Loop App Transforms Healthcare Communication and Connects Surgical Patients and Their Loved Ones

Crispin Clarke was already anxious enough when he took his mother in for cardiac surgery in 2015. But when Clarke and his family struggled to stay informed about her surgery, his stress level rose. All they could do was continually check in with nurses, which he knew added to the burden of the healthcare team who were supposed to be focused on providing his mother with excellent care.

It seemed obvious to Clarke that his family wasn't alone in their experience, and he was convinced there was an answer to this universal problem. That's when he had the idea for Loop, a startup that recently launched a mobile app designed to let patients and hospital staff keep loved ones informed on the day of surgery.

"Requiring family and friends to be physically present in the hospital to get updates or be expected to navigate the phone system was inefficient and clearly wasn't working," said Clarke, co-founder and chief product officer of Loop. "A mobile app was the perfect solution."

Industry:
Healthcare

Solution:
Kony AppVantage

Extensive market research including feedback from Marianne Yeung, M.D., who was running the Inpatient Department at a large hospital in Palo Alto, confirmed Clarke was onto something important. Yeung even offered to support the initiative as an advisor.

Clarke discovered that many people whose family members had gone through surgeries had a very poor experience staying informed. The primary point of contact always reported feeling overwhelmed from fielding the large number of requests for updates from family and friends. It was during this research phase that Clarke met Shannon Griffin who was then a nursing director at a large health system in San Francisco. Griffin had an immediate visceral reaction to the idea for Loop.

"It was one of those moments where you say, 'Whoa, this is brilliant, why didn't I think about this?'" said Griffin, who subsequently joined Clarke as co-founder and chief executive officer of Loop. "In my experience both as a staff nurse and hospital administrator, I understood the need. I understood how the app would fit into the healthcare ecosystem and how we could make it successful."

Griffin and Clarke both knew they should be focused on the vision behind the Loop app. They wanted to concentrate on understanding user needs, product-market-fit, and smooth implementation while building an empathetic and successful business. What they didn't want at this stage was to operate an in-house mobile app development team.

"We were looking for a turnkey technical solution that could be deployed quickly and enable us to scale rapidly with guidance based in deep mobile expertise that we could rely on," said Clarke.

Gaining an "AppVantage" with Kony

A Silicon Valley advisor to the young company recommended mobile and digital applications company Kony which brought substantial experience in developing applications that are compliant with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Kony also understood the caliber of quality that a mobile healthcare application had to deliver, and could effectively address any related security, privacy, and scaling concerns. It was a perfect match.

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> *Loop*

healthcare customers it has worked with," said Clarke. "We wanted the credibility of the world class enterprise that Kony brings."

Kony AppVantage offered Loop a solution that provided a soup-to-nuts mobile application development lifecycle, taking them through design and development to deployment and management. AppVantage also included every other piece of the process a company might need, from hosting, analytics and security to OS upgrades and support.

Perhaps most important, Kony's comprehensive capabilities enabled Loop to remain focused on its most important tasks.

"Our goal at Loop is to empower patients, improve facility workflow, and enhance communication between providers, patients, and support networks," said Griffin. "With Kony AppVantage, we didn't have to worry about the technical development of our mobile app and instead could focus on the innovative product design and implementation."

One of the most helpful features of Kony AppVantage for Loop was its testing environment, which enables users to see a live prototype of an app before it goes

into production. When the day of the launch arrived, Loop's leadership was on site with its customer, Golden Gate Surgery Center, confident that the app would perform as they hoped.

As expected, the deployment was seamless. Loop's Vice President of Design David Holl who has years of experience in healthcare app development, declared it was the 'smoothest go-live' he had seen in his career.

encouraged to do so to take full advantage of the features such as the clinical newsfeed and progress bar.

Within the application, it's easy for patients to set up notifications, privacy preferences, options for direct messaging with their registered supporters, accessing surgery care guidelines, viewing a profile of the healthcare facility, or sending appropriate pre-fabricated updates to their network when they arrive home safely and when they want visitors.
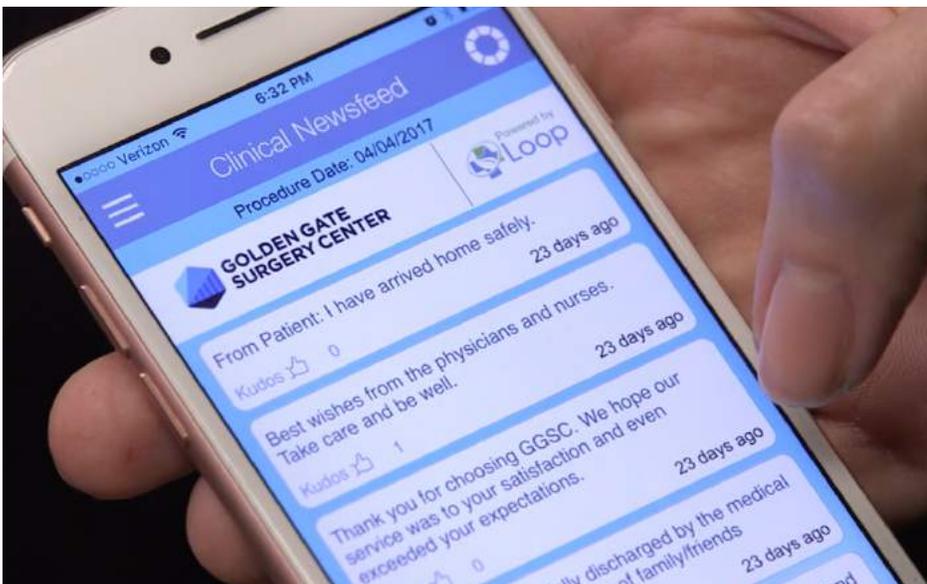
How Loop Works

The app works like this: The healthcare provider starts the process by inviting patients to register via email and text message through the Loop dashboard. Or invitations can be automated for every scheduled patient simply through an API integration to the healthcare provider's scheduling software. The patient then downloads Loop from the Apple or Android app stores. From there, patients invite members of their support networks into their communication "loop" via email or text, and may select contacts from their phone address books. Patients' supporters do not have to download the app to get notifications, which removes a significant barrier to adoption although they are

Once set up, hospital staff can use the Loop app to easily send messages to supporters regarding the patient's status in the different phases of surgery, when the surgeon will be in the waiting area, which room the patient is in, and when the patient is ready for pickup. To enhance customer service, external communication features enable hospital staff to send notes thanking patients and their supporters for using the facility.

The Loop app will soon be able to attach pre-surgical and post-operative instructions, which patients frequently misplace amid the chaos and disorientation that often accompanies the process.

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Enabling Improved Care and Better Patient Experiences

Loop is breaking through a communication logjam by simultaneously easing the burden on healthcare providers, creating a direct link between patients and their loved ones, and providing peace of mind to everyone in the support network.

The Loop app not only enables hospital staff to be more efficient and thus able to provide better care, it has also boosted the patient experience and improved the relationship between healthcare providers, patients, and their loved ones.

"We were looking for any opportunity to significantly improve our patient engagement and satisfaction," said Nicholas Colyvas, M.D., medical director at Golden Gate Surgery Center. "Having a tool that relieves anxiety for patients' families and keeps them completely updated regarding the status of their loved ones was an easy decision to make."

In these ways, Loop enables surgical facilities and other healthcare providers to effectively market themselves by creating a more positive experience for everyone touched by a surgical procedure. It also allows facilities to customize the look of the app with their own logos and social

media links, thereby putting their brands in front of patients' support networks which can stretch across the country and world. This combination of improved experience and brand visibility is projected to lead to increased patient retention and new patient referrals.

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Driven by Simplicity

What really makes Loop work is its ease of use by consumers and providers. Improving communication between hospital staff, patients, and patient supporters wouldn't be possible with a tool that was complex and required just as much time as

walking out to waiting rooms or making phone calls to deliver updates.

Loop streamlines the entire information-sharing process by enabling complicated group notifications to be shared from healthcare providers in seconds to authorized supporter mobile devices. Kony even enabled a web app 'touch and drag' feature for the Loop provider dashboard which makes the updating action quick and easy for the healthcare staff.

"As soon as the patient goes into surgery, the circulating nurse moves the patient's name on the Loop digital dashboard so family members are aware that their loved one has gone into the procedure," said Alexis Nunez, director of nursing at Golden Gate Surgery Center. "With a single click, Loop gives us the ability to update the patient's support network that the procedure is taking a bit longer, or let them know when the surgeon is coming to speak with them."

Clarke and Griffin look forward to delivering more patient-centered innovation and future plans for Loop include incorporating updates for other hospital fields such as Labor & Delivery, short procedures, and emergency departments.

"We're trying to bridge the gap between providers, patients and their support systems to promote better outcomes for patients," says Griffin. "And the greater your patient experience is, the greater your business is going to be."

Being able to simultaneously help hospital staff, patients, and supporters is the magic behind Loop, and with Kony's AppVantage supporting its mobile development efforts, the company is delivering on its vision of revolutionizing the way surgery-related communication is managed. In the process, it may very well help to boost hospitals and surgery centers' bottom-line, as well.

Need an app to deliver great experiences, fast? Kony AppVantage™ offers the best of both worlds for any business looking for a great app solution: robust pre-built apps that leverage industry-leading best practices and custom-built apps to get you to market faster, in the most cost-efficient way.