

# 6 INNOVATIONS FROM OTHER INDUSTRIES THAT HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD ADOPT

By David Devine

Rather than trying to come up with revolutionary ideas to improve healthcare all on your own, look to other industries. There are many concepts that have transformed retail, technology and financial services companies which could be applied to healthcare. By implementing innovative ideas that have worked for others, healthcare organizations can provide a better patient experience, lower costs and improve the quality of care.

Blockchain could help healthcare organizations finally connect disparate data to develop predictive analytics methodologies that generate actionable insights and improve care.

Six examples of innovative solutions that healthcare organizations should consider adopting are blockchain, omnichannel, artificial intelligence, software as a service, internet of things and services in a box. Some of these concepts are new to healthcare while others have been implemented within healthcare, but not to the extent that they have been in other industries.

## I. Blockchain creates a direct to consumer system

Blockchain is a decentralized database that records transactions across computers and relies on a network of users to continuously share, update and verify activity within this database. With blockchain, sharing information is easy, however the data is impossible to change. This ensures the accuracy of the data.

Blockchain has the potential to disrupt and transform many industries including banking. With blockchain, core financial services including checking and savings accounts could become obsolete as a blockchain-based infrastructure replaces our centralized system. In this system, everyone would own their personal banking record and could make transactions without needing banks to serve as the middlemen.

Healthcare could leverage blockchain in a similar way by removing the need to connect various medical records together to create a complete picture of an individual's health record. Instead, everyone's complete health history could be

assembled and stored, and new health information could automatically be added, regardless of where care was provided. This health data could be exchanged as tokens so that providers always have access to an individual's most complete health picture. In addition, blockchain could help healthcare organizations finally connect disparate data to develop predictive analytics methodologies that generate actionable insights and improve care.

## II. Omnichannel experiences to improve the consumer interactions

Omnichannel provides individuals with seamless experiences regardless of how they engage with a company.

Retailers, including Target, have created omnichannel experiences by integrating consumers' in-store, online and mobile experiences. For example, Target customers can use an app to browse for coupons, make shopping lists, order items on their shopping list and pick them up a few hours later in the store. The app can also be used to access in-store coupons, scan product barcodes for prices and pay for in-store purchases. The in-store experience also connects to the e-commerce experience as employees help customers order items that are not available instore and ship them to their homes. This creates an improved shopping experience for customers and one that is uniform regardless of where customers chose to shop. With nearly [five million uses](#) of the Target app each week, Target also gains valuable data from across shopping platforms to create a more holistic picture of each consumer.

To create an omnichannel experience within healthcare, organizations must integrate their consumer touchpoints by connecting patient portals, call centers, online scheduling systems, virtual appointments and in-person appointments to one another. This will allow patients to seamlessly access care from the time and place that's most convenient for them, and creates a

more complete, centralized picture of a patient's health information.

## III. Connect data using the internet of things

The internet of Things (IoT) uses various technologies including sensors and software to automatically connect data collected by various products. This data can trigger other devices to perform an action or send an alert to the device owners.

In nearly every industry, products are being IoT-enabled to create a better consumer experience. The FordPass app gives drivers the ability to unlock cars, check fuel levels and start their cars from a mobile device. At the same time, FordSync connects apps on drivers' mobile devices with the car, allowing seamless integration between the two. This also allows for voice commands to order products via these apps while driving.

IoT could transform many aspects of the healthcare industry. For instance, digital therapeutics could disrupt the pharmaceutical industry by creating treatment programs tailored to an individual's specific health condition. By connecting medical information with data from mobile devices and other technologies, it will be easier to optimize treatment plans. In some cases, these programs could help increase adherence to medication regimes by monitoring usage and alerting an individual of a missed medication dose via mobile apps.

Another use for IoT is the [Integration of radiofrequency identification \(RFID\) tag](#) information with other data to increase safety and efficiency. Many healthcare organizations already use RFID tags to track and monitor instruments used during surgery. This accounts for all tools and devices, creating a safer surgery experience. However, outside of the operating room, RFID tags can provide valuable insight on device availability and supply usage, and more accurate clinical care documentation. Connecting various devices

together (along with the data they collect and other patient information) could also provide valuable insights to physicians.

#### IV. Use software as a service to lower costs and improve data access

Software as a service (SaaS) is a concept where software is hosted in the cloud (rather than in a private data center or on-premise system) and distributed to end users via the internet. Many businesses use the SaaS tool Salesforce, a customer relationship management platform that runs off the internet. This allows all individuals within a business to access and update information in the application, without the maintenance and overhead fees that come with traditional software.

Healthcare organizations are adopting cloud-based applications for various business functions and to manage electronic health records (EHRs), but the opportunity to fully capitalize on SaaS has not been realized. For instance, with SaaS data is stored uniformly. With all the data stored in the same way, it is easier for clinicians to tap into this data and use it for clinical decision making. This could help identify the best treatment options for a given patient by looking at outcomes from patients with similar medical backgrounds. SaaS also offers the opportunity to not only sync data, but to connect all patient data including appointments, labs, imaging and medical information in one central location.

#### V. Use data to improve healthcare with artificial intelligence

Artificial intelligence uses data and algorithms to teach computers and machines to perform certain tasks or to make decisions based on data.

Amazon's artificial intelligence (AI) capabilities allow them to accurately recommend products to consumers based on prior purchases, viewing habits and other data. By taking their vast amount of consumer insight data and making it

meaningful, they have been able to stay relevant and top of mind, ultimately leading to repeat purchases and loyal customers. In the same way, taking the massive amounts of data housed within EHRs and turning it into actionable insights could help providers predict health conditions more accurately, identify better treatment options and lead to better health outcomes. Similarly, data could be used to stop a health problem before it ever occurs by identifying patterns within data that signal a condition may arise. Many companies are also working to develop AI solutions that use machine learning to read MRIs and other scans.

#### VI. Offer services in a box

Subscription-based models that provide a set of services, professional support and some basic how-to guides are becoming commonplace in many industries. These "services in a box" bring particular expertise to consumers at a lower price compared to traditional offerings.

Online services, like LegalZoom, are disrupting the legal industry by providing legal services significantly less than paying for a lawyer. With these offerings, customers pay for a subscription, which includes an outlined set

Within healthcare, subscription-based service models could provide patients with defined services or offerings for a set price. This could allow patients to have more access to providers for things like virtual chats or easier scheduling. Subscription-based models could give smaller physician practices the opportunity to collaborate with each other and "bundle" services, while still remaining independent.

The ways in which other industries use data and technology to innovate will be critical for healthcare organizations to adopt as they seek to evolve and improve.

## Key Takeaways

To be successful in the evolving healthcare market, organizations must:

### Think differently.

Identify innovative ideas from outside industries that can be applied to your organization.

### Plan differently.

Use the lessons learned from other industries to create new operating models and implement technologies that can lower cost, provide more consumer-centric care or improve quality of care.

### Act differently.

Build the healthcare delivery system of tomorrow by continually investing in new technologies while maximizing the value of these investment and develop a culture of innovation within your organization.



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