

Andrew A. Brooks, M.D., F.A.C.S.

Chairman of the Board and Chief
Executive Officer, Cardo Medical



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Cardo Medical develops reconstructive orthopaedic and spinal products designed to reduce operative time, enhance surgical technique, shorten hospital stays, reduce recovery time and improve outcomes. Cardo Medical's portfolio includes devices for knee, hip, spinal fusion and motion preservation arthroplasty and replacement, many of which have already received FDA clearance. Cardo Medical has a robust and innovative product pipeline pending both USPTO and FDA submission and clearance. *ORTHOAEDIC PRODUCT NEWS* recently asked him about his experience.

ORTHOAEDIC PRODUCT NEWS (OPN): *What motivated your decision to build your own orthopaedic device company?*

Andrew A. Brooks, M.D. (AB): I worked as a design consultant to major companies previously, and was frustrated at the pace of innovation and the layers of bureaucracy to accomplish goals. I love orthopedic surgery and innovation and felt we could make a difference in the status quo and do things with a better standard.

OPN: *How were you able to finance your endeavors?*

AB: I had personal capital from previous healthcare companies I had founded and sold. I raised more private money from high net worth individuals. When the company got a certain stage we raised additional funds with Dr. Phillip Frost and his partners, and became publicly traded at the end of that transaction.

OPN: *How did you manage to make time to build your own enterprise and maintain a busy practice?*

AB: I have always had decent time with management and efficiency skills. I had already reduced the number of hours I was spending practicing as a result of demands of my former company.

OPN: *Are your company's devices of your own design or have you acquired them?*

AB: Our companies' products are primarily our own design; we have a couple products in our portfolio which were acquired or licensed.

OPN: *What was the biggest challenge you faced as a surgeon building an orthopaedic company?*

AB: As a surgeon myself, it provides a significant advantage to us, as I understand the needs of our customers from their perspective. So far, we have been fortunate in the reception we have had from our customers.

OPN: *Were there times when you thought of giving up? What kept you going?*

AB: No, the thought of giving up really doesn't enter my way of thinking. I expect to do well in things I put my mind to and am probably my own harshest critic.

OPN: *If you could relive the experience, what would you have done differently?*

AB: So far, I wouldn't have done anything differently yet. I am sure in a few years I will look back and have a different answer to this one.

OPN: *Do you think industry at large has responded properly to the needs of orthopaedic surgeons? What advice would you have for industry moving forward?*

AB: I think the industry as a whole has become very consolidated, which makes it difficult to respond to the needs of all orthopaedic surgeons. By and large the industry has done a great job, but we believe there is room for a smaller, more nimble and more focused company to fill in some of the needs surgeons are clamoring for.

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OPN: *What advice do you have for surgeons who are contemplating developing their own ideas into products, and perhaps starting their own device companies?*

AB: Look to at least get a provisional patent. Try to get the product as far down the regulatory path as possible before showing to other companies. Be focused and remain tenacious. All too often, I see my fellow surgeons with great ideas they simply give away. Understand that without your ideas, device companies' cannot succeed. The industry works by having a synergistic and complementary relationship between surgeons and talented engineers.

OPN: *What are your plans for the future?*

AB: To continue my focus and commitment in helping to build Cardo into a world class innovative orthopedic reconstructive and spinal surgical device company.

Dr. Brooks founded Cardo Medical in May 2007. Prior to founding Cardo Medical, Dr. Brooks built a successful track record in healthcare entrepreneurship. Most recently, Dr. Brooks founded Specialty Surgical Centers, a group based in Southern California. Specialty Surgical became the largest privately held surgical center company in California before being acquired by Symbion in August 2005. Specialty Surgical has over 150 partner-physicians and continues to grow and operate successfully. Dr. Brooks received his B.S. and M.D. degrees from University of Southern California. He can be reached at abrooks@cardomedical.com.

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ORTHOPAEDIC PRODUCT NEWS

CALL FOR EDITORS

ORTHOPAEDIC PRODUCT NEWS invites surgeon guest editors for issues focusing on biologics, hip/knee, small bone, spine, arthroscopy/soft tissue repair and trauma.

If you would like to participate, please contact John Engelhardt at 440.543.2101 or john@orthoworld.com

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