

A SPOONFUL OF SUGAR: DEVELOPING A MEDICATION-REMINDER APP

By: [John Moore](#)

Sticking to a health regimen means remembering to take prescribed medications. But studies of medication adherence show that patients often fail to stay with the program. A prescription drug survey published by the National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA) revealed that nearly 50 percent of consumers said they forgot to take a prescribed medication, while 24 percent said they took less than the recommended dosage.

Against this backdrop, [MEMOTEXT](#), a company focused on medication- and treatment-compliance programs, offers a medication-adherence service that issues reminders to a patient's mobile phone, tablet, PC or landline. The service is offered in more than 26 countries.

We spoke to Amos Adler, founder and president of MEMOTEXT, about how the system works and what it was like developing for the growing [healthcare app market](#).

How did you come up with the idea for MEMOTEXT?

Amos Adler: The idea originated before smartphones were prevalent. I had the idea for an SMS [Short Message Service] reminder service that was more broad: remember to tape your favorite TV show, a birthday, call your mom, shopping lists, etc. Once we gained a little traction, we did some analysis on the types of reminders people were sending themselves and noticed that the majority of messages were reminders for medication and health.

From there, the idea for a medication-adherence service was born. Once we did some research, we realized that there is a serious problem out there [in regards to medication adherence] and we could do something positive about it. This led to the integration of voice, mobile APIs and the creation of our PersonoLogic Engine to personalize messaging based on the behavioral and health education needs of patients.

How does the service actually work from the patient's perspective?

A.A.: Each adherence program is designed differently based on stakeholder requirements, and that includes elements like enrollment and message types. The first thing patients have to do is enroll into the program. Enrollment options include the Internet, fax, call center and text-to-enroll. From there, patients get to pick the type of message (phone call, SMS, email, mobile-push), the number/email where they want to receive the messages and the time -- which corresponds with the time they take their medication. Once patients are enrolled, they will start interacting with messages directly to their phone or email account.

Can patients use any type of mobile device or is MEMOTEXT limited to certain platforms?

A.A.: Yes, patients can use any type of mobile device on any platform -- Apple, Android, BlackBerry -- or simply their home phone to receive and interact with messages. The MEMOTEXT offering is not limited to mobile devices; we are able to communicate with patients to their home or office landlines, as well as to email. The diverse types of communication we offer in the programs means that we can reach a broader demographic of patients across the world.

According to MEMOTEXT, a typical reminder service boosts adherence to medication by 2 to 9 percent, but MEMOTEXT can increase adherence by up to 31.4 percent. What is MEMOTEXT doing differently to improve the adherence rate?

A.A.: Our PersonoLogic inference engine modifies the types of messaging an individual patient receives. Based on real-time answers to questions, we are able to gauge their knowledge of the disease, the medication, the lifestyle requirements associated with their disease and any incidents of treatment-related depression, if any, to provide a personalized adherence program. This means we are able to address an individual's barriers to adherence that suits where they are in their journey -- making the programs personalized leads to positive

behavior modifications that improve overall patient health outcomes.

What are the underlying technologies of MEMOTEXT?

A.A.: MEMOTEXT uses a media-rich, interactive broadcast campaign management engine and data management system. This platform allows for SMS, Interactive Voice Response (IVR), voice recognition, Web 2.0, email and mobile platform integration.

John Moore has written about business and technology for more than 20 years. Moore's articles have appeared in Baseline, CIO.com, Federal Computer Week, iHealthBeat, and TechTarget. Areas of focus include cloud computing, health information technology, systems integration, and virtualization.