

Creating a Digital Culture in your Healthcare Organization

TRANSFORMING THE PATIENT EXPERIENCE THROUGH TECHNOLOGY INVESTMENT

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Digital technology is essential to the [consumer experience](#). From retail and travel to hospitality and banking, consumers have come to expect a certain level of value and convenience that only digital technology can provide.

Prioritize technology investments that consider both the needs of the consumer and the experience of providers, physicians and staff.

The healthcare consumer experience is no exception. Digital health — the digital technologies that improve health by making healthcare more accessible and personal — is revolutionizing how consumers seek, receive and manage care. Healthcare organizations can deliver better consumer experiences if they have an established digital culture that embraces technology for its power to enable positive change.

To establish a digital culture, functional leaders will need to engage leaders in the information technology (IT) department to gain their buy-in, insights and internal support. From there, leaders can determine the technology investment strategy that best serves the organization and its consumers, emphasizing interoperability for seamless experiences.

Finding True North With IT

Because digital culture sits at the intersection of technology, operations, strategy and IT, healthcare leaders are wise to bring in the expertise, insight and perspective of leaders in these respective areas when creating or enhancing the organization's digital culture. Leaders must collaborate to reverse engineer how the organization transforms from its current state to its desired state: a robust digital culture that serves consumers' most pressing needs, or the "true north." By defining the organization's true north together, operations, strategy and IT leaders can successfully implement changes to support a growing digital culture while also aiding in the [change management](#) aspects of the initiative, such as stakeholder buy-in and staff and physician adherence to behavioral changes.

Making Technology Investments With the Consumer (and End User) in Mind

Historically, consumers have had two options for interacting and engaging with their providers: call in or visit an office. Today, digital health tools provide consumers new ways to communicate with their providers quickly, easily and on their own time.

That said, it isn't enough for healthcare organizations to simply turn on digital capabilities. They must prioritize technology investments that consider both the needs of the consumer and the experience of providers, physicians and staff. Since they are the ones who will actually use the tool, it is a worthwhile endeavor to include them in the creation or choosing of tools. Best practices for determining technology investment are to look for devices and programs that:

- **Empower patients to maintain their health outside of a clinical setting.** [Apps](#) and [wearable](#) devices that provide digestible and actionable information can help consumers feel in control and encourage them to practice healthy behaviors.
- **Give patients the care they want, when and where they want it.** [Telehealth](#) programs and online patient portals provide greater access and convenience for consumers to schedule appointments, receive test results and get common health questions answered — all without disrupting daily life. This is particularly significant for patients in rural areas who would otherwise need to travel to receive care.
- **Enable patients to make better decisions.** Consumer contributions to healthcare costs are growing. Making it easy to find quality data and pricing information on a user-friendly website gives consumers confidence that they are making the best choices for themselves. This also helps patients stay well and manage disease with minimal disruption.

Patient-Centric Interoperability

Healthcare organizations can improve the patient experience with the right individual tools. However, by prioritizing interoperability when choosing those tools, they can do more than improve the patient experience: they can transform it.

[Interoperability](#) is essential for creating a unified digital culture. A system that not only aggregates important data but also communicates that information across the organization allows providers to make better business decisions, saving them time and money. But interoperability's true value is in the impact it has on patients, especially in the midst of the industry's shift toward value-based care. The more information providers have on their patients, the more value providers can bring to each patient interaction in the form of more accurate diagnoses and more effective treatments, ultimately producing better patient outcomes. As with any exchange of data across digital platforms, healthcare organizations must take proactive measures to maintain digital trust by protecting patient data through a robust cybersecurity strategy.

Digital technology is only going to become more prominent in consumers' daily lives. For healthcare organizations to create better outcomes for their consumers, they must have an organizational culture that understands and embraces digital technology for the positive changes it enables. Healthcare leaders can not only improve their organizational performance but transform the consumer experience by prioritizing channels that are familiar, accessible and effective.

Key Takeaways

To create an effective digital culture within their organizations, healthcare leaders must:

Think differently.

Digital cultures embrace technology because of what it can do to transform experience and outcomes, not because it's flashy and nice to have.

Plan differently.

Collaborate with leaders from operations, strategy and IT to establish a strong, digital foundation.

Act differently.

Choose tools that enable data integration and create a unified digital culture to get the most for your patients and providers.



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