Elie Lobel – CEO, Orange Healthcare, France



Access to healthcare is a critical issue around the world. At Orange Healthcare we believe that digitization is a major part of the solution to this problem

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Elie Lobel, CEO of Orange Healthcare, explains how digitalization is bringing together stakeholders from across the healthcare continuum, allowing increased information exchange and connectivity. Lobel also gives insight into the latest projects the company is working on to digitally transform healthcare.

How is Orange Healthcare positioned today as opposed to when you first took on the role as CEO three years ago?

Over the past three years, we have continued to establish Orange Healthcare as a key player in the digital healthcare area. Part of our success is due to our focus on two types of customers: Healthcare providers and the Life Sciences industry. Our efforts are paying off: in the past two years, Orange Healthcare achieved double-digit growth above 20 percent, and we are well positioned to continue this performance in 2019.

What have been the drivers of the company's growth over this time period?

This growth is being driven by four "solution areas". First, Orange Healthcare provides best-in-class data solutions that allow our customers to manage the health data journey. Orange Healthcare provides the solutions that are critical for data collection, hosting, protection, analysis, and

processing and that are compliant with current regulations

Our second driving force is related to connectivity and interoperability, which are at the core of our value proposition as a trusted partner in the health data journey. With access to the extensive technological assets of the Orange group, Orange Healthcare has the capabilities to enable different healthcare actors to securely access and exchange health data. Of course, with the acquisition of Enovacom, we significantly increased our capacity to address this area because Enovacom's services are very complementary to Orange Healthcare's, namely providing software solutions that are essential for the interoperability and the secure flow of data.

A third area of product development is the digitalization of patient-care pathways. This is linked to the need for healthcare organizations to make life easier for patients. In Europe, the experience of a patient at a hospital compared to that of, say, a frequent flyer with an airline is very different. Transforming the way patients interact with the healthcare system is at the centre of this concept. It is a question of making life easier for patients and creating efficiencies in their interactions.

The fourth driving force is the digitization of services for healthcare professionals, for example through telemedicine.

Orange Healthcare has both the capacity and the experience of managing large-scale telemedicine projects. There are many small players and startups in this area, but healthcare establishments and life sciences players required robust, industrial solutions that that meet the high regulatory requirements in terms of security and protection of healthcare data.

How are today's healthcare trends reflective of Orange Healthcare's current priorities?

The organization of healthcare is changing. In the past, healthcare organizations like hospitals were in isolation and not interacting with other actors. With today's care pathways, the need for regulated and public health data infrastructure is rising. These pathways are coordinated between different actors across the healthcare spectrum and the need to exchange and share data between different organizations, heterogeneous applications, and medical devices has never been more urgent. This need for integration is fueling our organizational engine and we are aiming to provide integrated platforms to make it possible for big hospitals groups and territories to work collaboratively and seamlessly.

The goal of Orange Healthcare is to provide a comprehensive set of services such as online appointment scheduling, Web portals for patients and healthcare professionals, automated check-

in and check-out systems, outpatient monitoring applications, etc.

How is Orange Healthcare positioned against other digitalization players in healthcare?

Our competitors vary depending on the country or region we are talking about, but in many circumstances, our competitors can also be our partners, especially for large, complex projects that require the extensive, specialized skill sets of a consortium of partners.

Likewise, we do not consider digital giants (GAFAM) to be competitors but rather potential partners. For example, Orange Business Services has been working hand in hand with Microsoft as a technology partner for many years. We have developed a lot of value for our customers through this partnership, and we are confident that there could be significant synergies in the healthcare space that we are now looking into.

Orange is the largest national telecommunications company here in France. What can Orange Healthcare' role be as the heart of the digital health cycle?

The entire Orange group has undergone a significant transformation over the past decade, with a greater focus on IT services that enable our customers to benefit fully from the digital universe and the power of its new generation networks. Healthcare is a complicated environment where you need to interact with different actors from patients to healthcare professionals, organizations, and payers. What makes Orange Healthcare special is that we interact with all these players at the same time. The current strategy that we have is definitely a B2B strategy which offers a long pathway with many opportunities.

With last year's acquisitions of Enovacom and Business & Decision Life Sciences (a data management consultancy organization), Orange Healthcare now has access to a team of 400 experts in the healthcare and life sciences industries. For example, with Business & Decision Life Sciences, we have the opportunity to expand our international reach into the Life Sciences and MedTech sectors with a clear value proposition around Big Data and analytics

An important and fascinating development is how we make it possible to go from the digital healthcare world to electronic clinical research files (eCRF). In other words, how can we make it possible to for the electronic CRF to be fed directly with real-life data from the patient or other sources? To address this, we are exploring how to gather necessary, real-life data in and outside of

the hospital from patients who are enrolled in clinical trials and transform it into an automated digital process that can feed into an electronic CRF. This is one of the challenges that we are working on and will be evaluating this year. Our expertise in the interoperability of biomedical devices inside and outside of the hospital gives us a big advantage in tackling this particular challenge.

What other collaborations has Orange Healthcare created with health stakeholders like hospitals, insurance providers, and MedTech and pharmaceutical manufacturers?

We have started a very interesting partnership with Sanofi that involves two projects. The first project deals with how to use chatbot technology to improve medication prescription and adherence. Dealing with patients who have complicated conditions can be challenging for doctors, so the aim here is to help doctors understand how drugs can be best applied within a treatment regimen. We aim at using chatbot technology to digitize pharmacovigilance and to create new communication channels with healthcare professionals. The objective is to allow physicians to work faster as access to information is simplified.

The second initiative we are working on with Sanofi is in the area of the diagnosis of rare diseases. There are nearly 7000 rare diseases, and, on average, it takes five years for patients to be diagnosed correctly. In France alone, there are 3 million individuals that suffer from a rare disease, and it is estimated that up to 50 percent are never properly diagnosed. We are looking at how computerizing the diagnosis process might help doctors recognize symptoms of a rare disease faster. When a doctor identifies that her patient may potentially have a rare disease, the patient can be put in contact with the appropriate expert through telemedicine. This allows the doctor and patient to find the right specialist and determine how to move forward with the treatment.

Moving forward in this area, one of the projects that we are also looking at is the use of artificial intelligence to reduce diagnostic errors for patients with rare diseases, with the goal being to ensure that patients get the right treatment faster.

What is the strategy to bring Orange Healthcare outside of France and have an international presence? What markets is Orange Healthcare looking at?

For several years now, Orange Healthcare has led activities internationally in areas I mentioned previously, notably securing and hosting healthcare data. For example since 2012, Orange

Healthcare has hosted healthcare data from implanted cardiac devices in patients located in 15 countries across Europe and North America.

As a global network and integrated solutions provider, we also have a strong value proposition around connectivity and interoperability for healthcare actors internationally. This is the case for example in Belgium and Canada. We are able to provide multinationals in the MedTech and pharma industries with solutions to gather healthcare personal data from all of the countries they have operations and host them in our data centres. Our objective for 2019-2020 is to increase our international coverage with Europe, Middle East, Africa, and North America as our priority markets.

Additionally, Enovacom, which is now an Orange Business Services subsidiary, has a strong commercial presence in Switzerland, the UK, Belgium and Canada. In 2018, Enovacom and Canadian partner Purkinje won the call for tender to enable the sharing of patient data for healthcare facilities across the province of Quebec. These are replicable projects that we can leverage internationally.

In the longer term, we will look at how we might address the Orange group’s global B2C footprint, which covers 28 countries across Europe and Africa representing 260 million household customers.

How does Orange Healthcare establish itself as it enters into new markets abroad?

Orange Business Services has a portfolio of 3000 multinational clients for whom we already provide a vast range of enterprise services such as connectivity, mobility, collaborative workspaces and many others. Our multinational customers in the healthcare space are increasingly interested in digitizing their operations, but also to have a clear digital strategy for the healthcare data that they host. There is a real opportunity to evolve these relationships beyond connectivity services to ones based on value-added digital services.

We have also increased our international reach through recent acquisitions, such as Base Farm from the Norway and UK-based Secure Data, as well as Business&Decision, all of whom operate internationally.

In the field of national healthcare programs, the software solutions provided by Enovacom are very advantageous. Enovacom’s simple yet innovative compliance solutions enable hospitals to use these services independently, without the constant intervention from Enovacom. The IT team from a given hospital can be trained with the software until they can manage it on their own. **.**

In your opinion, can France be a leader in the e-Health movement?

Naturally, Orange Healthcare is strongly convinced that there is a great capacity to develop state of the art solutions, not only in France, but across Europe. The GDPR, which was put in place just a year ago, is a key differentiating factor for all of Europe in the era of personal privacy and data protection, which is paramount in the healthcare space. France and our neighbouring coutries across Europe possess significant talent, with highly-skilled engineers, scientists, and a well-developed medical system. France, and all of Europe, can lead the way in showing that investing in digital healthcare can be a can have significant returns, especially in terms of and international competitiveness.

What is your vision for Orange Healthcare?

Orange Healthcare’s customer base is largely French – around 70 to 80 percent of the hospitals in France are our customers. The level of notoriety of both Orange Healthcare and Enovacom across hospitals in the country is very high. In countries such as Switzerland, Germany, UK, and Canada people will trust Orange Healthcare when moving to digitize their hospitals.

We are currently expanding to new countries where we can establish new projects. We particularly want to build new partnerships in order to address large transformation projects for national healthcare systems. Access to healthcare is a critical issue around the world. At Orange Healthcare we believe that digitization is a major part of the solution to this problem. We also anticipate changes in the way clinical trials are run, with having data flowing automatically between from medical devices to healthcare records…

Overall our aim is to make healthcare more accessible to patients all over the world.

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