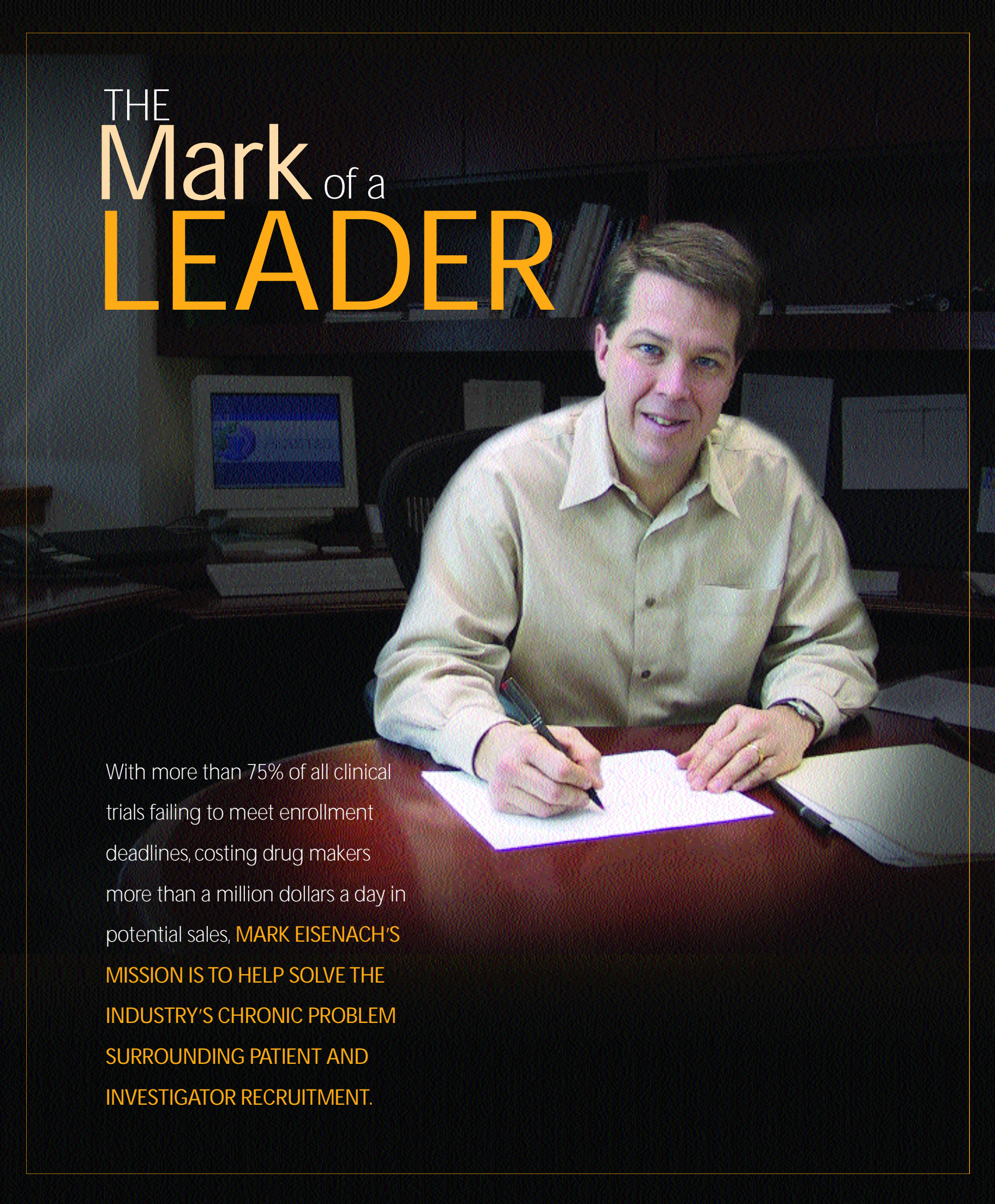


THE Mark of a LEADER

A man with short brown hair, wearing a light-colored button-down shirt, is sitting at a dark wooden desk in an office. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. He is holding a black pen over a white sheet of paper on the desk. In the background, there is a computer monitor displaying a blue screen, a keyboard, and a bookshelf filled with books. The lighting is soft, highlighting the man and his work area.

With more than 75% of all clinical trials failing to meet enrollment deadlines, costing drug makers more than a million dollars a day in potential sales, **MARK EISENACH'S MISSION IS TO HELP SOLVE THE INDUSTRY'S CHRONIC PROBLEM SURROUNDING PATIENT AND INVESTIGATOR RECRUITMENT.**

BY KIM RIBBINK

True innovators leave an impression. Dissatisfied with the status quo, **Mark Eisenach** has spent more than a decade initiating change within the healthcare arena, specifically in the area of **fostering improvements in the clinical-trial process.**

First as a consultant with The Boston Consulting Group, then as a top executive with Covance Inc., and now as the new CEO of Acurian Inc., Mark Eisenach's mission is to help companies bring new medications to patients as quickly and efficiently as possible. Only 39, Mr. Eisenach's influence has been profound in improving the mechanism of the clinical-trial process. "Looking forward 20 to 30 years, healthcare is the industry where fundamental and radical change will happen with great speed," Mr. Eisenach says. "It's a good place to be from a career standpoint. I have always wanted to be in an industry where there is momentum, because the thing I do best is anticipate change. What drives me is being in a position to lead an organization to where it needs to be in the future."

Throughout his career, Mr. Eisenach has made it his mission to anticipate change and build an infrastructure to adapt to the future. In all his roles at Covance — leading corporate development, marketing strategy, and ultimately launching Nexigent — and as CEO of Acurian, Mr. Eisenach has sought ways to help the healthcare industry improve efficiencies within clinical research.

"My role has been to look for opportunities that can have a significant impact on the way clinical research gets done, provide services along the way, and create some very good and attractive businesses from that," he says. "My goal is to ensure that the teams I work with leave a footprint on the way clinical trials get conducted now and in the future."

"New medicines have dramatically changed the way medical care is delivered," Mr. Eisenach says. "As a result, people are living healthier, longer lives. Continuing those advances means bringing new medicines to patients as quickly as possible. My personal contribution to improving medical care is to help companies bring new medicines to patients as effectively as possible."

Mr. Eisenach has been at the forefront of many of the innovations that help companies improve the speed and efficiency of discovering

new compounds. He sees the bigger picture, understands the intricate nature of the business, and recognizes the need for a cohesive approach to conducting a clinical trial.

"A clinical trial is one of the more complex industrial relationships that one can imagine," Mr. Eisenach says. "It's a large-scale initiative with a distributed workforce. Essentially, a clinical trial comprises a team that comes together for one purpose and then disbands. There aren't many more difficult business operations to organize and pull off."

TIMING is Everything

For the CEO of a growing company, time is often scarce. Then again, saving time — helping pharmaceutical companies streamline the process of clinical trials — is a key part of Mr. Eisenach's mission, both as head of Acurian, which works to accelerate the launch of clinical trials for biopharmaceutical companies, and in his previous role as a senior executive at Covance, a large and comprehensive drug-development services company. Covance helps pharmaceutical companies advance drug development through science, service, and shaping technology solutions.

"At Acurian we focus very much on patient-physician recruitment, but at the end of the day we exist to make clinical research more effective," he says. "We focus on improving the economics of our customers."

"At Covance and now at Acurian I have been focused on the same set of problems that the pharmaceutical industry is constantly facing — how to get clinical trials done more swiftly and less expensively than they are done today."

Even before embarking on a fully fledged career in the healthcare industry, Mr. Eisenach's work as a consultant centered around providing effective time-saving solutions to various industries. While at The Boston Consulting Group, Mr. Eisenach was involved with, and ultimately led, projects that addressed the most pressing concerns facing executives in the business world — the burgeoning costs of research and

EISENACH

I have always wanted to be in an industry where there is momentum, because the thing I do best is anticipate change.

development, ensuring products enter the marketplace effectively and seamlessly, and visualizing corporate growth.

“At Boston Consulting Group I worked with several clients who were looking to improve their processes to get more out of their research and development investments,” Mr. Eisenach explains.

Many of those early clients were pharmaceutical companies, which undoubtedly fostered Mr. Eisenach’s interest in being a part of the health-care industry.

But ultimately, the attraction to the health-care industry for Mr. Eisenach had its roots in a deeply personal need to play a part in the business of saving lives.

A PERSONAL Journey

“A member of my family died 15 years ago from ovarian cancer and since that point I’ve been looking for opportunities to participate in, and support healthcare,” Mr. Eisenach says.

With a background in business and economics, rather than in science, the go-getter executive found other ways to contribute to the advancement of healthcare.

“The opportunity to be a part of the health-care industry presented itself while I was working as a consultant at BCG,” Mr. Eisenach explains. “It became clear that, while I am not a physician, I could contribute to the area of research and development by helping the pharmaceutical industry find ways to bring therapies to market more quickly and effectively. That has been a challenge for the industry, given how wildly expensive research and development has become. At the same time, the need for innovative therapies is as pressing as ever.”

EISENACH
I could contribute to the area of research and development by helping the industry find ways to bring therapies to market more quickly and effectively.

Although working as a consultant to the industry enabled Mr. Eisenach to have some involvement, he desired a role that would allow him to have more of a direct impact.

In 1997, Mr. Eisenach joined Covance. This allowed the executive, motivated by a personal desire to see more treatments brought to market, to join an organization whose business it is to drive R&D — and that proved to be an ideal fit.

While at Covance, Mr. Eisenach identified the need for a more efficient method of delivering clinical-trial services. From that sprang Nexigent Inc., Covance’s e-business sub-

siary, which Mr. Eisenach founded and led from 1999 until leaving Covance to head Acurian.

“Covance, which is in the business of supporting clinical development, already had some existing businesses that did pieces of the clinical-research process,” Mr. Eisenach says, explaining the origins of Nexigent. “With its involvement in investigator sites, Covance was well-positioned to look for new technology-based services that would connect the participants of a clinical trial. Nexigent brought that together.”

In 1999, Mr. Eisenach founded Nexigent Inc., Covance’s e-business subsidiary for the development of technology-enabled clinical-trial services, which he built into a 100-person organization generating multi-million dollar revenue in its first year. The core objectives of Nexigent are to more effectively develop, brand, and market Internet-enabled capabilities for enhancing clinical trials. Nexigent offers Web-based services and tools to address major bottlenecks in conducting clinical trials, such as the capture and management of voluminous patient data from



Making an impression

SINCE JOINING ACURIAN INC. AS CEO IN OCTOBER 2001, MARK EISENACH HAS BEEN BUSY MANAGING AND EXPANDING THE COMPANY’S DATABASES, OFFERED SERVICES, AND PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS.

OCT. 10, 2001. Acurian partners with F-D-C Reports to provide authoritative drug development news to healthcare-information seekers and to consumers for the first time; F-D-C Reports publishes The Pink Sheet.

OCT. 16, 2001. Acurian launches its enhanced clinical-trials Website with advanced customization, ease-of-use features supporting 215 medical conditions; the site seamlessly integrates clinical-trials access with relevant news and drug information to more effectively connect Acurian’s rapidly expanding user base to relevant clinical trials and related medical information.

OCT. 22, 2001. Acurian hires Scott Ballenger, as VP of sales. Mr. Ballenger brings nearly 12 years of outsourcing and pharmaceutical sales experience to Acurian, where he is leading all corporate sales activities focused on assisting pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies that are facing a severe bottleneck in the launch phase of clinical trials. Before joining Acurian, Mr. Ballenger was VP, sales and marketing for Pharmaceutical Research Plus, a clinical-trial outsourcing company focused on providing patient recruitment services to pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies.



many disparate sources, and enhance communications among the broad and diverse range of trial participants — patients, investigators, sponsors, and service providers.

Mr. Eisenach's experiences with Nexigent made him uniquely suited to be Acurian's next CEO. Armed with in-depth knowledge of the pharmaceutical outsourcing industry, and, in particular, his experience as the founder and chief operating officer of Nexi-

gent he had exactly the attributes Acurian was seeking in a CEO.

Many of the advances in clinical-trial support, including the formation of Nexigent as well as Acurian's business of matching clinical-trial participants to investigators, according to Mr. Eisenach, have been made possible by the accelerated advancement of information technology.

"Communications technology is changing the way to connect all the participants to make a clinical trial happen," Mr. Eisenach says.

Advances in information technology coinciding with capital growth and huge increases in scientific breakthroughs have been hugely advantageous for the industry, enabling companies to investigate innovative therapies for an array of diseases. Yet at the same time, the rapid nature of those advances — the large amount of

capital that up-and-coming companies have managed to raise in the past couple of years, together with the genomic revolution — has meant more challenges for the industry. Finding ways to meet those challenges is what motivates Mr. Eisenach.

"This is a very different industry than it used to be, and that is putting increased demands and stresses on a clinical-trial system that was already challenged and cumber-

some," he explains. "As a result, it takes too much time and too much money to get a trial done.

"While the pressures on drug companies to innovate and advance medicine increase, companies like Acurian can simplify matters because we can help find the physicians and the patients that enable research to get done," Mr. Eisenach says.

Acurian employs database-driven solutions that have helped to accelerate the launch of more than 60 clinical trials. Using proprietary, Web-enabled databases and software, Acurian allows sponsors to select the highest performing investigators while at the same time reaching out to interested, pre-screened clinical trial candidates. Acurian's proprietary physician investigator database, the largest of its kind, includes detailed profiles on more than 41,000 experienced physician investigators in the U.S. In addition, Acurian maintains a proprietary patient database of more than 1.3 million individuals across more than 200 therapeutic areas.

When a pharmaceutical or biotechnology company contracts with Acurian to help launch a clinical trial, Acurian is able to quickly contact the appropriate individuals in its patient database based on a person's expressed area of therapeutic interest and geographic location and match them to a high-performing physician investigator.

Mr. Eisenach understands the hurdles the healthcare industry faces. While he and the company he leads cannot run the race for the

NOV. 13, 2001. Acurian enters into a partnership with Healthology, Inc., a developer of high quality text, broadcast, and Web-cast health programs using an extensive network of respected physicians from across the country, to be the first clinical-trials resource to blend streaming media technology with in-depth information relating to emerging treatments. Under the agreement, individuals who visit www.acurian.com for clinical-trial and related information now can access more than 1000 compelling, accurate, and timely health-information programs that span a range of medical conditions.

NOV. 14, 2001. Acurian is selected to receive a "Company to Watch" Award at the 9th Annual Enterprise Awards Gala by the Eastern Technology Council, which is sponsored by industry leaders, including PricewaterhouseCoopers; the Enterprise Awards recognize excellence in the field of technology.

DEC. 4, 2001. Acurian announces an agreement with CaP CURE, the world's largest private source of prostate cancer research funding. Under the agreement, Acurian now reaches the thousands of patients, physicians, and researchers who visit the CaP CURE Website at www.capcure.org, enabling them to access the latest medical treatments and clinical-trials options to fight prostate cancer.

DEC. 11, 2001. Acurian enters into an agreement with Glaxo-SmithKline to begin work on the patient recruitment phase of two key clinical trials.

drug developers they can provide the tools that facilitate achieving desired results.

"Within the area of clinical development, the biggest challenge for the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries is firstly testing their clinical hypotheses, then proving that the drugs that they bring to market are safe in applications on a large scale," Mr. Eisenach says. "Time and money are working against the industry. It costs tens, even hundreds of millions of dollars to bring products to market. The longer this process takes, and the more expensive it is, the greater the likelihood that the product won't be a commercial success. Either a competitor will bring a similar product to market, the company conducting the trials will go out of business, or the product will have to be abandoned because by the time the research is completed it will no longer be economically viable to bring the drug to market."

According to Mr. Eisenach, the single

biggest area of opportunity for improvement in the clinical-trial process is patient-physician recruitment.

"By having a target patient and investigator audience, companies can shorten the timeline of clinical trials without having to alter the rest of the R&D process," he says.

Many of the business challenges healthcare and pharmaceutical companies encounter are faced by other industries. That outside perspective, the ability to absorb and translate lessons learned from one industry into another, has been a huge boon to the companies in which

Mr. Eisenach has been a part.

"Many people in the pharmaceutical industry have spent their working lives in the industry, and have not participated in other sectors where many of the same problems exist," Mr. Eisenach says.

"Granted, we have a whole host of issues, from privacy to the fact that we're providing

human healthcare in a regulatory environment that constrains how we go about introducing change," he says. "But the fact is the problems we're trying to solve exist in other industries and one of the things I bring is a broader perspective on how to bring solutions from an unrelated business to the pharmaceutical industry."

A PROGRESSIVE Attitude

During his years at Covance, Mr. Eisenach played several central roles in shaping the company's business. He led Covance's worldwide business strategy, before going on to lead global marketing and business strategy. Next, he founded Nexigent and oversaw the subsidiary as chief operating officer.

After a few years of progressively more demanding and increasing responsibilities at Covance, Mr. Eisenach felt he was ready for the next big leap — leading a young company. Acurian, with a growing reputation for matching investigators and patients for clinical research through its vast databases, seemed the perfect fit.

"For me, the attraction of Acurian was that the company is the market leader in new

EISENACH

Communications technology is changing the way to connect all the participants to make a clinical trial happen.

Faster, better, more ...

IN AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH PHARMAVOICE, MARK EISENACH, CEO OF ACURIAN INC.,

SHARES HIS VIEWS ON IMPROVING THE CLINICAL-TRIAL PROCESS.

WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FACING THE PHARMACEUTICAL OUTSOURCING INDUSTRY TODAY?

One of the biggest challenges is the issue of supply and demand. There are not enough investigators with experience, and finding the right ones to conduct a trial is a huge problem. Also, there are not enough patients enrolling in clinical trials. By some estimates, there is a gap of 300,000 patients between the number of people who are actively participating in trials and those who are needed.

HOW CAN THE INDUSTRY BEST HANDLE THE GROWING ISSUE OF PATIENT PRIVACY?

Privacy is a hugely complicated area, but in my view the tenets are really simple. The individual who entrusts Acurian with his or her information for the purpose of learning about clinical-trial opportunities is always in charge. Information should never be used for a purpose other than for what it is intended, and those involved in gathering the information must never disclose data to parties other than those directly involved in the clinical-trial process.

If the industry adheres to the highest possible standard of privacy, a lot of those other concerns disappear. It's when companies or individuals try to deviate from one of those core tenets that there is trouble. Privacy laws are attempting to ensure those tenets work in all circumstances.

HOW DOES ACURIAN DIFFER FROM OTHER COMPANIES IN ITS APPROACH TO FINDING PARTICIPANTS FOR CLINICAL TRIALS?

We have come up with a creative set of solutions for finding individuals who are interested in participating in clinical research. Our ability to get a clinical trial started quickly is vastly enhanced because we don't have to start from scratch to find those patients. In essence it is like trying to assemble a team. On the one hand, there is the Acurian-style model with a roster of people who have interest and experience, on the other hand there is, essentially, a white-pages phone directory offering no clues as to where to find those people. Acurian can fill that team much more quickly because through our databases we can target directly the people who might be interested in participating.

WHAT ARE YOUR GROWTH TARGETS FOR ACURIAN THIS YEAR?

We've made a number of management changes since I've joined, and we now have in place a team that works well together. We expect to start growing pretty rapidly before too long. Currently we have about 50 employees and by the end of 2002, we expect to have about 70 to 80. We also are in the process of transitioning our technology team from St. Louis to Horsham, Pa., so our whole team is in one place.

HOW HAVE YOU SHAPED THE COMPANY SINCE YOUR ARRIVAL?

When I arrived at Acurian, I took a look at our offerings and reclarified



approaches to patient/physician recruitment, he says. "Furthermore, the financial backers of this company are unbelievable. I have never seen a venture-backed company with as strong an investment group as the one that Acurian has."

Founded in 1998, Acurian secured the backing of blue-chip investors including Euclid SR Partners, ProQuest Investments, JP Morgan Partners, Flatiron Partners, Merck Capital Ventures, and Sofinov.

"The fact that two pharmaceutical concerns also have invested in Acurian is a huge validation of our approach, and an indication of the

standard that we present to our customers," he says, referring to CDP Sofinov and Merck Capital Ventures.

Being part of a young company, also appealed to Mr. Eisenach. Acurian was founded in 1998. "Setting up a subsidiary like Nexigent, or joining a young company like Acurian is exciting as it offers an opportunity to start with a fairly clean sheet of paper and build a business for the future without being overly constrained by the past," he says. "We can adapt to the marketplace without having to undo a lot of the infrastructure that has outlived its usefulness."

For Acurian, the attraction of bringing Mr. Eisenach on board in October 2001 was his proven track record in the business of finding innovative solutions for the healthcare industry.

"I have been working in this area for a long time and so I know it very, very well," he says. "I creat-

ed the new business within Covance, Nexigent, which was of a similar scale to Acurian, so I had a demonstrated record of building a new enterprise. Additionally, I knew the industry well and had been focused on it for some time, solving the same types of problems. Also, I had the demonstrated general management background that was required to lead this company."

Keeping It SIMPLE

Since its inception, Acurian has been building Web-enabled databases to support the clinical recruitment of physicians and patients. Additionally, the company has formed partnerships with several organizations to enrich its database resources (see box on page 66).

With the necessary resources and partnerships in place, Mr. Eisenach's goals for the company are, he says, straightforward.

"We're trying to keep it reasonably simple, focusing on our three major offerings. We can't do everything for everybody."

Firstly, Acurian offers investigator profiling — the service offering that the company was founded on more than three years ago — which has at its core the investigator database, offering information about physicians and

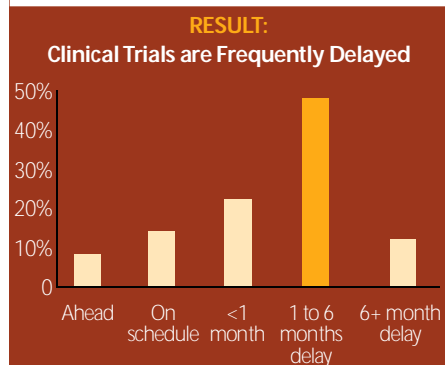


them, laid out exactly what they are, making it easier for the sales-operation team to go out and talk to customers about what we do and how we do it.

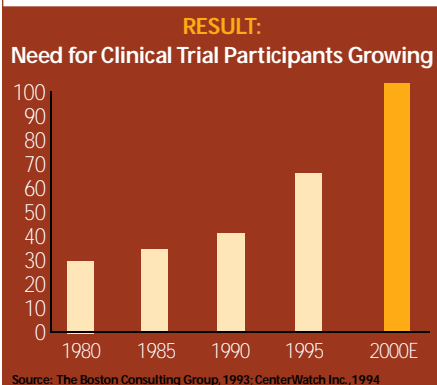
Now that the company has the resource and asset base that we want, we can move forward. We are trying to keep everything reasonably simple at the company by offering three straightforward services to our clients.

We've got three variants that we work with here and we've organized our operations around those three variants — investigator profiling, patient-identification service, and direct-to-patient, where we identify patients who may be interested in the clinical trial.

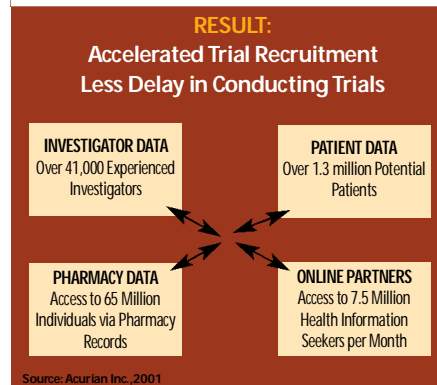
FACT: More than 75% of trials fail to meet patient enrollment deadlines



FACT: More clinical trials are taking place per new drug



FACT: Acurian is Matching Qualified Investigators with Targeted Patients



what they do. Secondly, there is the patient-identification service, which enables physicians to identify patients willing to join a clinical trial. Thirdly, there is the direct-to-patient offering which, through Acurian's partnerships with pharmacy chains, enables the company to identify patients who may be interested in a clinical trial.

"This is how we are making a radical change in the way we find patients for clinical trials," Mr. Eisenach says. "Contrast that with running an advertisement on late-night TV — the cost of what we're doing is much lower and it's highly targeted to the people who are more likely to be interested in participating in a particular clinical trial."

Mr. Eisenach's goals are to build customer satisfaction and focus employee energy on the customer's needs and demands.

"We've built the recruitment site, now we're focused on delivery and execution, ensuring that we provide excellent service to our

customers," he says. "In five years time, Acurian will be very well-known for its ability to find patients and as a resource for patients to find trials to participate in for new therapies."

His arrival at Acurian in 2001 coincided with the company's need to take its business one step further. "I came to Acurian at an inflection point in its history where a lot of energy had been spent on building relationships and building assets," he says. "Now it's time to focus on customers and deliver a high quality of service to them. Since I joined Acurian, there has been a significant change toward focusing as much energy and attention on our customers as we can. If we can stay focused on delivering results to our customers, nothing will stop us from progressing."

A QUESTION of Style

The vision Mr. Eisenach brings to Acurian certainly has not meant sudden and uncom-

fortable changes for the staff. On the contrary, Mr. Eisenach believes it is in the company's best interests to guide and encourage those who report to him, not to lead dictatorially.

"My style is very much one of empowering individuals to make decisions," he explains. "My goal is to offer guidance and provide clarity around our objectives and how to accomplish those objectives."

"To me, a good CEO is one who has the ability to listen, to really understand how people feel and think, to be able to clearly articulate where the company is going, why it is going there, and how it is going to get there."

Mr. Eisenach says he has looked to leading executives who have had a positive impact, not just on company performance but also on staff morale.

"One of the things you can tell about someone and the impact they've had on their company is what kind of stories get told about them," Mr. Eisenach says. "In my career I have had the privilege of working with two individuals who have led multi-thousand personnel organizations where the only stories you ever hear about those people are positive ones."

That, he says, is extraordinarily rare, since even some of the most highly respected company executives have been said to use some element of fear to motivate staff.

"Some executives motivate by fear or intimidation or by their position, but then there is a special group of people who motivate through leadership skills and through personal quality," he says. "These are the peers that have had a very large impact on the way that I lead people, and lead teams, because I've seen how that has impacted their organizations to embrace change. It's a style that is very inclusive, it is not bullying or threatening."

With an ability to innovate and inspire, Mr. Eisenach has been able to move rapidly through the ranks to embrace roles of greater responsibility.

"My career path has been a fairly deliberate one — to move from a very senior consultant to the pharmaceutical industry to positions of more and more general management responsibility for organizations," he says.

"This is where I anticipated ending up upon leaving consulting — in a leadership position at an organization that makes an important contribution to the industry."

"Acurian is unique in what it is doing. The company is having a huge impact on the business of clinical trials and that's very appealing to me both intellectually, because I like looking toward the future, as well as professionally, because I'm leading a really talented and exciting group of people." ♦

PharmaVoice welcomes comments about this article. E-mail us at feedback@pharmalinx.com.

A deliberate path to success

MARK EISENACH - RESUME

OCTOBER 2001. CEO, Acurian Inc., Horsham, Pa. Joined the company with a view to helping Acurian to grow and further improve the launch phase of the clinical-trial process.

1999 TO 2001. Senior VP and chief operating officer, Nexigent Inc., Princeton, N.J. Founded global e-business subsidiary of Covance Inc. for technology-enabled clinical-trial services with three locations in the U.S. and U.K. Also a member of Covance GLC Executive Committee.

1999. Corporate VP, marketing and strategy, Covance Inc., Princeton, N.J. Reported to CEO, led global marketing for Covance in addition to continuing to serve as head of strategy. Aligned marketing function with business unit objectives, eliminated 20% of positions and reallocated expense to external marketing.

1997 TO 1999. Corporate VP, strategy and corporate development, Covance Inc. Reported to CFO and CEO, led worldwide business strategy for premier pharmaceutical development services company. Drove development of overall Covance business strategy, including alignment of historical acquisitions into five key segments, to focus on reducing time and cost in drug development.

1989 TO 1997. Manager (1993), The Boston Consulting Group, Chicago, Ill. Led more than 20 projects, resulting in significant change for clients in diverse industries.

1986 TO 1987. VP, sales and marketing, PG Calc Inc., Cambridge, Mass. Marketed fundraising software to non-profit institutions for start-up company. Expanded customer base from 60 to over 150 users.

1984 TO 1986. Tax Economist and Senior Consultant, Price Waterhouse, Washington, D.C. Analyzed numerous tax-reform proposals leading to the Tax Reform Act of 1986. Co-wrote three published articles.

EDUCATION. Harvard Business School, Boston, Mass.

1987 TO 1989. M.B.A. General management curriculum with emphasis on business strategy, finance, and operations management. First Year Honors.

1980 TO 1984. Harvard College, Cambridge, Mass. A.B. in Economics, magna cum laude. Harvard College Scholarship.

PERSONAL. Mr. Eisenach is married with four children and lives in Princeton, N.J.