

Enabling Digital Strategy





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Defining Digital Strategy

Digital strategy is an elusive, complex, and ill-defined buzzword that oozes importance and urgency, yet lacks clarity. In a recent survey of chief executives, board members, and directors, digital transformation was ranked as the most concerning risk for business in 2019.¹ In another survey, only 8% of companies said their current business model would remain economically viable through the course of industry digitization.² Despite understanding digital transformation as an inevitable and essential part of business longevity, there are many misconceptions around what a successful strategy to address it is and how to go about developing one. Oftentimes, digital strategy is conflated with adopting digital solutions or digital initiatives, but having these digital tools does not equate to having a robust digital strategy.

Further, digital strategy can be misunderstood as the job of a single department, such as marketing, IT, or sales and thus may be mistaken for a department-level, rather than system-wide, initiative. In his book, *Driving Digital Strategy*, Harvard Professor Sunil Gupta warns against these silos, stating, “managers are using a Band-Aid for a deeper problem. In order to be successful, you can’t just create a separate digital unit, or run experiments, or use technology to improve your efficiency. Instead, you must make digital strategy an integral part of your overall business strategy.” There are many ways to warn against what not to do when developing a digital strategy, but how should digital strategy be defined and understood? The MIT Sloan School of Management defines digital strategy as “a business strategy inspired by the capabilities of powerful, readily accessible technologies...intent on delivering unique, integrated business capabilities that are responsive to constantly changing market conditions.”

As it relates to healthcare, Healthbox envisions digital strategy as the organized use of tools and technology-enabled services to create and strengthen connections between healthcare stakeholders to help achieve the quadruple aim.

A digital strategy can support healthcare organizations in achieving a variety of strategic objectives, from improving operations to managing chronic diseases. Whatever the objective, in order to succeed, digital strategy must align with enterprise strategy and values, providing a path for successful solutions to quickly scale across the system.

Definition: Digital Strategy

Digital strategy is the organized use of tools and technology-enabled services to create and strengthen connections between healthcare stakeholders to help achieve the quadruple aim.

¹ <https://blogs.wsj.com/riskandcompliance/2018/12/05/businesses-predict-digital-transformation-to-be-biggest-risk-factors-in-2019>

² <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/digital-mckinsey/our-insights/why-digital-strategies-fail>

A Brief History of Digital Transformation

Over the past 50 years, information and technology have dramatically shifted the way we live, work, and think -- moving away from in-person, siloed, manual, and sometimes redundant processes towards virtual, connected, automated, and even predictive ones. While recent digital transformation challenges the status quo, it is not the first time that society at large has undergone a massive tech-induced transformation. In the 1960s-70s, “the Age of Information”, businesses had to respond to the first wave of digitization; activity productivity increased, and the pace at which the world moved quickened; data was able to be captured and quantified like never before, and people were confronted by the challenge of having too much information.

The second wave of IT-driven transformation occurred during the rise of the internet in the 1990s, rapidly transforming how quickly companies could coordinate and integrate internal activities and connect with suppliers and customers on an international scale. In “Strategy and the Internet”, written in 2001, Michael J. Porter forecasted that companies who ignored adopting a digital strategy and/or who rushed the adoption of solutions would soon be in a race towards the bottom. Those that reinforced a distinctive strategy and tailored their activities to enhance its fit to the overall organizational strategy would have a sustainable competitive advantage.³ With a recent S&P 500 study stating that the average longevity of businesses in the index was 33 years in 1965, yet is predicted to shrink to just 14 years by 2026, companies with a digital strategy designed to enhance the overall organizational strategy will be better suited to survive in both the short-term and the long run.⁴

Now, in the third wave of digital transformation, instead of merely being cheaper or differentiated to remain viable, companies and products require data, information, and technology throughout their businesses to set themselves apart. Technology no longer operates solely as a product, but at the foundation of the entire system and value chain of an organization. In order to increase operational efficiency, connect to internal and external stakeholders, and enhance current value and/or add new value, companies need a digital strategy that guides them through the process of reimagining their entire organization, and doing so in a way that incorporates input from key leaders as well as the employee/customer populations being impacted and served. This report delves into ways healthcare stakeholders can leverage digital to enhance their core capabilities as well as innovate to remain competitive in the third wave of digital transformation.

³ <https://hbr.org/2001/03/strategy-and-the-internet>

⁴ <https://www.inc.com/ilan-mochari/innosight-sp-500-new-companies.html>

Digital Transformation in Healthcare

Digital transformation has undoubtedly impacted every industry. It has forced individuals and companies alike to confront the status quo methods of operating and making a profit, and to reimagine how they deliver value amidst newer and more diverse types of competition, technological capabilities, blurred industry lines, changing consumer demands, and the uncertain viability of existing business models. The rapid pace of digitization is forcing companies to reexamine and reevaluate nearly everything they do both internally and outwardly. Ignoring or resisting these external market forces often results in falling behind, losing margin, or being forgotten.

In healthcare, these same external forces are at play, but the consequences of operating without a digital strategy are perhaps graver given the current healthcare landscape of declining reimbursements, increasing physician burnout, labor shortages, the numerous mergers and acquisitions taking place, and the effect all of these have on patient lives. From 2001-2014, practice expenses rose 60.6% while CMS payments rose 2.9%. In 2018, 78% of physicians reported experiencing burnout, listing frustration with EHRs as one of the biggest contributing factors. By 2030, there will be an estimated shortage of more than 100,000 doctors. Further, as the trend of hospital mergers continues, with hospital mergers averaging 55 between 2002- 2009 and the announcement of 115 mergers hitting in 2017, the need for tech-enabled operational efficiency is critical. If the healthcare ecosystem is not operationally effective, how will it be able to withstand the inevitable changes at hand while upholding its responsibility to provide the highest quality care to all people? At the same time, while operational efficiency is a good place to start, centering a digital strategy on internal operations alone is not enough to truly move the needle, catch up to other industries, and compete with emerging players.

In addition, companies must also consider how a digital strategy can position them to do things differently and to deliver unique value to the set of customers or stakeholders they serve. Perhaps one of the most obvious places to start is acknowledging that patients, or consumers, have different demands than they once did --the way they search for, learn about, plan, and purchase goods or services has shifted, with many decisions being made long before a patient arrives in the clinic. In fact, 77% of U.S. adults have a smartphone, and 88% of them research purchases online prior to buying. Both the hospitality and the airline industry have used this knowledge and have done so radically transformed the way they run their business, provide value, maintain loyalty, improve quality, and diversify revenue streams. There's little reason healthcare cannot adopt similar strategies and solutions to deliver a seamless patient experience across their entire care journey.

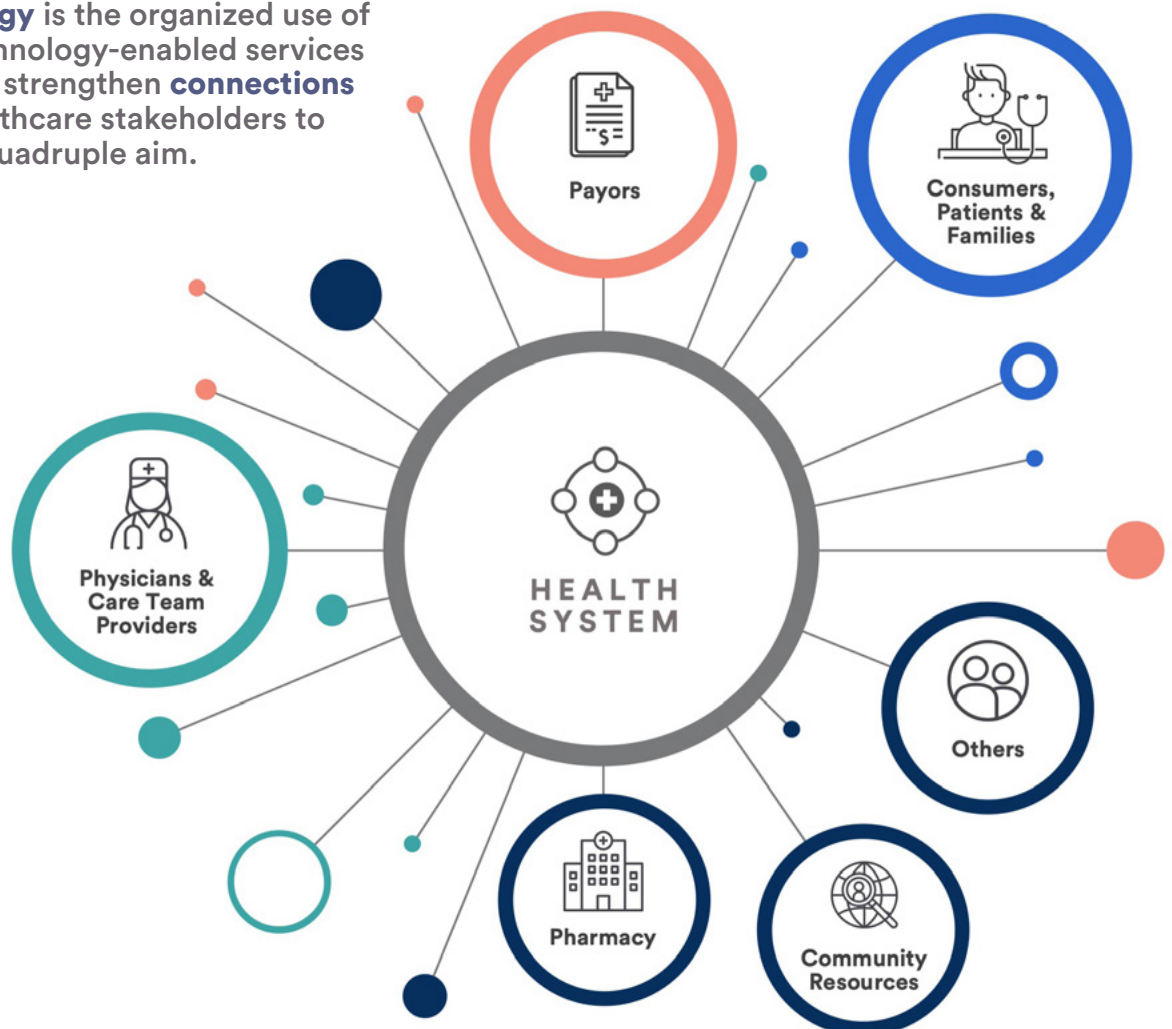
Technology plays a significant role in addressing these market forces head-on and the most effective approaches are those that are part of a thoughtful digital strategy. Although each organization has different strategic priorities and desired outcomes, a digital strategy can advance all aspects of the quadruple aim: quality improvement, cost reduction, provider experience, and patient experience. In the **Case Studies** section of the report, you can find examples of healthcare organizations who have developed digital strategies that have resulted in improving one or several of these domains.

What is Digital Strategy for Healthcare?

At Healthbox, we have drawn from our collective professional and educational backgrounds, our experience with clients, and research across healthcare and other industries to design an approach to developing a successful digital strategy for healthcare organizations. In a healthcare context, digital strategy largely consists of the organized use of tools and technology-enabled services to create and strengthen connections between healthcare stakeholders. This may consist of a provider or payor creating additional channels to their patients to improve engagement and health. In a different setting, it may focus on its connection with physicians and other care providers to improve the satisfaction and efficiency of their care providers. Other settings may require more effective connections to pharmacies to improve medication adherence or reduce the inappropriate use of opioids or other prescriptions. Determining which areas of focus are most important for an organization and as a focus of a digital strategy can be challenging, but necessary to the strategy's success.

Digital Strategy for Healthcare

Digital strategy is the organized use of tools and technology-enabled services to create and strengthen **connections** between healthcare stakeholders to achieve the quadruple aim.



Reimagine Your Business

In pursuing digital transformation, having a firm grasp of the enterprise strategy as well as internal and market drivers is essential for a business to define the opportunities for their digital strategy. The shifting digital trends require leaders to reexamine the scope, business model, and ecosystem of their organization to gain a comprehensive understanding of the direction their core and digital businesses should be heading.⁵ Despite healthcare's ability to withstand the storms of the past as an industry, individual players are not immune to the current wave of digital transformation; as startups and industry outsiders are at the gates, healthcare organizations must reimagine their business models to remain ahead of the curve.

The predominant shift in the healthcare industry that has been redefining the business of many organizations comes from care reimbursed on a fee-for-service model to value-based care. This reorients the business from delivering services largely focused on a patient's acute needs to focus on their overall health and long-term outcomes. Effective, high-quality care delivery is still a key component of the business, but the activities that fit within the scope of a health-focused business expand beyond the four walls of a hospital or clinic. Similar to other industries, this shift and the addition of digital solutions has resulted in the creation of new business value in the form of platforms for or aggregators of other in-demand resources that patients are able to leverage outside of the traditional venue for receiving care.

Understanding this and similar shifts are critical to inform healthcare organizations' enterprise strategies and the digital tools they adopt to advance their goals. Delivering the value needed to compete in the new wellness-oriented market will require increased connections and for information to flow across various stakeholder groups. The initial scope of a digital strategy should be defined by those stakeholders most involved in delivering key strategic initiatives. Creating these connections at scale requires the coordination and capabilities delivered by a digital strategy.

Connect with your Patients and Stakeholders

In many cases, the emphasis of a digital strategy will be on strengthening connections to patients or members. However, these initiatives may also include providing stronger connections between care providers, operators, pharmacies, community organizations, and others, to improve an organization's effectiveness in achieving its strategic priorities.

Creating connections that will deliver value requires an acute understanding of the current experiences and limitations of your stakeholders. Healthbox often advises clients and aspiring healthcare innovators to "fall in love with the problem." Collecting data, conducting interviews, focus groups, and other forms of research should be pursued to build a clear understanding of which aspects of the experience or operation could be improved, added, or removed. In doing so, many pain points are likely to arise that highlight what patients and other stakeholders need and want from their care experience that can guide the digital approach. Of that set, which ones are likely to be improved by a digital solution, more data, or clearer communication? Which of those challenges would also address strategic initiatives is solved? Answering these questions will provide the set of opportunities to further investigate in developing a pipeline of projects that fall within the digital strategy.

⁵ Gupta, S. (2018). *Driving digital strategy*. Boston, Massachusetts: Harvard Business Review Press.

Organize for Success

As a set of digital solutions to address stakeholder challenges emerges, mobilizing the appropriate teams, processes, and resources for effective implementation presents barriers for many organizations. Establishing appropriate governance and leadership as well as appropriately prioritizing initiatives will avoid many of the roadblocks to success.

Governance

A common pitfall for many teams pursuing a digital strategy is placing sole responsibility for its direction on one functional team, most commonly either IT or marketing. In order for a digital strategy to successfully connect stakeholders across an organization and ecosystem, broader buy-in is required to ensure the strategy is integrated across departments, teams and individuals in a way that each group understand their role in driving the strategy forward. The team overseeing a digital strategy needs the perspective and input of operators, clinicians, and other leadership that will be affected by the solutions implemented. A proper governance structure will enable the digital strategy to have both the support and autonomy needed to stay a priority in an environment with many competing opportunities.

Scalability

Adding on to the idea that digital strategy cannot simply be held in one department or one team, you must make digital strategy an integral part of your business strategy in order for it to be both scalable and sustainable. Many organizations fail to see a return from their digital investments because projects are unable to scale beyond the initial test site. A digital strategy must provide the process and resources to support successful projects to expand from one portion of the organization to the whole.

Systems for Success

After gaining a detailed understanding of various stakeholder interactions, the set of potential projects to pursue may seem insurmountable. How should these potential projects be prioritized?

Organizing in order of systems of infrastructure, record, and engagement is one useful way to understand the technical restraints that may limit the effectiveness of projects down the road.

- Systems of infrastructure may relate to data management, cybersecurity, or identity management. These must be set in place first. Without them, other solutions are unlikely to result in the strengthened connections across stakeholders that a digital strategy requires.
- Systems of record should be prioritized next. These include the EMR, imaging, operational, claims, and membership data. Having the appropriate systems of record in place is also prerequisite to many other digital solutions.
- Systems of engagement, which may range from patient education to fraud detection, are the systems your stakeholders will use to access more information and interact in new ways. See the Kaiser Permanente case study below to read about how this works in practice. Ultimately, operational systems of record serve as a central, organized source of transparency for a company's investments, progress and outcomes.⁶

⁶ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbestechcouncil/2018/03/13/why-digital-transformations-fail-closing-the-900-billion-hole-in-enterprise-strategy/#27dda51f7b8b>

Not having a centralized place to store data and information results in a variety of problems such as time inefficiencies, siloed work efforts, a lack of transparency, and most importantly, the inability to track and report on critical activities. Defining measures of impact and metrics of success are key to ensuring your organization is headed in the right direction, or in identifying early on when you need to halt or pivot an initiative.

Beyond these systems, organizing by estimated value to the strategic objective as well as interdependencies with other potential projects can help further sort out how to sequence your initiatives. For example, providing a self-service triage tool will have limited benefit if your organization does not already have a robust EMR or online scheduling system implemented to capture users of the triage tool after a recommendation is given.

Metrics

Create metrics for each project early in the process. These metrics should be specific, measurable, and relevant to the broader goals of the organization. In addition, each project should track both input and output metrics for determining success. Setting appropriate metrics early not only helps justify continued investment in the digital strategy, but also accelerates the vendor selection process significantly. Creating a plan to track and measure all ongoing IT initiatives is a key piece of NYU Langone's digital strategy described in the case study below.

Managing Channel Conflict

Creating a digital channel may pose a conflict with analog approaches currently providing value for the business. Leadership teams must direct where various tradeoffs, real or perceived, are acceptable. For example, reimbursement models for many digital solutions are still developing. Investing in additional points of access may not result in direct billing, but can drive additional utilization as the connection to patients is strengthened over time.⁷

⁷ <https://www.healthaffairs.org/toc/hlthaff/37/12>

Considerations When Designing a Digital Strategy

In addition to following the recommendations outlined above, the considerations listed below can help further guide organizations in the right direction when designing or improving upon a digital health strategy:

1. Vendor Selection⁸

Similar to governance for the overall digital strategy, selecting the appropriate vendor to address a priority area requires input from many stakeholders. Having both clinical and administrative advocates for each project to help understand the details of a challenge and navigate bureaucracies is essential. If the project will need significant IT resources, it is best to include the perspective of the IT team early on. See the “cybersecurity and privacy” consideration below to learn how having a set of security and risk standards should be used in product selection as well to ensure the vendors you work with are compliant to your organization’s safety policies.

The team should source a wide variety of potential solutions and evaluate their ability to address the identified challenges. Be diligent in researching their performance against key metrics identified for the project. Furthermore, research the quality of the potential vendor’s references, financial stability, leadership team, and other relevant factors. This is particularly true for early-stage companies.

2. Cybersecurity and Privacy

Organizations must build a culture of awareness about cybersecurity and continually educate their employees on the various relevant compliance standards that exist, such as HIPAA or GDPR. A culture of compliance competency should apply to the whole organization, not just the IT department. The more departments, teams, and employees that understand, for example, email phishing attempts, the better set up the organization is to prevent these issues. Deploying a centralized, standardized data access management service can help organizations be more successful when choosing or developing new solutions to ensure they comply with existing enterprise and external compliance policies. Training employees on these policies can help mitigate security risks and unintentional privacy breaches.

3. A Bad Process Digitized is Still a Bad Process

Before transferring processes or information from manual to digital, it’s important to have a firm understanding of your users’ workflows and behaviors as well as the quality of pertinent data. For example, HIMSS CTIO, Steve Wretling, shared that when deploying a mobile strategy at Kaiser Permanente, his team ran into additional work when data that had not been standardized, kept accurate, or adequately deidentified had to be updated before it could be used for the project. He advises companies to plan for these scenarios and take the time to understand how various pieces work together prior to executing on a plan to take the organization digital. A bad process digitized is still a bad process.

4. Digital Strategy Depends on People

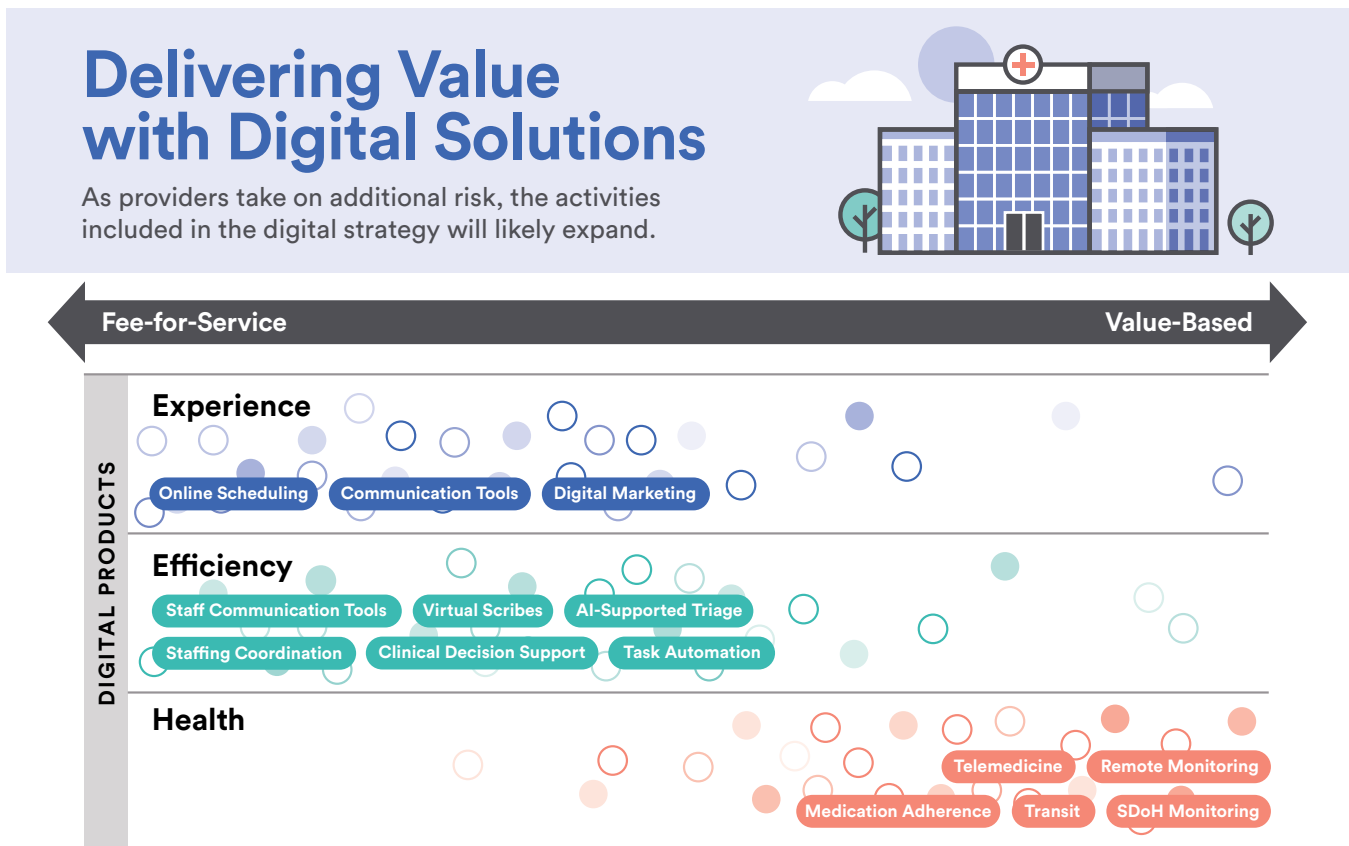
More important than the most innovative new technology tool or brilliantly designed strategy is making sure the people at your organization are organized, included, informed and empowered to execute on the implementation plan. Knowing how to engage your employees, identify champions, and provide relevant training requires understanding your company culture and being thoughtful about the way a strategy is communicated. Most of all, it takes understanding that in order for a strategy to see success, you must first set your people up for success.

⁸ For more information on solution sourcing see *Healthbox Innovation Consumption Report*
<https://www.healthbox.com/insights/improving-innovation-consumption>

Opportunities for Digital Strategy to Improve Patient and Organizational Health

With hundreds of opportunities and many more solutions available to address them, the specific tools selected as part of a digital strategy will likely vary for every organization. Selecting the appropriate strategic priorities and understanding the experiences of various stakeholders will drive particular areas of focus for solution sourcing. However, some trends in choice may be observed based on the competitive and risk-bearing factors of a particular market.

Already referenced is the shift toward value-based care and overall patient health. The extent to which healthcare organizations have progressed along this spectrum often has a large effect on the digital solutions they implement.⁹ Organizations in largely fee-for-service markets are incentivized to optimize care delivery and volume and are more likely to start by implementing solutions focused on patient or member experience, easing the process of finding, accessing, or paying for care. Organizations bearing more risk in value-based arrangements have greater incentive to focus on long-term health are consequently more likely to implement solutions that may not otherwise be reimbursed but contribute to the overall well-being of patients and members. Retaining staff and improving operational efficiency are pursued across the spectrum, but may vary based on the competitive dynamics in a particular market. The graphic “Digital Strategy Scope” illustrates this shift where the scope of a digital strategy may shift as markets move toward value-based care.



⁹ Using reimbursement-focused vocabulary such as fee-for-service and value-based care is provider/health system centric. However, payors also participate along this spectrum as member tenure, competitive, and other factors vary widely.

The Scope of a Digital Strategy

There are three main categories that encompass the scope of a digital strategy: those focused on improving the patient or member experience, improving provider/staff satisfaction and operations, and digital solutions focused on clinical benefits and improved health. Within these, what types of solutions are available and being used across the market? While not an exhaustive list, a number of common categories are below:

- **Patient/member experience:** Online scheduling, patient portals, communication tools, digital marketing, simplified billing, benefits overview, price transparency,
- **Provider satisfaction**¹⁰: virtual scribes, task automation, clinical decision support, digital rounding
- **Operational efficiency:** staff communications, triage tools, fraud detection, staffing coordination, revenue cycle management, referral management, prior authorization, inventory management
- **Digital Health:** **remote monitoring**¹¹, transportation, medication adherence, **social determinants of health**¹², **behavioral health integration**¹³, **healthcare at home**¹⁴

The options for strengthening the connections between healthcare stakeholders are continuously expanding. Filtering the seemingly endless set options to those most important for your organization can be a difficult task. The next section explores a few different types of healthcare stakeholders who have already begun their journey toward a digital future.

Case Study: Hospital Sisters Health System

Healthbox partnered with Hospital Sisters Health Systems (HSHS) to develop a digital strategy that focused on every touchpoint the patient has with the health system. Thus, the digital strategy would encompass IT solutions, telehealth, and the patient experience, including solutions targeting patient education and care coordination. To learn more about how HSHS partnered with Healthbox to develop a digital strategy to find, treat, and retain patients, download the Digital Strategy Case Study [here](#).

¹⁰ <https://www.healthbox.com/insights/provider-experience/>

¹¹ <https://www.healthbox.com/insights/remote-monitoring/>

¹² <https://www.healthbox.com/insights/root-causes-of-health/>

¹³ <https://www.healthbox.com/insights/behavioral-health/>

¹⁴ <https://www.healthbox.com/insights/redefining-healthcare-delivery/>

Healthcare Organizations Leading the Way in Digital Transformation

In 2018, companies across the globe were projected to spend nearly \$1.3 trillion on digital transformation efforts; however, research shows that roughly 70% of these initiatives would not reach their outlined goals, resulting in \$900 billion of wasted spend. The overwhelming slew of digital solutions that exist compounded by the complex and delicate decisions that healthcare companies are confronted with on a daily basis make it discouraging to believe that the risks, time, and money put into a digital transformation will be worthwhile, resulting in desired outcomes. Yet, as national and global guidelines such as the American Medical Association's (AMA) digital health implementation playbook, and the WHO's development of a global digital health strategy for 2020-2024, companies can gain a better understanding of the meaning and purpose of a digital strategy and how to implement one so transformation efforts result in intended outcomes. Looking at the progress other industry incumbents have made navigating the dynamic digital world is further proof that healthcare companies can too adapt and reimagine the way care is delivered and processes are executed. This section highlights the journey and approaches that Johnson & Johnson, NYU Langone, Kaiser Permanente, and the Australian Digital Health Agency (ADHA) are taking to show the rest of the industry that transformation is not only possible, but advantageous.

Digital Strategy to Improve Internal Operations: Johnson & Johnson

Johnson & Johnson (J&J) has undergone an impressive digital transformation over the last seven years. Since entering the role of CIO in 2012, Stuart McGuigan prioritized improving operational efficiencies by thinking about technology through three cornerstones: speed, efficiency, and consistency as well as ensuring that any internal or external digital initiatives ultimately tie back to J&J's overall mission of improving patient lives. In order to achieve this, McGuigan first moved J&J away from its decentralized model by creating cross-functional partnerships, building an agile culture, and ensuring that technology solutions and processes scaled in a standardized way across all 265 operating companies.

“True digital transformation touches every part of the organization.... it has to be an integrated effort rather than a separate one.” – Stuart McGuigan.

Over a four year period, McGuigan has moved more than 80% of workloads onto a hybrid-cloud while simultaneously sunsetting or consolidating 40% of applications or moving to SaaS. This shift has led to 100% compliance on new systems validation and better security for the organization since they're able to scan the whole environment every 15 minutes. The IT infrastructural changes have also made it possible for J&J to create customer blueprints so engineers can search their redesigned data repository to easily select the solution best suited to meet the needs of a customer. Ultimately, McGuigan claims that this development alone has more than paid for the infrastructure investment and that “the ROI [of the digital strategy] has been tremendous — it exceeded the original proposal.” He emphasizes that digital transformation must be embedded into the culture that starts with champions and is rolled out in a way that empowers employees to see the benefits of the new strategic goals and drive their own change.

“
We are at a tipping point where technology is becoming the medium through which healthcare can become a more effective and efficient system.”

Sandi Peterson,
Worldwide Chairman,
Johnson & Johnson

Digital Strategy to Improve Customer Experience: NYU Langone

While a thoughtful digital strategy is a foundational and effective way to increase internal efficiencies and reduce costs, digital strategy can also be used to find, engage, and retain customers. NYU Langone, a 2018 HIMSS Davies Award Winner for using health information technology to substantially improve patient outcomes and value, is a model hospital in their approach to digital strategy design. The hospital broke strategic development into four phases: Discovery, Roadshow, Alignment, and Execution. In phase one, the hospital conducted a current state assessment, researched what others in health and non-health related industries were doing, and learned direct from patients what they wanted. In phase two, they used their discoveries to create a new vision statement, gap assessment, and strategy framework and shared their findings to get feedback on their initial proposed strategy. In phase three they prioritized digital patient experience initiatives based on data, feedback, and opportunities for scale and ensured each aligned with overall company strategic initiatives. The finalized Roadshow proposal included community buy-in, leadership buy-in and a unified framework that supported the needs of both groups. The last phase of the strategic approach, Execution, consisted of launching new initiatives, building on existing ones, and the creation of steering committees, IT leaders, and sponsors, a plan to track and measure all IT efforts, and team training to carry out the strategy. Some early projects that resulted from the digital health patient experience strategy include the expansion of telemedicine services in 24 departments, online scheduling, check-in, and billing, as well as digital pre-procedural educational and preparedness tools for pregnant women. In addition to outputting innovative digital health solutions, NYU Langone also became the first hospital in New York to achieve the HIMSS stage 7 certification, and complete full integration of IT infrastructure merely 18 months after a major acquisition.

Digital Strategy to Improve Customer Experience: Kaiser Permanente

Kaiser Permanente (KP) is another model system whose digital strategy has improved the customer experience. Steve Wretling, also former VP, Mobility and Information Services at Kaiser Permanente, helped lead KP's EPIC EMR system integration that became fully functional in 2010. When they first created an official digital health strategy in 2013, they continued to focus on foundational aspects such as building infrastructure, restructuring data management, setting data sharing standards, prioritizing patient privacy and information security, and implementing cloud computing. From there, they further refined their systems of record such as imaging, labs, claims, ERP/SCM, and membership so they were well positioned to shift their attention to systems of engagement, using social media, sensors, mobile apps, and other digital health tools to connect with and provide value to patients. Wretling highlights that the foundational aspects described above are crucial to being able to engage and empower patients in their care. Currently, 59% of patient interactions are done virtually thanks to both an app and website that supports online/mobile scheduling, check-ins, payments, viewing test results and ordering prescriptions. Kaiser's tech-enabled healthcare strategy equates to about 5 million appointments being booked online, 23 million secure messages sent to providers and over 78 million prescriptions ordered per year. Since the strategy implementation, malpractice cases have gone down significantly and quality of care for chronic conditions and cancer prevention screenings have risen well above the national average. Patients who are users of Kaiser's online EMR-integrated patient portal are 2.6 times more likely than non-users to remain KP members and report feeling more confident, more in control of their condition and closer to their physician. KP's digital strategy truly puts patients at the center of care, leading to improved outcomes as well as more loyal and satisfied customers.

Digital Strategy to Improve the Health of a Nation: Australia Digital Health Agency (ADHA)

In 2016, Australia created the Australia Digital Health Agency (ADHA) and tasked them with developing a national digital health strategy. To ensure the strategy was both inclusive and comprehensive, the agency led over 100 forums, workshops, town halls, and webinars that were attended by more than 3,100 people. The ADHA invited patients, consumers, and caregivers to submit their own recommendations for the strategy, drawing over 1,000 responses. After consolidating and analyzing the feedback, the agency crafted a strategic vision statement, categorized the findings into four key themes and proposed seven priorities to be accomplished by 2022.

As of 2018, all patients have been provided a digital health record called My Health Record which they and their healthcare professionals can access and contribute to anytime online or via a mobile app. My Health Record will also help facilitate digital prescriptions and access to view your own or your patient's medication history and allowing health professionals to share information through safe digital channels. Additionally, they are developing agreed upon digital definitions and a roadmap to standardize interoperability initiatives, training healthcare professionals on the use of digital health solutions, as well as supporting and incentivizing partnerships that test, pilot, and solve problems using digital tools and strategy. Ultimately, this ambitious plan aims to establish digitally-enabled models of care that drive improved accessibility, quality, safety, and efficiency. The next step comes in the form of Australian government serving as a platform to influence policy that supports innovators and the accreditation of evidence-based digital health tools. While it's still too early to show significant results from the ADHA's bold strategic initiatives, they are taking a step in the right direction through their thorough approach to improving their nation's health by way of digital strategy.

Conclusion

There is not a “one size fits all” approach to undergoing a digital transformation, but keeping the above advice and examples in mind can ensure that the process is well-aligned, scalable and sustainable. Ultimately, digital strategy is an essential way to optimize your business as a whole to keep it afloat and relevant for the world as it exists today and for the world as it changes in the future. Digitization is here to stay and will continue to revolutionize the way we live our lives and connect with one another. Leveraging digital strategy, closely paired with overall organizational strategy, to deepen the connections between healthcare systems, physicians, patients, and other stakeholders has the power to not only make care more affordable and accessible but to make communities safer and healthier.



About Healthbox

Healthbox, a HIMSS Innovation Company, is a healthcare advisory firm that leading organizations trust with innovation and digital strategy development and execution. Healthbox drives innovation from the inside and out, helping organizations build internal innovation programs in addition to assessing the commercial potential of employee-led projects. We also help them look to the market to find solutions to implement or invest in. Through both approaches, Healthbox provides the tools and support needed to improve care and support organizational growth. We are proud to work with industry leaders who share our passion for building, harnessing, and advancing solutions to empower the reinvention of healthcare.