

What kind of doctor?



FOCUS ON

Digital Front Door

How Health Systems Are Closing
the Digital Experience Gap

AN EXCLUSIVE SPECIAL REPORT FROM

eHealthcare
STRATEGY & TRENDS

A Message from the President



A seamless digital experience can make the difference between a patient choosing your organization or looking elsewhere. The digital front door plays a central role in how health systems present themselves and deliver on their brand promise.

Yet building an effective digital front door requires more than good design. It requires a clear strategy, cross-functional coordination, and a deep understanding of patient needs at every step of their journey.

This new report from [eHealthcare Strategy & Trends](#) examines how leading hospitals and health systems around the country create digital experiences that work for patients.

Our goal for this report — and all [eHealthcare Strategy & Trends](#) member content — is to give you tools and tips, information and inspiration to help you succeed as a digital leader at your organization. We are confident that you will find high value, actionable ideas you can put to work today.

For more expert guidance that will help you stay current with emerging trends, visit ehealthcarestrategy.com today.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt Humphrey".

Matt Humphrey
President
Plain-English Media
Publisher of [eHealthcare Strategy & Trends](#)
and [Strategic Health Care Marketing](#)

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The Pizza Tracker Problem: Why Health Care Still Has a Patient Experience Gap

By [Susan Dubuque](#)

Industry expert Ben Dillon unpacks how retail giants have set a new standard for digital experience — one that health care must now rise to meet.

Imagine ordering a pizza and watching in real time as it's prepped, baked, boxed, and delivered — a simple, seamless experience powered by technology. Now, contrast that with sitting in a waiting room at your doctor's office, unsure how much longer you'll be waiting or if they've simply forgotten that you're there. It's a jarring comparison, but one that highlights the persistent gap between health care and other industries when it comes to [digital experience](#).

That comparison came from Ben Dillon, president and CEO at Geonetric, during a recent webinar on digital patient experience. It perfectly illustrates what many in the field already know: Health care's digital experience often lags behind the expectations of modern consumers — expectations shaped not by hospitals but by brands like Amazon, Netflix, and Domino's.

“Most consumers aren't engaging with the health care system that often, so their expectations aren't built on what we've done in the past. They're shaped by the best-in-class experiences they're having every day online. That's a tough standard to meet,” says Dillon.



Ben Dillon, president and CEO at Geonetric

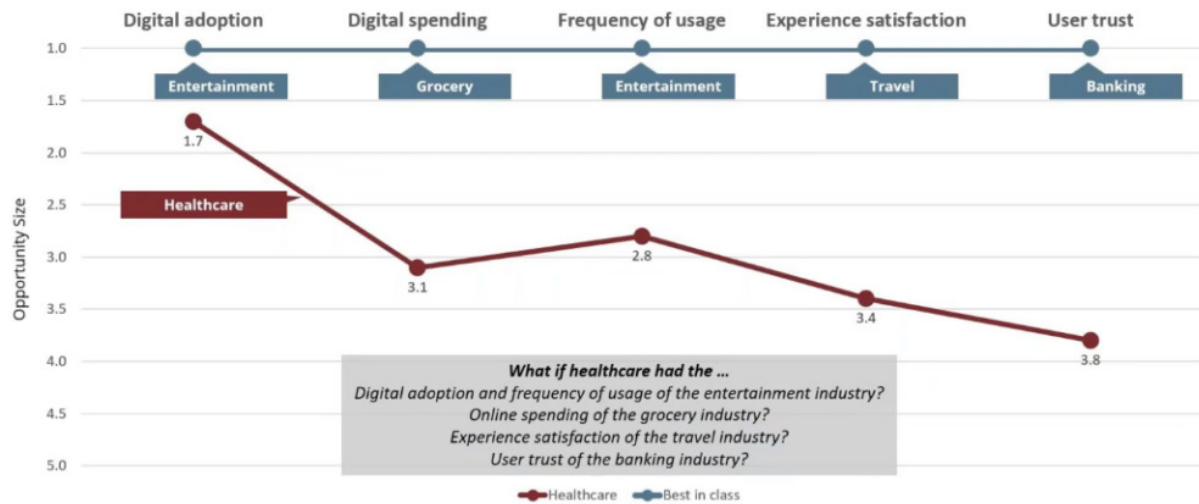
We followed up with him for a deeper dive into digital experience. Read the full article to explore how health care marketers can more closely align patient experience with consumer expectations influenced by major brands.

Take a Page from the Retail Playbook

Consumers expect digital experiences that are seamless, intuitive, and personalized. In health care, delivering that level of service can be uniquely challenging.

Dillon shared data from McKinsey showing that health care continues to trail industries like travel, banking, and retail in key areas of digital engagement. “Unfortunately, the red line on the chart is health care,” he notes. “We've got some catching up to do.”

Other industries are raising the bar for digital experience



McKinsey & Company, Global Digital Sentiment Insights Survey

Consumer perceptions of the digital healthcare experience compared to digital experiences in other industries.

A Clear Gap Between Priorities and Performance

[Geonetric's](#) research backs this up. In its *Healthcare Digital Marketing Trends Survey*, the company found that creating a positive [consumer experience](#) consistently ranks as one of the top goals for digital teams at health systems. Yet, it's also one of the areas where organizations feel the least confident in their performance.

“There’s a clear recognition that consumer experience is the number one thing to accomplish all the other goals,” Dillon says. “But we’re also seeing that it’s the biggest gap between what’s important and what we’re delivering.”

That disconnect isn’t just frustrating for patients — it’s a business risk. Poor digital experiences can erode trust, drive patients to competitors, and undermine brand loyalty. “In an era where patients have more options and information than ever, health care organizations can’t afford to ignore the digital front door,” says Dillon.

Personalization Still Isn’t the Norm

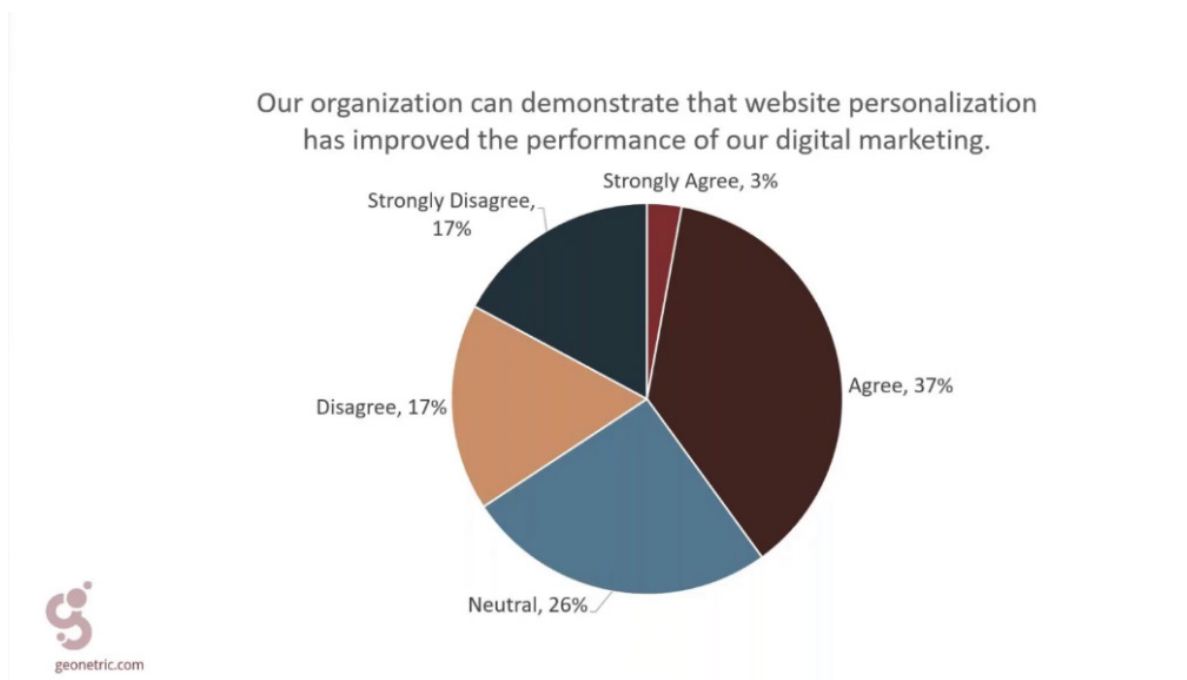
One key area where health care falls short is [personalization](#). Despite years of buzz, few organizations have fully implemented personalization strategies on their websites or digital platforms.

Dillon says, “Only 22 percent of health systems say they have a personalization program in place, while another 50 percent report using it only on an ad hoc basis. That leaves nearly a third with no personalization efforts at all.”

Why the slow uptake? “A lot of the use cases we see in other industries don’t translate easily to health care,” says Dillon. “It’s not like retail, where you can recommend a product. This is about people’s health — it’s more sensitive, more complex.”

But organizations that are leading in digital experience tend to be the ones investing in personalization. “There’s a high correlation,” Dillon explains. “The leaders are doing it better and seeing value for it.”

It’s not easy. Only 3 percent of organizations strongly agree that personalization has significantly improved their performance. Another 17 percent strongly disagree. “That mixed response suggests that the technology alone isn’t a silver bullet. It takes strategy, patience, and integration across systems to pay off truly,” Dillon says.



Geonetric’s Healthcare Digital Marketing Trends Survey shows the perceived contribution of personalization in improving digital marketing. Download a courtesy copy of the survey findings [here](#).

Meeting Patients Where They Are — But Inconsistently

There is good news: Health systems are engaging with patients across more digital touchpoints than ever. Beyond just websites, they’re now leveraging patient portals, apps, chatbots, and email campaigns to stay connected.

But that increased presence comes with its own challenges, namely, consistency.

“As the number of touchpoints has increased, one of the big challenges is that those experiences are not consistent,” says Dillon. “The visual presentation, tone, voice, and the way things are presented don’t feel like they are coming from the same organization.”

That inconsistency can erode trust and create friction. For patients already navigating a complex health care journey, every digital misstep adds to their burden.

Closing the Gap: What Health Care Marketers Can Do

Dillon offers the following insights on how marketing professionals can better align the health care experience with rising consumer expectations:

- **Reframe experience as a core competency.** Health care marketers need to reframe how they think about digital experience to close the gap between expectations and reality. It’s no longer a “nice to have” — it’s central to the [patient journey](#). Rather than treating digital experience as a support function, marketers can help reposition it as central to business performance, patient satisfaction, and brand differentiation. That means building experience goals into strategic plans, not just campaign briefs.
- **Invest in fundamentals.** Before chasing advanced features, evaluate the basics:
 - Is your website structured around user needs?
 - Is content written in plain language?
 - Are tasks, like finding a provider or scheduling care, intuitive and fast?

Marketing teams should lead usability audits and advocate for foundational improvements that remove friction.

- **Elevate content as a service tool.** Patients don’t come online for marketing — they come for answers. Marketers can shift focus from promotion to empowerment, crafting content that anticipates questions, supports decisions, and guides next steps. Done right, content becomes a powerful extension of care, not just a brand message.
- **Prioritize patient-centered metrics.** Traditional success metrics like pageviews or clicks don’t tell the full story. Marketers can push for measurement that reflects real impact:
 - Reduced call volume
 - Completed appointments
 - Shorter time-to-task
 - Improved satisfaction scores

These are the numbers that resonate with both leadership and patient needs.

- **Lead with empathy, not assumptions.** Digital transformation should start with listening. Marketers can lead qualitative research efforts — from patient interviews to usability studies — that uncover real pain points and unmet needs. These insights improve design and foster a more respectful and responsive health care system.
- **Break down internal silos.** Fragmented systems lead to fragmented experiences. Whether on your website, app, or portal, patients should feel like they're dealing with one trusted organization, not a patchwork of disconnected experiences.

Marketers are often the only team with visibility across the entire digital ecosystem — from web to social to CRM. Use that vantage point to align departments around a unified experience strategy, ensuring patients encounter a cohesive journey at every stage.

What's Next

“When I order a pizza, I never worry that it will be forgotten,” Dillon remarks. “But when I go to the doctor, I wonder — am I on the list? Do they know I'm here?” That's the pizza tracker problem in a nutshell. And until health care can deliver that same sense of clarity, connection, and control, the patient experience will continue to fall short.

But there's reason for optimism. As more health systems achieve digital maturity and expectations continue to rise, the pressure — and the opportunity — to get this right has never been greater.

“Health care marketers have a critical role in shaping a more modern, human-centered experience — one that reflects how people actually live, decide, and seek care,” concludes Dillon. “Closing the gap isn't just about catching up to other industries; it's about building trust, easing stress, and making health care feel like it truly sees the individual on the other side of the screen.”

[Susan Dubuque](#) is a strategist and writer specializing in health care and behavior change. She serves on the editorial advisory board of [Strategic Health Care Marketing](#) and cochaired the 2025 [eHealthcare Leadership Awards](#). Connect with Susan on [LinkedIn](#).

This article was originally published on May 14, 2025.

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AI-Powered Health Literacy: A New IHA Tool Offers a Competitive Advantage in Patient Communication

By Althea Fung

The Institute for Healthcare Advancement (IHA) leans on decades of health literacy expertise and generative AI to offer a tool that helps transform patient education into a driver of both equity and efficiency.

Healthcare organizations produce a lot of content, from patient handouts to digital campaigns. But making this information accessible and understandable for diverse populations is a significant challenge that can impact health outcomes.

Low [health literacy](#) is a costly issue, contributing an estimated \$106 billion to \$238 billion in unnecessary healthcare spending annually in the U.S. These costs stem from preventable hospitalizations, emergency visits, medication errors, and poor chronic disease management. As healthcare systems aim to control costs and improve outcomes, addressing health literacy is crucial.

The Institute for Healthcare Advancement (IHA) is tackling this problem with HealthLiteracyCopilot™, an AI-powered web application that assesses, revises, and translates health information into plain language while considering cultural appropriateness. This tool enables organizations to create clearer communications without overburdening staff.

“We’ve always championed the importance of plain language and health literacy,” says Stan Hudson, director of professional development & training at IHA. “But even when organizations train someone in these principles, staff turnover and the high material volume of health communication can make it challenging to be consistent. HealthLiteracyCopilot addresses the scalability gap with technology.”

Here, we’ll see how this new health literacy platform works, who has access to it, and why human oversight is still needed.



Stan Hudson, director of professional development & training at the Institute for Healthcare Advancement (IHA)

Built on Decades of Expertise

HealthLiteracyCopilot evolved from IHA’s existing plain language assessment methodology, PLATO (Plain Language Assessment Tool for Organizations). This method is designed to enhance the health literacy of patient materials.

Unlike conventional readability tools, Copilot analyzes content across four dimensions:

1. Plain language writing
2. Numeracy
3. Non-continuous text (like charts and tables)
4. Design elements such as white space and layout

Hudson explains, “Other tools might just give you a Flesch-Kincaid score. We’re focused on much more than that — how numbers are presented, whether graphs are interpretable, and if the layout supports comprehension and action.”

How It Works

Once users upload a document, currently limited to PDFs, the system runs a detailed health literacy assessment and provides a score. It then recommends specific line-by-line revisions that users can choose to accept or reject. Once finalized, the system offers [AI-powered](#) translation into one of approximately 15 supported languages, with plans to expand to over 100 languages in the future.

“We’ve built the system to prioritize clarity from the start, simplifying the content before any translation occurs,” he notes. “We have benchmarked the AI’s translation against certified human translators to ensure high-quality results, and we regularly see 90–95 percent agreement.”

“AI can suggest revisions, but it doesn’t fully grasp cultural nuance. That’s where community health workers and trusted messengers come in.”

Stan Hudson
HEALTHCARE ADVANCEMENT

The system was originally designed for large health systems, but it is also highly suitable for smaller clinics, nonprofits, and social service agencies. As a nonprofit itself, IHA plans to use revenue from enterprise clients to subsidize access for organizations with limited resources.

“We understand the barriers that smaller organizations face,” Hudson says. “Our mission is rooted in equity, and that includes making tools like this accessible to those who need them most.”

This video shows how HealthLiteracyCopilot works:



Human Oversight Remains Key

Despite the power of AI, Hudson emphasizes the continued need for human input, particularly when it comes to addressing cultural differences. “AI can suggest revisions, but it doesn’t fully grasp cultural nuance,” he says. “That’s where community health workers and trusted messengers come in. We recommend a final review by someone who knows the target audience.”

He adds, “The golden rule in health literacy is to know your audience and design with, not just for them.”

In a healthcare landscape that increasingly relies on digital communication, tools like HealthLiteracyCopilot represent a significant advancement. But Hudson warns that technology is only part of the solution.

“Digital tools can increase efficiency, but they’re not infallible. You still need a human eye to check for errors, especially in medical instructions. AI is getting better every day, but it’s not perfect.”

As of now, the IHA team is collecting usage data from early pilot partners and working toward outcome measurement.

“It’s too early for long-term results, but early feedback has been positive,” Hudson says. “Organizations are excited to finally have a scalable way to integrate health literacy best practices into their workflows.”

Althea A. Fung is a digital content strategist and healthcare journalist. She is a senior editor at NewYork-Presbyterian.

This article was originally published on July 21, 2025.

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Revolutionizing Care: How Digital Transformation Shapes Patient Experience at Intermountain Health

By Susan Dubuque

An unrelenting dedication — combined with a healthy dose of digital expertise — earned Intermountain Health recognition as a winner of the 2024 Mark Gothberg eHealthcare Organizational Commitment Award.

How do you align 34 hospitals, 400 clinics, nearly 5,000 employed physicians and advanced care providers, 68,000 caregivers (employees), and more than one million health plan members? For Intermountain Health, the answer is simple: by focusing everyone’s efforts on a unified mission to help people live the healthiest lives possible.



According to Mona Baset, Intermountain Health’s vice president of digital services, the organization’s strategic framework aims to transform experiences across the board by:

- Taking full clinical and financial accountability for the health of more people
- Partnering to keep people well
- Coordinating and providing the best possible care

“Many years ago, Bridget van Kranlingen, an IBM leader, said, ‘The last best experience that anyone has anywhere becomes the minimum expectation for the experience they want everywhere,’ says Baset. “This is how we approach our work to transform [digital experiences](#) for our consumers, patients, health plan members, and caregivers.”

She adds, “Healthcare no longer gets a pass in the experience department, and Intermountain Health continues to lead the way in transforming how all our communities engage with us.”

Read on to learn how this award-winning digital team creates a measurable impact on patient experience.



Mona Baset, vice president of digital services for Intermountain Health

Transforming Care One Click at a Time

[Intermountain Health's](#) digital services team leads the [digital transformation](#) roadmap and drives consumer and caregiver engagement strategies and the technologies that help enable those experiences. The team's responsibilities are vast and include the external website, intranet site, digital marketing and automation platforms, mobile application and patient portal development, [user experience](#), chatbots, and customer relationship management.

"Our work focuses on guiding people to engage easily and confidently throughout their health and work journeys, anywhere and anytime," says Baset. "Our road map leverages an 'Objectives and Key Results (OKR)' approach, empowering the teams closest to the work by assigning them problems and giving them the freedom to solve them. The result has been extreme ownership, innovation, and solutions that truly positively impact our communities."

Within the OKR, the team's key objectives are:

- **Experience:** Customers will recommend us to friends and
- **Access:** Provide care where, when, and how consumers
- **Engaged Caregivers:** Create an unparalleled caregiver

Guiding Principles Set the Course

The digital services team relies on guiding principles to support planning and implementation.

"We aim to make experiences easy and low effort by focusing on the user's needs, not our processes," remarks Baset. "We [personalize experiences](#) based on a deep understanding of our users. From a design standpoint, the team leverages the smallest number of connected platforms needed. It provides options for users to engage easily and confidently throughout their health and work journeys, anywhere and anytime."

"Our work focuses on guiding people to engage easily and confidently throughout their health and work journeys, anywhere and anytime."

Mona Baset
INTERMOUNTAIN HEALTH

Digital Transformation in a Sea of Change

The health system recently completed a two-year integration period as part of the merger between Intermountain Health and SCL Health, including a full rebrand of the combined organization.

“Amid this unprecedented change, which often can take five years or more, the team was able to complete the integration activities while driving digital transformation forward,” says Baset.

Significant accomplishments and outcomes for the past year include:

- The **consumer contact center** was revamped using a comprehensive agent desktop with integrated features like a patient 360 overview, a knowledge base, voice self-service, and support across many channels.
 - Outcome: Abandonment rates dropped by 85 percent year-over-year.
- **Marketing automation** was improved through Salesforce, enabling care gap campaigns and important communications with patients across all markets. New features include automatic reminders, follow-ups, and [online scheduling](#).
 - Outcome: These updates help ensure patients receive proactive care and save millions of dollars in primary care costs through value-based care.
- The digital team **combined four websites** and redesigned the enterprise site from a blank slate to update the brand, boost conversions, and make it easier for users to complete specific tasks.
 - Outcome: This led to double-digit increases in conversions for tasks like Make an Appointment, Get Care Now, and Sign In.
- The **Kyruus platform** was expanded to all regions, enhancing online search and scheduling for providers and locations.
 - Outcome: This generated an increase in the percentage of appointments scheduled online.
- **Two legacy consumer portals** were merged with consistent branding while keeping the main applications (Cerner and Epic).
 - Outcome: Launching a new mobile experience for Epic patients led to record-high app store ratings.
- **Multiple intranets** were combined and redesigned from scratch to create a better caregiver experience, including advanced search and personalization.
 - Outcome: Metrics demonstrate improved engagement and use of the site.

- The team extended the use of **intelligent automation and AI** in novel ways. Use cases include automatically identifying patients at risk for developing sepsis or pneumonia and drafting language for physicians when responding to patients within the patient portal.
 - Outcome: The digital team managed 4,000+ automations, returning more than 200,000 hours to the enterprise in a year.
- The team partnered with Qualtrics to launch **listening posts** across digital channels like the website, contact center, and provider search. “This helps us understand consumer success and effort,” says Baset.
 - Outcome: Access to real-time data allows the team to improve experiences and quickly address unmet needs.

It Takes a Village

Digital transformation is possible only when key areas across an organization come together to move initiatives and strategies forward.

The Digital Steering Committee comprises high-level leaders from Intermountain Health, including C-suite members and key personnel from technology, finance, HR, operations, marketing, and clinical care. This committee reports to the executive-led Digital Technology Services Executive Governance Committee and oversees four subcommittees to expedite progress with the right expertise and support.

“After the merger of Intermountain Health and SCL Health in April 2022, the digital services team doubled to nearly 100 caregivers,” says Baset. “Teams across the organization were brought together to form an even stronger new Intermountain digital services team.”

The organization recognized the benefit of having all [digital engagement](#) resources and expertise in one place, allowing the team to manage a single roadmap. “This structure continues to empower our caregivers to solve real problems and deliver innovative products and solutions quickly and effectively,” says Baset.

While digital transformation is led primarily by the digital services team, many teams are involved in delivering an excellent consumer experience.

“The marketing and communications team leverages the digital space to engage consumers further,” says Baset, “including our Healthcare 360 blog, social media posts, and emails that give patients key information they need in their health journeys, including nudges to help them fill care gaps.”

A vice president of consumer experience was hired in late 2022 to head a team focused on consumer experience and engagement strategy. “This group is responsible for a high-level enterprise initiative called ‘Partnering for Health and Healing’ that aims to improve experiences through the lens of simplification,” says Baset.

Digital Transformation Has Broad, Sweeping Impact

Key metrics monitored by the digital team align with Intermountain Health’s KPIs. Most metrics have shown significant improvement compared to the prior year, including:

Measure	Prior Year	Current Year
Making it easier to obtain needed care	79.7 percent	81.4 percent
Likelihood to recommend	63.9 percent	86.3 percent
My Health+ Net Promoter Score	+23.5	+54.2

“Digital services’ focus is creating an incredible experience for our consumers, patients, and caregivers, and the metrics tell us we are succeeding. We always feel there is room to improve,” says Basset, “but receiving third-party recognition is icing on the cake.”

Last year, Intermountain Health’s digital team received numerous awards, including Most Wired Level 10, Epic Gold Stars Level 10, and nine [eHealthcare Leadership Awards](#).



Watch the video to learn why the Intermountain Health digital services team enters the eHealthcare Leadership Awards.

Keys to Improving Patient Experience Through Digital Transformation

1. Establish a cohesive and strategic focus that aligns all stakeholders — from caregivers to technology teams.
2. Form cross-functional committees to oversee digital initiatives, ensuring alignment and leveraging diverse expertise.
3. Centralize digital resources under a unified team to accelerate innovation and implementation.
4. Deploy advanced technologies like Salesforce and Kyruus and incorporate intelligent automation and AI to enhance efficiency, save time, and reduce costs.
5. Optimize access and engagement by redesigning touchpoints like websites, portals, and mobile apps.
6. Empower teams and encourage ownership, innovation, and impactful solutions.
7. Enhance consumer-centric experiences by focusing on ease of use, personalization, and reduced effort.
8. Continuously collect and analyze real-time feedback to identify unmet needs and refine experiences.
9. Track key performance indicators (KPIs) and celebrate milestones, awards, and third-party recognition to maintain momentum and morale.

This article was originally published on January 13, 2025.

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How Press Ganey Uses AI to Make Healthcare More Human

By Althea Fung

Sentiment analysis can be a blunt instrument indicating only if the sentiment was positive or negative. What if there were a way to understand the nuances more deeply?

Healthcare providers constantly seek ways to improve the patient and employee experience, but in many cases the most valuable insights are hidden in plain sight. Open-ended survey responses, call center transcripts, online reviews, and employee comments are rich with meaning but challenging to analyze at scale.

Press Ganey, the Indiana-based healthcare analytics and performance improvement company, is tackling that challenge head-on by greatly expanding its [artificial intelligence](#) (AI) and [natural language processing](#) (NLP) capabilities.

“We’re sitting on millions of open-ended comments every year,” says Mike Thompson, chief analytics officer at Press Ganey. “They’re full of insight, but they’re hard to quantify. That’s where AI comes in.”

Over the past few years, Press Ganey has made a major investment in AI and NLP to help its healthcare clients better understand patient needs. Now, the organization has rolled out a program that analyzes open-ended questions on surveys, social media comments, and posts on review websites to find actionable insights.

Here, we look at how these expanded capabilities make a difference in call centers, some surprising findings about what patient feedback really reveals, and how deeper insights lead to change.



Mike Thompson, chief analytics officer at Press Ganey

From Noise to Knowledge

Each year, Press Ganey receives millions of [patient experience](#) feedback surveys. The AI Insights team wanted to use AI and NLP to analyze the feedback and use it to help healthcare organizations enhance patient experience. Thompson, who joined Press Ganey after decades of leading AI efforts in healthcare and finance, explains that the team developed a three-pronged strategy to do this:

1. Summarize
2. Compose
3. Recommend

“Summarizing means extracting valuable insights from text,” he says. “Composing is generating human-like responses or prompts. And recommending is where we predict outcomes or next steps.”

The heart of Press Ganey’s current innovation lies in its advanced NLP and text analytics systems. Rather than simply determining whether the feedback is “positive” or “negative,” Press Ganey’s AI dives deeper, identifying themes, intent, tone, and even emotional shifts over time.

“In our call center product, we don’t just track what’s said. We analyze the emotional arc. Did the patient come in anxious and leave reassured? That tells us whether we’re actually helping.”

For instance, the technology can analyze if a patient’s sentiment improves during a phone call or whether a staff member left a conversation feeling more hopeful.

“That’s only possible with open-ended NLP,” says Thompson. “You start to answer not just ‘what happened?’ but ‘how did it feel, and why did it matter?’”

Listening in Real Time

Much of Press Ganey’s early work in NLP focused on retrospective, passive listening, processing written survey responses and online comments after the fact. But now, the company is moving into “ambient listening,” real-time analysis of conversations, particularly in call centers. Press Ganey uses Microsoft’s AI and cloud solutions to drive the ambient listening initiative for the call center and [analyze sentiment](#).

“In our call center product, we don’t just track what’s said,” Thompson explains. “We analyze the emotional arc. Did the patient come in anxious and leave reassured? That tells us whether we’re actually helping.”

This deeper analysis helps organizations pinpoint operational friction and emotional pain points.

Making Feedback Actionable

Raw data is helpful only if it leads to change. That's why Press Ganey's AI tools are designed with a client-friendly interface. Dashboards, heatmaps, and word clouds highlight emerging trends broken down by demographic, location, or other relevant factors. The system can even prompt patients mid-survey with personalized questions based on their responses, increasing depth and relevance of feedback.

"We look for what people say without being asked," says Thompson. "Like if someone mentions struggling with discharge instructions — even if that wasn't on the survey — that's gold. We can spot trends like that early and help clients act."

One hospital, for example, noticed low cleanliness scores in a specific unit and responded by increasing housekeeping rounds. But comments analyzed by Press Ganey's AI revealed the real issue: food trays weren't being picked up for hours.

"That insight saved resources and focused efforts where they mattered," Thompson says.

"Open-ended feedback represents lived experience. We're not just mining data — we're making healthcare more human."

Mike Thompson
PRESS GANEY

Built for Healthcare, with Guardrails

Unlike generic AI models, Press Ganey's technology is purpose-built for healthcare, with healthcare-trained agents and topic modeling. Thompson notes that it recognizes medical terminology and distinguishes between patient concerns and routine mentions.

The models are constantly improving. "We monitor for data drift and model drift," he explains. "If something changes in the patient population or feedback trends, the model retrains. And we customize for each location so New York doesn't get misread by a model trained in California."

Driving Systemic Change

Ultimately, Press Ganey sees AI not just as a tech solution but as a human one. By amplifying authentic voices — patients, families, and healthcare workers — the company aims to help organizations collect feedback and truly understand and act on it.

“Open-ended feedback represents lived experience,” says Thompson. “We’re not just mining data — we’re making healthcare more human.”

This article was originally published on April 15, 2025.

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Banner Health's Location Pages Upgraded

By Wendy Margolin

Phoenix, Arizona-based Banner Health's digital team adopted an e-commerce mindset to modernize the health system's location pages, making it easier for patients to access the services and care settings of their choice.

Sometimes, creating the simplest online [patient experiences](#) requires the greatest effort. That was the story behind Banner Health's location pages, which received a facelift this year.

Updating the health system's 575 location pages was the last big hurdle the digital marketing team had to tackle to complete its consumer journey project.

Banner's updated website looked great, but the location finder for services, running on eight-year-old technology, was a problem.

"Banner had a bit of a digital identity crisis because it had a modern look and feel, but the functionality was still lagging," says Chris Pace, senior director of digital marketing at Banner Health.

Pace and his team wanted the health system's location pages to be as functional as e-commerce hospitality websites like Airbnb and Marriott, where shoppers always have a way to complete the transaction. That's not always the case in healthcare. The team needed to think creatively about how to build flexible calls to action aligned with users' search queries.

Prioritizing consumerism is crucial for healthcare providers, especially as the leading edge of Gen Z, now in their 20s, begins to shop for healthcare. Read on to find out how Banner Health followed the model of the hospitality industry to make its website location pages [consumer-friendly](#).



Chris Pace, senior director of digital marketing at Banner Health

Prioritizing Consumerism in Healthcare

Marketers understand the importance of prioritizing consumerism, but they tend to hit a wall with operations, leadership priorities, and budget. "Thankfully, [Banner](#) is a consumer-forward company," says Pace.

From a user's perspective, the need for user-friendly websites is obvious. For providers, it's not so simple.

“In healthcare, projects for web experiences tend to be like trying to eat the elephant, small bits over time, and investments into marketing initiatives don't come at a fast clip.”

**Chris Pace
BANNER HEALTH**

Strong marketing teams must think about both sides of this equation: the natural consumer pathway and business operations. “Strong marketing teams can align those journeys to take away friction for the consumer and let the technology do the heavy lifting,” says Pace.

Removing the Friction Bit by Bit

Banner's marketing communications team started down the path of consumerism in 2018 with the goal of removing user experience friction in [online scheduling](#). Making it easy for consumers to book appointments based on location and provider preferences was always the objective, but it required a massive amount of technology and time.

The team took on the challenge in phases, focusing on projects that would deliver small, meaningful changes. “In healthcare, projects for web experiences tend to be like trying to eat the elephant, small bits over time, and investments into marketing initiatives don't come at a fast clip,” says Pace.

First, the team made urgent care appointments and locations more visible. Banner Health provides about 650,000 urgent care appointments a year, a third of them booked online. “We've done a good job getting people to the site to convert in the immediate care setting. We wanted to replicate that for finding a doctor appointment,” says Pace.

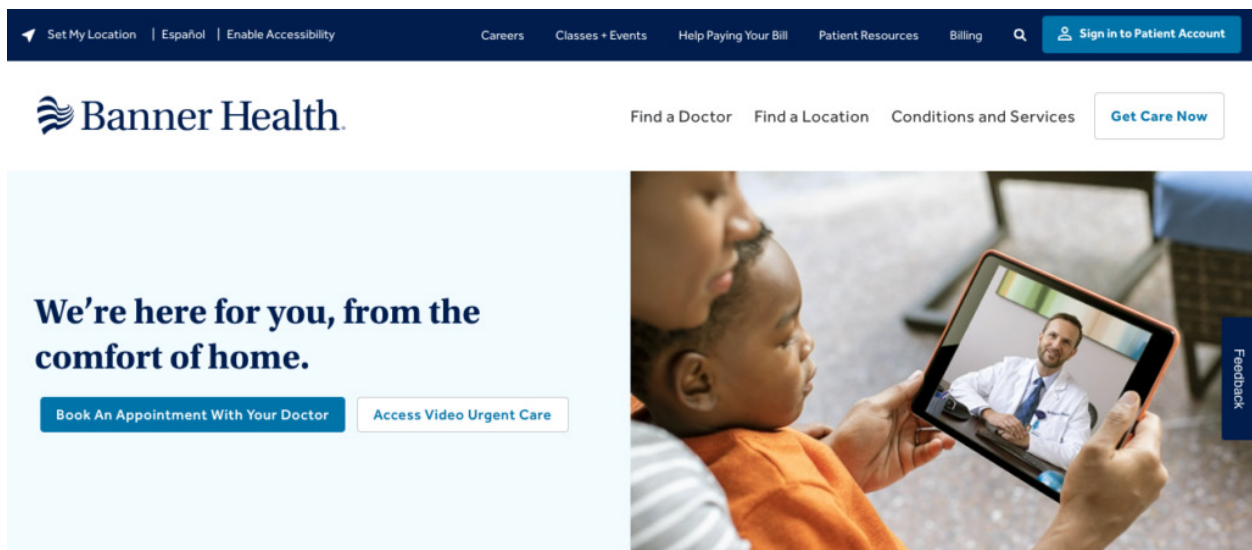
Once they accomplished this, they were ready to tackle the oldest asset on the website: the location finder. The technology was built in 2017 before Banner Health launched digital front-door efforts. “It was this forgotten technology that was super slow, the filtering was nonexistent, and there was nothing you could do beyond find a place and address,” says Pace.

The pandemic put a pause on funding, so the team wasn't able to begin work on this big consumer roadblock until 2024.

They approached organizing the data like an inventory management system. “It was a reorganization of how we think of the products we sell, using an e-commerce mindset of thinking about what we want people to do when they find what we sell,” says Pace.

They also had to think about consumer preferences. Search capabilities and call center operators should deliver the next appointment in the system based on location, rather than a particular provider’s availability.

A consumer might want the next available appointment “near me” without caring about seeing a specific provider. “It frustrates consumers when a system is set up according to providers’ availability because they see there’s no access. If I want an appointment tomorrow, I might be okay driving to the next town over, where an appointment is available,” says Pace.



Banner Health’s home page includes prominent placement of the “Find a Location” call to action, making it easy for users to find a care setting “near me.”

That’s where the e-commerce mindset comes in, with flexible calls to action that meet consumers’ needs.

For example:

- For urgent care, users likely need to reserve a spot or get directions.
- For doctor appointments, users need to book an appointment, make a phone call, or get directions.
- For hospitals, users want to learn more, get directions, or contact them.



Banner Health Clinic

Hours Today: 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Service available at this location

- Diabetes
- Family Medicine
- Nutrition
- Pediatrics

All service & location details

[Book Appointment](#)

[\(970\) 587-4974](#)

[Driving directions](#)

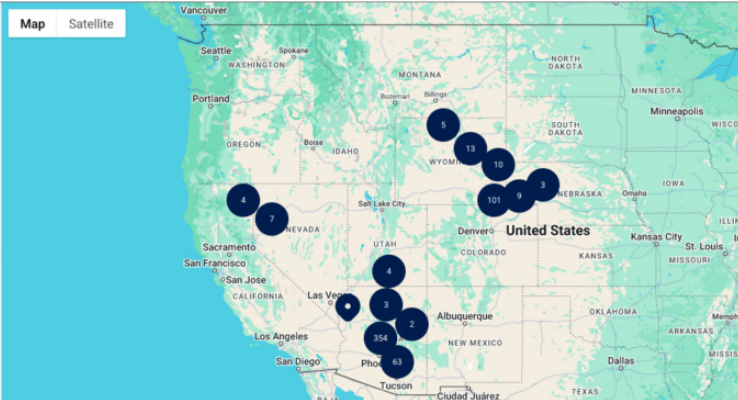
Each location page has multiple CTAs based on user experience.

The technology behind the updated location pages is easily scalable for future capabilities, such as scheduling imaging appointments.

Find a location

579 Results Filters: LOCATION TYPE: [Select location type](#) SERVICES OFFERED: [Select service\(s\)](#) DISTANCE RADIUS: [None](#)

[Clear all filters](#)

<p>Banner Physical Therapy 2853 S. Sossaman Rd., Suite A 106 Mesa, AZ 85212 (480) 373-9700</p>	
<p>Banner Health Center 1917 S. Crismon Rd Mesa, AZ 85209 (480) 610-7100</p>	
<p>Banner Children's - Banner Health Clinic 7400 S Power Rd Ste 140 Gilbert, AZ 85297 (480) 827-5046</p>	
<p>Banner Physical Therapy 10165 E. Hampton Ave., Suite 111 Mesa, AZ 85209 (480) 354-5424</p>	

Banner's Find a Location page allows users to filter by location, service, and distance.

Catering to Every Generation's Patient Journey

Redesigning the [digital front door](#) to mirror the simplicity and ease of hospitality platforms is necessary as Gen Z ages into healthcare decision-making. This largest healthcare consumer group in U.S. history has grown up in a hyper-fragmented attention economy, and their expectations are forcing healthcare organizations to rethink everything. “If you want to get people engaged and attract that group of people that’s going to become the largest healthcare purchaser, then you must make it simple,” says Pace.

But while the future demands digital-first, ultra-easy experiences, today’s business realities need to take a broader view. Boomers and older Gen Xers remain the highest users of healthcare services today. Many still expect options that match their preferred behaviors, like making a phone call. “You need other pathways available because you don’t want to dismiss the rest of your book of business,” says Pace.

Personalized Journey Maps vs. Generic Marketing Funnels

To meet all consumers’ expectations, Pace is seeing more healthcare marketers move beyond traditional marketing funnels to embrace journey-based thinking. “Everybody’s journey is unique, so [personalization](#) aligns with shopper behavior,” he says.

“Designing websites to follow a natural process makes appointment booking and care navigation dramatically easier for all generations.”

While funnels push everyone through the same linear steps, journeys let the customer define the path based on their behaviors, preferences, and timing. Budget and compliance constraints support this approach. “It’s expensive to do funnel marketing, and privacy and tracking rules make it harder,” says Pace.

He recommends health systems [design consumer journeys](#) based on the first-party data they already own, noting, “First-party data is the only data you should be using, and you should be trying to grow it as much as you possibly can through the marketing process.”

This means understanding the patterns real patients follow and where friction slows them down. Designing websites to follow a natural process makes appointment booking and care navigation dramatically easier for all generations.

The payoff of consumer-focused marketing in healthcare is clear: more efficient marketing spend, more conversions, and stronger [long-term loyalty](#). “Once you know who your customers are and the patterns of behavior that they use, loyalty marketing is so much cheaper than acquisition marketing,” says Pace.

Building a flexible, data-informed ecosystem that makes consumer journeys seamless takes time and resources, but Pace is convinced healthcare providers won't have a choice. "We can either listen to what consumers want and make things easy, or not adapt our business model and lose patients — especially Gen Z."

Key Takeaways

Drive quick wins. Your website is your most valuable and most expensive asset. If you don't have the budget or time to make big changes, you can still tackle small, meaningful projects that improve the user experience.

"Even if you're a small system running on WordPress, you can still understand your customers' behaviors through the data to find ways that drive quick wins aligned to goals and outcomes that people outside of marketing care about," says Pace.

Use what you have. Change doesn't have to be big to make a big difference. Pace recommends deciding on marketing initiatives based on the level of effort they require, and impact.

"We've gotten scrappy, given the resource limitations over the years, to look where we can find quick wins using the technology we have. Get a clear picture of how to pull as much value out of your current resources before spending money on big platform shifts," says Pace.

Make it simple. Gen Z is entering the healthcare shopping market. "In a hyper-fragmented attention economy, if you want to get people engaged and attract that group of people that's going to become the largest healthcare purchaser, then you must make it simple," says Pace.

As owner of [Sparkr Marketing](#), Wendy Margolin helps busy healthcare marketing communications teams create more content. She's on a mission to build a better medical web, one article at a time. Her favorite form of content is hospital brand journalism, which ties together her 20-year career in journalism, marketing, and healthcare.

This article was originally published on May 6, 2025.

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Raising the Bar: How Award-Winning Health Systems Enhance Digital Patient Experience

By Susan Dubuque

Industry experts from Hackensack Meridian Health and UNC Health share insider secrets on meeting today's consumer expectations.

Patient experience is no longer judged based on bedside manner or in-office interactions alone. Increasingly, it's defined by the digital journey, and the benchmark for that journey isn't set by other hospitals. It's set by companies like Amazon, Netflix, and Domino's.



This insight came from Ben Dillon, president and CEO of Geonetric, during a recent member roundtable featuring winners of the [eHealthcare Leadership Awards'](#) Best Digital Patient Experience category. It underscores a growing truth: Today's patients expect the same seamless, intuitive, and personalized experiences from healthcare providers they enjoy from top-tier brands in every other corner of their digital lives.

This article summarizes the panel's responses to 10 key questions related to [digital patient experience](#), from prioritizing initiatives to the challenges of online scheduling. [Their comments have been lightly edited for length and readability.]



Members of the panel include:

- **Ben Dillon**, CEO, Geonetric
- **Roc Johnson**, Director, Digital Strategy, UNC Health
- **Adrienne Woods**, Vice President, Digital Engagement, Hackensack Meridian Health

If you are working to elevate digital patient experience in your own organization, read the full article to get practical guidance.

eHST: How do you garner support for patient experience initiatives from the C-suite, medical staff, and team members?

Woods: It starts with our shared mission: putting patients first. Executive support is easier to gain when we frame digital initiatives through that lens. But it's also about metrics.

We use KPIs, [patient journey](#) dashboards, and ROI data to show how digital efforts support broader goals like [increasing patient volume](#).

For physicians, it's about speaking their language — data. We show how enhancements, like improving online profiles with photos and bios, lead to more of the right patients finding the right doctors.

Collaboration is key for team members. We emphasize how digital tools can streamline their work, not complicate it. Respecting their time and showing real value turns colleagues into partners.

eHST: With so many digital touchpoints and patient experience opportunities, how do you prioritize where to focus?

Johnson: We align everything with our *Forward Together 2030* strategy — especially the “unified front door” initiative. That keeps us focused on systemwide goals rather than isolated fixes.

Consumer insights are critical. Our research team conducts user and A/B testing to guide decisions based on what patients want, not what we assume they need.

We also look for visible wins to build momentum. Projects with measurable impact help establish credibility and earn support for future initiatives.

Dillon: Often, organizational readiness is a bigger challenge than the technology itself. Before launching anything, we ask: Can we realistically do this right now? Something like [online scheduling](#) affects many workflows and can create chaos without alignment.

And don't forget the fundamentals. It's tempting to chase the latest tech, but basics like helping patients find a doctor who takes their insurance are still hard to get right — and hugely valuable.

Prioritization is about balancing ambition with reality, while always centering on what matters most to patients.

eHST: How do you visualize the patient experience journey?

Woods: I think of the journey as a circle — continuous, dynamic, and [personalized](#). Patients enter and move through it in different ways: a Google search, the ER, a routine checkup. Our job is to meet them where they are and make it seamless.

Johnson: We use journey maps, user testing, and tools like Adobe Customer Journey Analytics to track real behavior. That data helps us spot friction points and opportunities to improve the experience.

Dillon: We have to consider the whole story, not just our touchpoints. The journey includes waiting for results or getting a confusing bill weeks later. If we truly want to be patient-centered, we must design for every step, even outside our walls.

eHST: Beyond your websites, what other tactics deepen the patient experience?

Woods: I see the website as the biggest slice of the pie, not the hub. Patients often interact through listings, snippets, or widgets without even hitting our homepage. That's why accuracy and optimization across all digital channels are so important.

Patient portals and mobile apps are vital — but only if they're usable and people know they exist. We're turning the portal into a "wellness hub," guided by user feedback.

Virtual visits are also essential. Patients want care on their terms — at home, work, wherever. And text messaging? Huge impact. For many, it's more convenient than calling. Some people never want to talk on the phone again — we need to support that.

Johnson: The website is central to our patient experience work, but it is changing. As AI and search behaviors evolve, we're adapting our web strategy to meet patients where they are and how they search.

We coordinate across apps, social media, portals, and telehealth to ensure consistency. A unified digital strategy creates a more cohesive experience for patients.

Dillon: SEO and digital marketing remain key, but now privacy is front and center. HIPAA and AI are changing how we engage digitally, and we help organizations adjust. Many meaningful interactions happen beyond the website — what we call "digital outposts."

eHST: With so many tactics and touchpoints, how do you connect the dots and ensure a seamless patient experience?

Woods: We're focused on aligning communications across CRM, access, and virtual care so patients hear one clear, helpful voice. That means coordinating everything from reminders to instructions to avoid confusion or overload.

Johnson: We've broken down silos by merging web and patient content teams. Whether it's a blog, website, or text message, the tone should be familiar and consistent — that consistency builds trust.

Dillon: Governance is critical. A small, central team should set messaging, voice, and quality standards. If your internal team structure is fragmented, your [patient experience](#) will be, too.

SHCM: How do you personalize the digital patient experience?

Woods: Personalization should empower, not frustrate. It's about giving patients the right tools — like showing relevant services or reminders — without adding friction. I've seen personalization block access, like when zip code limits prevented me from helping my mom find a doctor. That's not helpful.

Johnson: We personalize based on geolocation, using IP or zip code to show regional content, but we always allow flexibility. The goal is relevance, not restriction.

Dillon: Personalization is the path to a smarter, smoother experience. Consider matching landing pages to ads or promoting virtual visits when call centers are closed. The right strategy depends on your audience, geography, and digital maturity.

eHST: How do you measure the success of your efforts in patient experience?

Woods: Sometimes success is silence. I use Amazon weekly and never need to contact them — a sign of a good experience. But we take it seriously when patients complain via chatbots, surveys, or “stop texting me” messages.

Johnson: HIPAA changes temporarily limited our analytics, but we're back on track. We monitor online appointment volumes and G-Site survey feedback daily. Those metrics tell us how we're doing and where to improve.

Dillon: Success means the experience works so well that patients don't even notice the system behind it. That's the real goal.

eHST: What challenges have you encountered in introducing online scheduling, and how did you address them?

Woods: Yes, we've done it successfully — but it's a challenge. Getting buy-in requires tough conversations. It's about identifying roadblocks and collaborating to move past them, always coming back to what's best for the patient.

Johnson: Adoption is still growing. Patients love it, but internal complexities, like provider preferences, make full rollout tricky. We're steadily expanding it across departments.

Dillon: Online scheduling is more about culture than tech. It requires rethinking long-standing processes. In decentralized systems, it can feel like losing control. You have to be patient and do the work to bring people along.

eHST: How do you manage your online reputation in today's digital landscape?

Woods: We monitor feedback daily and respond thoughtfully. A careless reply can do more harm than no reply at all. We treat every review as a chance to improve the next experience. Google Business Listings are a top focus — patients use them constantly, and accuracy matters.

Dillon: Listening is step one. There's always a new platform or issue, and you can't chase everything, but you miss critical opportunities if you're not listening.

Johnson: It's still evolving at UNC Health. We don't have a dedicated team, so reputation management falls to our group. It's time-consuming, and we're advocating for more support. It's too important to be a side task.

eHST: What advice would you offer to someone just starting to improve the digital patient experience at their health system?

Johnson: Secure leadership support early. Without it, progress will stall. Executive buy-in makes it a priority, not a passion project.

Woods: Start small. Find one area where you can make a real difference. I also look at eHealthcare award winners and reach out — learning from others helps you skip common mistakes.

Dillon: Establish a baseline. Know where you are before jumping to solutions. Then aim for quick wins that show real results. Those early successes build momentum and trust.

Key Takeaways:

- Start small and build credibility through targeted wins.
- Secure leadership buy-in early and often.
- Listen to patient feedback — and respond with empathy.
- Embrace AI and personalization, but prioritize clarity and connection.
- Stay adaptable — because both technology and patient needs will continue to evolve.
- The ultimate goal: make healthcare simpler, more intuitive, and more human — at every digital touchpoint.

This article was originally published on April 28, 2025.

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