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Executive Profile: Craig Collins

By **STEVE ADAMEK**

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Craig Collins is president and CEO of La Jolla-based health care technology firm Perminova, which recently closed a \$7 million Series A round of funding. The company develops and markets Web-based software for use in cardiovascular surgery and is pioneering health care's move to modern and secure cloud computing. Perminova is deployed at leading cardiology centers throughout the United States, including UC San Diego Health System and Mount Sinai Hospital in New York.

BUSINESS PHILOSOPHY

Essential business philosophy: Build a strategic competitive advantage by making sure your product or service is truly innovative and delivers value that isn't just marginally better than the status quo, but is better by a quantum leap.

Best way to keep a competitive edge: Don't be afraid to hire people smarter and better than you. That's because those types are essential to building great teams. And great teams always outperform individuals.

Guiding principles: Be smart. Be proactive. Be persistent.

Yardsticks of success: Delivering value to customers, employees and shareholders.

Goals yet to be achieved: Taking a startup all the way — from concept to initial funding to hyper-growth to IPO. I've been on each segment of the journey at various companies, but haven't been through the process from A to Z. Perminova has a real shot at becoming a start-to-finish home run.

JUDGMENT CALLS

Best business decision: Positioning Perminova to get on track for Series A funding and high growth.

Worst business decision: Early in my career, I took a job with an unethical manager because I thought that I could coach them into making the right decisions and doing the right things. It was a Sisyphean task that I've vowed never to repeat.

Toughest business decision: One of the most difficult things to do in a startup is to keep the team focused. In new markets with new technologies, there are always 20 directions you can go. But it's almost always fatal to chase every shiny object on the horizon. As a leader, it's critical to set the best course and be disciplined about keeping everyone motivated and marching in the same direction.

Biggest missed opportunity: When TaylorMade Golf first moved to San Diego County in the late '80s, I was a consultant for what was then a small, unknown company. They offered me a job a couple times, but I turned them down because I kept thinking, "Metal drivers? What's the future in that?"

Word that describes you: Persistent.

TRUE CONFESSIONS

What you like best about your job: Every day is a chance to create something from nothing, work with some of the most brilliant people in the world and help improve the delivery of cardiology throughout the United States.

What you like least about your job: The middle seat on Southwest Airlines.

Pet peeves: People who lack passion in what they do.

Three greatest passions: Family, Aztec basketball, business strategy.

First choice for a new career: Great American novelist.

Favorite quote: "I want my players to be committed, not just involved. And if you don't know the difference between commitment and involvement, when you sit down to your meal of ham and eggs in the morning, just know that the chicken was involved in your breakfast, but the pig was committed." — Hall of Fame baseball manager Whitey Herzog addressing the St. Louis Cardinals before spring training.

Favorite status symbol: My well-worn SDSU sweat shirt.

Favorite restaurant: Jean Georges, New York.

Favorite place for business meetings: Rubios.

Favorite way to spend time: Beating my son in "Madden NFL" (which happens about as often as a snowy day in San Diego).



Craig K. Collins

RESUME

Name: Craig K. Collins.

Company: Perminova Inc.

Title(s): President and CEO.

No. of employees: 20.

Year founded: 2008.

Education: B.A., English and MBA, San Diego State University.

Birthplace: Pocatello, Idaho.

Age: 51.

Current residence: Tierrasanta.

Family: Wife, Janice; son, Christopher.

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