”

“First and foremost, the cell phone is a communication device, so tying together health information you might need in a particular point in time—like a symptom—with the ability to make a phone call and things get interesting. Add in GPS functionalities so you can locate care facilities for consumers to actually call, and I think you have a powerful suite of services for consumers on the go.”