



Indiana Wesleyan University
**DYNAMIC LEADER
OF THE YEAR**



MAKING the JOURNEY

Bostic Driven to Improve Health Outcomes

By Tom Schuman

Removing the silos in the system and delivering a highly personalized health care experience for every patient. It's a lofty – and thus far – somewhat elusive goal.

Not if Brad Bostic has anything to say about it. He's been on a two-decade crusade to alter the past and shape the future. For the last nine-plus years, he has tackled the challenge as founder, chairman and CEO of hc1.

In official terms, the goal is for “each patient to receive personalized care leading to faster and more accurate diagnoses with targeted lab testing and precision prescribing that utilizes an individual's unique genetic makeup in developing the optimal drug regimen.”



The American Heart Association's Little Hats, Big Hearts program is one of the beneficiaries of hc1's community involvement.

In a more practical assessment, Bostic asks: "Why is it that when you order a Teddy Bear on Amazon, they treat it like it's life or death that they deliver it to you on time. But when you go through a health care experience – where it may be life or death – you get treated like a number? That doesn't make sense."

hc1 is able to contribute to changing the status quo by integrating more than 500 million clinical and diagnostic transactions each month into its cloud-based platform. The total was 23 billion and counting as of late August. The company used that information, and continued innovation, to deliver a series of solutions for its health care clients, employers and universities throughout 2020.

Bostic praises his team. "There's a belief at hc1 that you always have to be moving forward and innovating because this isn't an industry that stands still. It's not a situation where we're going to just have some silver bullet. We have to continuously innovate."

Early inspiration

The mission is a personal one for Bostic. His mother was diagnosed with stage 4 colon cancer in the early 2000s. He salutes all the medical professionals working so hard to care for her at the time, but also notes it was a system "where the caregivers could document things in their own little silos to do their jobs. It felt to me like we should have a more personalized approach to health care."

At the same time, Bostic was on the receiving end of sage family advice. His father, Sid, was a longtime banker – in South Dakota and Nebraska. (Side note: Brad visited his parents in Fort Wayne – his father's career led him there – after his freshman year in college. He traveled to several college campuses on his first trip to the state and ended up transferring from South Dakota to Indiana University,

where he finished his football career).

"Being the son of a community banker, I had a chance to see a lot of very successful people who were building and running their own companies. I think that had a lot to do with what formed my desire to do the same."

Similarly, his father-in-law, Dr. Dan Grossman, was offering another positive influence. "He was a very smart, successful person who lived in this mindset of anything's possible. He would begin with, 'OK, what do you want to do and how big can that be?' We would have discussions about how much health care needed to improve."

The combination of outstanding guidance "along with my mom, who was always such a great positive force in my life, getting sick ... when that came together that really lit my fuse and started this whole journey I've been on to do various things to make health care better."

Student business

Bostic's entrepreneurial side emerged while still a student at IU. The arduous task of purchasing and retrieving textbooks from the campus bookstore, combined with an introduction to the Netscape web browser, led to a new venture – students inputting their school and class schedule through the browser and Bos Books delivering the books to them.

He had the support of both his pragmatic father and his entrepreneurial future father-in-law. "It was a successful business that generated strong economics for a college kid. And I learned a lot about how you could bring a service to people using the internet."

After graduation, a stint at Ernst & Young opened the doors to many talented people and "exposed me to how companies work, and I learned more about health care." After a short time, he decided to start his own consulting company and the path to today's hc1 was underway.

Among the experiences:

- Bostech Corporation launched ChainBuilder, a web-based workflow and interoperability platform
- Bostech Ventures invested in a variety of enterprise cloud solutions since 2001
- Co-founder, president and board member of ChaCha, which became the most widely used text-based question and answer service in the country

Scott Jones, co-founder and the public face of ChaCha, recalls receiving a phone call from Bostic in the late 1990s. Jones had sold his original voicemail company (Boston Technology) and was moving back to Indiana. Bostic was seeking to acquire the Bostech domain name.

"That didn't work out, but he put me on his board. We did some acquisitions in technology



Bostic and Scott Jones teamed together on ChaCha, a high-profile, human-powered search engine operation.

together,” Jones shares. When ChaCha was being formed in the mid-2000s, “Brad was absolutely my first choice (as co-founder). I couldn’t imagine having a better partner, someone who is not only brilliant and innovative but someone who can motivate a team.”

Jones is also impressed by Bostic’s shift after ChaCha – forming hc1 in 2011 and later Health Cloud Capital, an investor in health care technology ideas and operations.

“He went back to his company and did a hard pivot. He’s so good at that, taking brand new things and growing them,” Jones offers. “They have been opportunistic in a fairly complicated regulatory type industry. Having the health care fund to go with their concept – some product, some service oriented – to slide back and forth between those concepts is not for the faint of heart.”

Data driven

Health care and data possess an inseparable but complex relationship. Enter hc1, at least when it comes to the power of laboratory tests.

Unlike electronic medical records and physician notes that can take on many forms, Bostic says his experience was “that every single place around the world that used lab data had at least some common set of test options.”

A routine physical and the blood draw so commonly associated with it “was really the experience that caused me to realize you have to go after and be outstanding at accessing a very scalable kind of data that can tell this broad story as your core.”

Thus, the mission of the company: “When we started to create hc1, it was predicated upon having the best in the world integration capability and the best in the world ability to use cloud computing and machine learning to standardize and normalize all this lab data.”

The work that took place in previous years allowed hc1 to react quickly when COVID-19 became a reality in early 2020. The company was able to step in and support its lab partners and health care clients.

Within a few weeks, it launched an interactive CV 19 Lab Testing Dashboard, showing testing rates and results as well as demographic

filters for those tested. It was made available to providers and public health officials at no charge.

“Our team literally worked around the clock,” Bostic recalls. “I am so incredibly impressed and proud of them when they realized, ‘Hey, this is a bad situation, but we have a very unique opportunity to do something about it.’”

Its expertise was demonstrated by an invitation to participate (and win) in a government-sponsored hackathon. “Everybody else had a lot of ideas, but we showed up and we said, ‘Those ideas are exciting and interesting, but why don’t we show you what we’re already doing.’”

On the fast track

That was only the beginning. In the ensuing months, hc1 also rolled out, among other initiatives:

- Workforce Advisor, which combines test results and a local risk index (based on employer and employee locations) into a dashboard to provide insight about safely returning to the workplace. A partnership with Sonora Quest Laboratories brought the tool to all long-term care and assisted living facilities in Arizona
- Workforce Advisor for Universities, with a focus on not only monitoring students on campus but identifying potential outbreaks or hot spots based on the micro analysis abilities of the platform
- Partnering with Eli Lilly and Company to analyze COVID-19 testing information

Again, hc1 was able to move quickly, with Workforce Advisor being developed in a matter of weeks.

“It is not the easiest road to be on to be innovating in response to a pandemic,” Bostic concedes. “But it’s also a function of how we’ve built the company from day one, which is really designed to have this underlying platform wherein we can create different solutions on top of that platform in a very efficient way.

“Think about it like this: Once you’ve built the smartphone in the operating system, and you want to add another app to it, to create some other kind of value, let’s say GPS, for example, it’s pretty fast to

The overriding goal for Bostic, speaking during a quarterly hc1 huddle, is to personalize health care as much as possible for each and every person.



create that app, right?”

Bostic reiterates that the work done this year in response to the pandemic and the new products are not a short-term proposition.

“We envision a day where there’s a whole ecosystem of partners who are leveraging the power of this to create thousands of different applications that can bring an improved ability to personalize health care.” He also doesn’t rule out a future in which the “capabilities that we provide being made available to consumers more directly.”

And there is a whole new understanding of the importance of laboratory data.

“Let’s just put it this way. I used to have to explain to people why lab data was so important,” Bostic says with a smile. “And now it’s front page news in the *Wall Street Journal* every day.”

Making the right moves

What makes hc1 and Bostic the leader in its field?

Bob Laikin, CEO of BrightPoint for many years among other roles, didn’t know Bostic about a decade ago but reached out to learn more about his company and its work.

“I heard he was a smart, aggressive entrepreneur who was doing good things not only for the businesses he was involved in but also the community,” Laikin recalls. “Brad is an open book. He operates like a public company in the transparency, and I really respect that.”

“I look at entrepreneurs and first, do they have a business vision and then are they able to execute on it and pivot as needed,” he continues. “Then, can they get the tools to be successful. Tools are everything from access to capital, recruiting and retaining great people around you. Brad has done a good job doing that as well. Brad is a real strategic thinker; most entrepreneurs are not. Most have their business plan on a napkin or in their head.”

Bostic is a board member of Laikin’s current Novus Capital Corp. effort, a “blank check company” focused on purchasing a business in order to take it public. Laikin lauds Bostic’s diligence, critical thinking and “relationships around the country that we have tapped into.”

In 2017, Laikin also brought Bostic’s abilities to the attention of the Eskenazi Health Foundation. Bostic is currently serving in his second board term.

Ernie Vargo II, president and CEO of the Foundation, says Bostic has been a perfect fit with his technology and health care background.

“Brad doesn’t have a huge ego. He has this really thoughtful way of including everybody in the conversation but leading in a way to a positive outcome,” he relates. “Anytime I have ever asked Brad to do something, there was no doubt it was going to get done –



Bostic and John Thompson, the 2019 Dynamic Leader of the Year, both serve on the Eskenazi Health Foundation board of directors.

usually that day. We’re grateful for that.”

When looking at what hc1 has accomplished, Vargo adds, “Sometimes this happens, that in our own community we don’t realize what we have. What Brad and his team are doing is transforming health care around the world.”

Growing our own

Bostic cites the progress in central Indiana and throughout the state in being places to build fantastic companies, but he also emphasizes the need to go further. He thinks hc1 can be part of that story.

“What I see as the next level is making it so that Indiana has the tech behemoths that are started here and built here,” he contends. “I think health care and health care technology is the optimal space where I would place that bet ... because of the kind of talent and expertise we have here in and around that domain.”

“I would put Indiana up against anybody in terms of this combination, this intersection of health care and technology. So, to really take Indiana to the next level, we need to grow an Apple here. That’s a lofty statement, but we need to do that.”

Among the primary factors is money – where it comes from and where it goes after a business success. The situation is improving, but too many times that money still originates from and returns to the East and West coasts.

“If you look at the other parts of the country where they’ve had these massive technology successes, it tends to be the place where they just know how to aggregate capital better than we do. It’s the difference between me being the acquirer of everybody else versus me getting acquired. Oftentimes, if I’m here in the Midwest, other folks have just been more effective at aggregating significant amounts of capital.”

“When you fast forward 20 years, my expectation is that we will look back and say, ‘We cracked the code on how to actually do

that capital aggregation, on how to execute better than anybody and become the consolidator and the grower that leads to this next generation of talent.’ ”

Doing for others

Bostic says he benefits from family – both at home and in the workplace. He enjoys watching his daughters’ volleyball matches and son’s basketball games. Snowboarding (remember that upbringing further West) and guitar playing are two personal pleasures. The support of his wife, Amy, has been present for many years.

As a young married couple with their first house and a dog, Bostic was going to be away for several weeks on a work assignment in a remote area.

“Amy was the first person to say you could do that, but you could also do something on your own; you could build your own company,” he recalls. “It’s pretty rare to have a spouse at that stage of life who’s that risk tolerant. And I certainly wouldn’t be doing anything I’m doing today if it weren’t for Amy and her confidence in me and her supporting the desire to go do something great from scratch.”

The work “family” comes into play in several ways.

“The No. 1 culture attribute within hc1 is curiosity. We’re always learning; we’re always moving forward. I know there are a lot of people depending on me, and I’m absolutely relentlessly committed to make sure that these talented people have the opportunities they deserve.”

“It’s both an external driver to do the right thing, to make health care better,” he continues, “and an internal driver to do the right thing by our team, who is here giving it their all and making sacrifices. I need to make sure I’m showing up with energy and really leading by example. And that’s what drives me.”