



Healthcare market insights: 5 priorities for digital transformation

Digital tools, technology, and data analytics are critical drivers of innovation and efficiency in healthcare. To understand how healthcare organizations are navigating the ever-evolving digital landscape, Huron surveyed CTOs, CIOs, and other technology leaders at national and regional healthcare systems and academic medical centers. Our research surfaces new insights about digital transformation priorities, challenges, and growth opportunities shaping the industry's future.

In Brief

- Healthcare organizations are prioritizing foundational digital investments, including cloud optimization, data management, and data security.
- Data integration and interoperability challenges persist, limiting healthcare systems from gleaning meaningful insights and making data-informed decisions.
- AI adoption remains cautious yet impactful, with leaders focusing on strengthening foundational elements to expand use cases from operational functions to clinical applications.



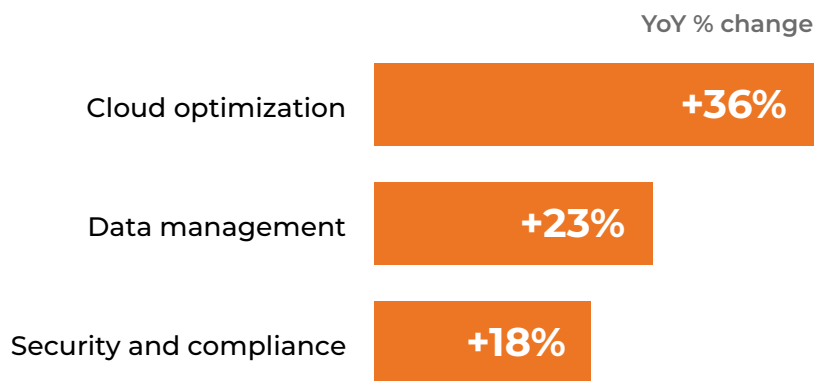
Key digital insights:

1. Leaders narrow in on infrastructure modernization

Leaders are prioritizing foundational technology investments as prerequisites for broader digital initiatives. Cloud optimization emerges as the top digital transformation priority, followed by data management, and security and compliance. Increased focus in these areas signals a mature approach to digital transformation — one that recognizes robust infrastructure as the cornerstone of data-driven decision making.

Top 3 digital transformation priorities

% change in technology leaders indicating “highest priority” from the previous year



2. Data integration is an elusive strategy

Despite widespread recognition of data's strategic value, healthcare organizations continue to grapple with integration challenges. **Only 17% of leaders say their organization has a unified view of their data across teams and departments**, compared with half of leaders who report a more fragmented approach. Massive data volumes coming from disparate or incompatible data sources make it difficult to maintain data integrity and make meaningful use of information. Leaders say ensuring data integrity across partner organizations is their top digital challenge.

How does your organization currently utilize analytics and insights to enhance operations, market offerings, and drive transformation?

% technology leaders selecting relevant response

17%
We have a comprehensive data strategy with a fully integrated data management system that provides predictive and prescriptive analytics, driving decision-making.

32%
We are in the early stages of organizing and managing data for analytics and insights, focusing on understanding current operations to date.



1%
We do not have a broader strategic approach, using analytics tools for a limited purpose.

50%
We use analytics in certain key areas but haven't fully integrated it across all organizational aspects.

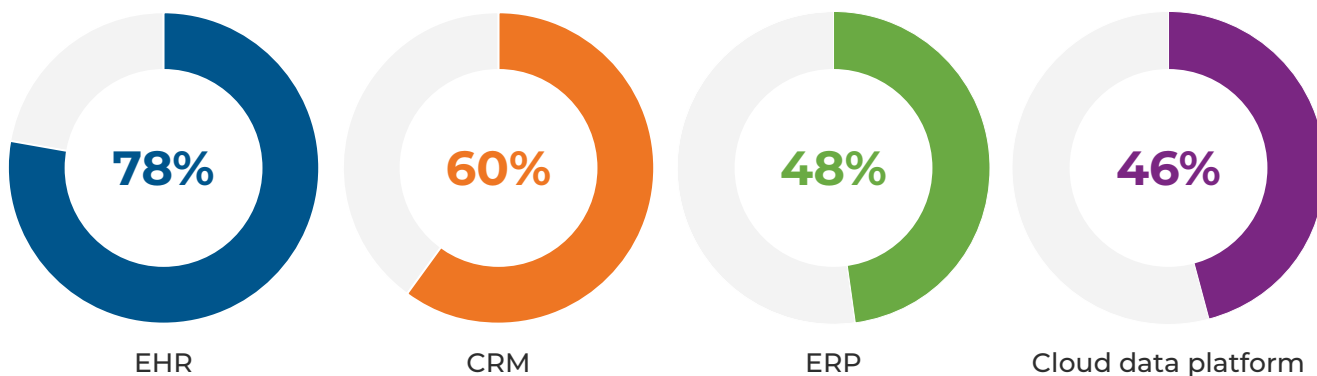


3. Lack of interoperability impedes access to meaningful insights

Like data integration, interoperability is a key enabler for better decision making and delivering high-quality care. Yet, most technology leaders report low to moderate levels of interoperability between core technology systems.

What is the level of interoperability of your organization's core technology?

% technology leaders reporting **low** and **moderate** levels of interoperability



“As data strategies mature, we’ll be able to assimilate knowledge sources from traditional systems that collect information (tabular data), but also collect observable data with audio, video, and IoT devices that will give us information in real time. The convergence of all that knowledge will transform care delivery by increasing the speed of time to information.”

— Michael Holt, principal, data analytics and management

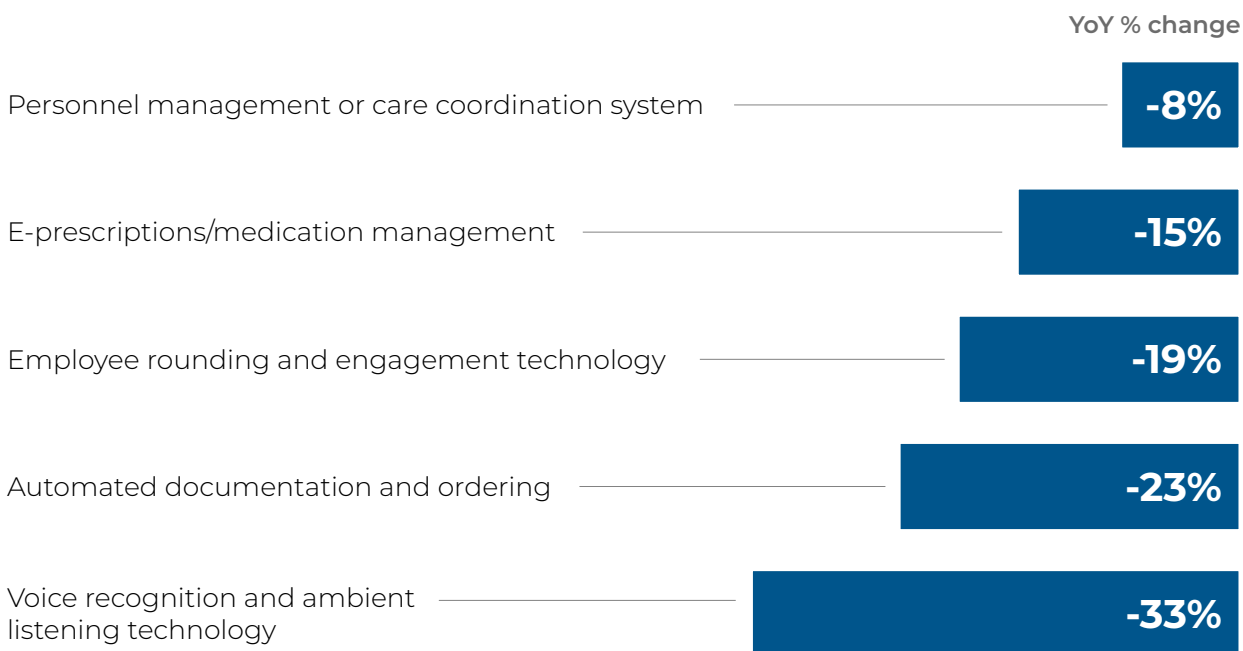
4. Frontline tools spark renewed attention, investment

As workforce shortages and burnout mount, [technology that enables healthcare workers](#) to do their jobs efficiently and effectively has become an urgent priority. However, just 60% of leaders say their organizations execute digital apps and tools for healthcare workers well — a sharp drop from 74% in our previous survey.

Leaders note a particularly steep decline in how well their organizations integrate specific workforce tools, including automated documentation and ordering, and voice recognition and ambient listening technology. These areas represent key opportunities to increase job efficiency moving forward.

How well does your organization execute these digital apps and tools for healthcare workers?

% change in technology leaders selecting “extremely well” from previous year



Leaders recognize that technology plays a vital role in improving the employee experience, operational efficiency, and [care delivery](#). **Nearly three-quarters (71%) of leaders deem digital apps and tools for their staff an immediate priority, with 60% planning a significant investment.**

5. Leaders deaccelerate AI initiatives, prioritize fundamentals

While artificial intelligence (AI) commands significant attention in healthcare, our research reveals a nuanced approach to its implementation. Organizations are strategically prioritizing data and technology infrastructure before pursuing large-scale AI initiatives to [ensure a solid foundation](#) for success.

“Organizations get excited about AI, sometimes for the wrong reasons. It risks becoming a shiny toy instead of a strategic tool. Organizations that have modernized their infrastructures to lay a healthy digital foundation and those with clear business objectives tend to be more successful in realizing the benefits of AI tools. We’re just scratching the surface of what’s possible.”

— Fanny Ip, managing director, digital and automation

Where deployed as part of a comprehensive digital strategy, AI is delivering notable outcomes, with leaders reporting particularly strong success in five areas.

How well does your organization execute the following advanced analytics, automation, and AI activities?

% technology leaders reporting “well” or “extremely well”



71%

Clinical appeals and denials



62%

Manual task automation



59%

Predictive patient status monitoring



57%

Accounts payable auditing and monitoring



56%

Predictive patient journey orchestration, including disease risk prediction

Leaders plan to focus on clinical AI applications, such as real-time clinical analytics and population health monitoring, as they shore up core technology and infrastructure.

What is the opportunity for healthcare technology leaders?

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