

# THE FUTURE OF HEALTHCARE MARKETING:



7 TRENDS AND TECHNIQUES TO TRY



The healthcare industry is ever evolving. Which means as healthcare marketers, we need to keep pace with the state of the industry, what is trending, and what patients are looking for from their healthcare providers. And, like everything else, healthcare has been continuing to shift toward digital platforms. As that digital shift deepens, it raises new questions (and sometimes concerns) for healthcare marketers. You might find yourself wondering, “Do patients want healthcare to be digitized?” (Spoiler alert: they do!) Or, “How can I go digital and maintain patient privacy?” (We’ll explain.) Or, “What is the latest strategy I should employ for my organization?” (You’ve come to the right place!)

To help you make sense of these questions, what is trending in healthcare marketing today, and where you should focus your effort and budget for 2025, we’ve rounded up seven recent strategic trends that have longevity and are worth the investment.

## I PRIORITIZING DIGITAL



Despite the increasing digitalization of the healthcare industry, healthcare marketing and advertising has stayed consistently in the realm of traditional media. But the time has come for healthcare to shift to a more modern, digital advertising stance.

In a recent survey we conducted, we asked consumers ages 25-64 in the state of Indiana where they routinely obtain information regarding area hospitals and healthcare facilities. Not one respondent (0%) selected newspapers as a source for information. It's proof positive that it's time to move beyond print media being the solution for every awareness campaign.

One of the newest and most exciting developments in digital advertising, and one that is particularly helpful for healthcare, is programmatic advertising. Programmatic advertising uses automated, algorithmic technology to automate digital media buying. Instead of selecting websites on which to display your digital ads (which makes it incredibly difficult to attain the critical mass needed to convert), programmatic automation analyzes users' signals to ensure that your ads show up at the right place and right time to yield the greatest results.

Programmatic ad platforms can target your patients and customers based on a host of factors including interests, behaviors, demographics and even time of day. Campaigns that our team ran utilizing programmatic digital ads have resulted in clicks-to-sessions rates as high as 91.91%. This means that 91% of the ads' clicks resulted in an engaged session on the client's campaign landing page. In 2024, no other digital media channel delivered as many engaged website sessions, even campaigns that generated more total clicks, than programmatic media.

The biggest benefits of programmatic advertising are:

- Large-scale audience reach
- Efficient awareness building with minimal to no spend waste
- Real-time performance data

## 2

## PERSONALIZATION

With so many healthcare brands vying for consumers' attention, when a brand speaks directly to a person's needs or problems, they are much more likely to sit up and take notice to that brand. Personalization in marketing today goes beyond just referring to a lead by their first name. It's about tailoring who sees what content and when and where they see it. As a healthcare marketer, you can use personalization to help streamline your target's journey by providing timely messages to consumers with more information on conditions they may be dealing with, proactive tips on how to improve their overall health, an easier way to access the product or service they need, and more.

Personalized healthcare messages have been shown to improve patient outcomes and help them:

- Be more likely to pay attention and act on messages that are relevant to them
- Make more informed decisions about their healthcare
- Follow treatment plans and take medication properly
- Be more likely to feel satisfied with their healthcare regimen and provider

Some sectors of healthcare like hospitals, providers and health systems need to pay special attention to **HIPAA compliance** regarding patient data. One of the best ways to start personalizing your messaging is to use a HIPAA-compliant customer relationship management tool (CRM). You can use your CRM to segment your customers into different topic groups, so you can send relevant reminders and content.

Before you start sending personalized messages, it's critical to ensure that you have a clean database. You don't want to start emailing someone messages about a medical condition they don't have or reach out in a personalized way to someone who asked to not be contacted—poorly executed messaging is a sure-fire way to create bad feelings.

Personalization can even occur in marketing tactics that exist outside of your CRM. For example, a more unique personalization application is the Ad Selector ad type available on Hulu. In these, the advertiser provides several different video ads, and the consumer can select which one they'd like to see for the most personalized viewing experience. This lets the viewer participate in the ad experience and gives them the opportunity to tell you what types of content they like to see—incredibly valuable feedback for future messaging and campaign development.



### 3

## OMNICHANNEL MARKETING

With the sheer number of media outlets available today, it shouldn't be surprising that your target audience might not all be congregated in one place. Omnichannel marketing is a strategy where your brand delivers a consistent message and seamless experience across a variety of channels from digital media and CTV ads to traditional media and even your website.

To help create this seamless experience across all channels, you'll need to be aware of everything that is running to ensure it all conveys the same messaging and experience consumers were seeing elsewhere. For example, we've seen that when an omnichannel campaign is in market, there is an increase in search traffic for that brand's services. With an influx in searches, you'll want to make sure that any SEM ads you are running have messaging that matches the active campaign.

Omnichannel marketing can even apply to diversifying within a "channel." For example, connected TV or CTV ads are quickly outpacing broadcast television

as consumers increasingly switch to streaming for their television. Within CTV there are many different platforms (think: Hulu, Netflix, Prime, etc.). Similarly, there are many different social media platforms with a variety of audiences using them. We suggest conducting research to find out where your target audience watches television and which social media platforms they enjoy, and then advertise on the top few. This casts a wide enough net to get a critical mass of reach but doesn't waste your resources on platforms where your target audience rarely—or never—spends time.

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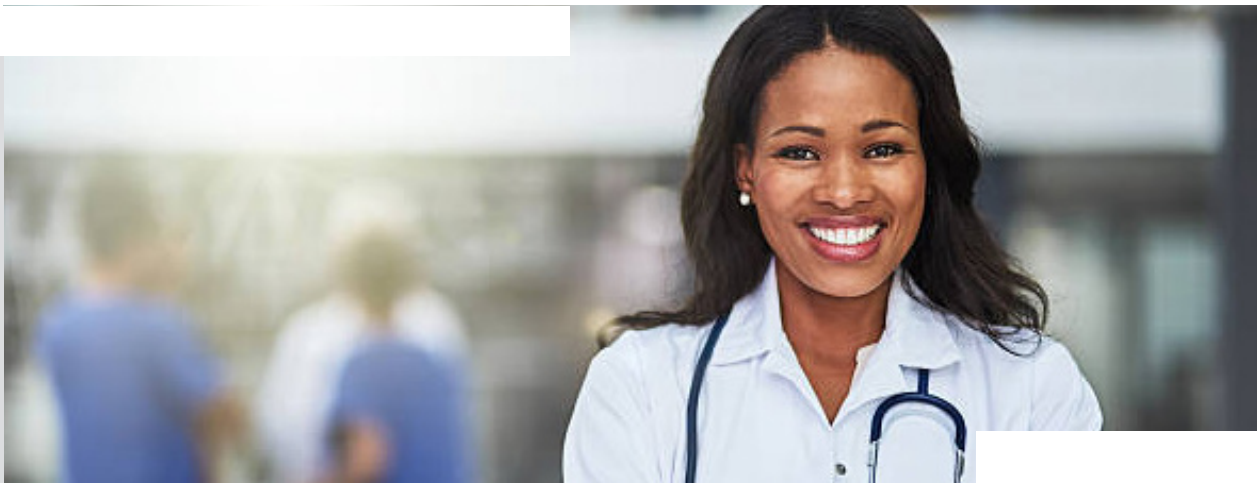
## 4

### PROMOTE TELEHEALTH



For providers, hospitals and health systems, are you promoting telehealth services? Telehealth can be a great way to get new patients familiar with your brand and practice since it is a much sought-after service.

While the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated the shift of some medical care from in-person to telehealth services, this offering has shown to have staying power. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that from 2019 to 2021, telemedicine use increased from **15.4% to 86.5%**. And since 2021, the popularity of telehealth has persisted and doesn't show signs of stopping.



We've seen the popularity of telehealth in SEM ads firsthand with our clients. In 2024, one health system has seen 55% of primary care-related paid search clicks coming from telehealth-related searches.

When you advertise your telehealth offering, here are a few things to keep in mind:

- Keep your messaging simple. Patients trying to take care of their health at home don't need added complications.
- Explain the value of telehealth. Don't assume patients know the benefits of telehealth, including time saved by not having to drive to an appointment and digital records that help with continuity of care.
- Use digital advertisements. Many patients are using the internet to search for health-related questions and information. Put your ads for convenient telehealth services online where consumers will see them at the right moment.

## 5

### CREATE MORE VIDEO

Video is now consumers' and patients' preferred way to consume content, and as such, should be a critical piece of your marketing strategy. Internet video is so massive that in 2022, it was estimated that **65% of all internet traffic** was video usage.

Video is a great medium for simplifying nuanced products or topics, which can be particularly useful in market segments like orthopedics and medical devices. It's also a great way to humanize brands and help new customers or patients get a feel for what it might be like to purchase a supplement regimen from your brand or schedule a new patient appointment with a provider.

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Additionally, quick-turn, low-production video content for blogs or social media can be a great time and resource saver. It can be time consuming for subject matter experts at your organization to write blog content, which can make them balk at the idea of sharing their expertise. But filming a quick 2-3-minute video on a smartphone can be a great way to get time-strapped colleagues to help with content.

We've also found that the majority of the time, digital ads with video have a higher click-through rate, generate more engagement and drive more traffic than image ads from the same campaign.

## 6

### OFFER ONLINE APPOINTMENT BOOKING

If you're a provider group or health system, do you offer online appointment booking? Not only does online scheduling improve efficiency for office staff, but it's also a feature patients want. As online appointment booking becomes more ubiquitous across industries, consumers are increasingly expecting it for healthcare providers as well.

More and more patients are turning to the internet to do their research on health-related topics, including looking for a provider, so why not make it easy for them to convert right where they are? Plus, younger generations just don't like to make phone calls if they can help it. In a recent study, **76% of Millennial respondents** said that they would be more likely to choose a healthcare provider who offered online booking over one that did not.



# 7

## MAINTAIN PATIENT PRIVACY

It has becoming increasingly important over the last few years to protect patient's sensitive PHI while using ad and traffic tracking tools. This isn't to say you can't target your ads anymore, but if you are in a healthcare segment where you need to protect patient data and maintain HIPAA compliance, you do need to be extra vigilant. Remember, this advice does not replace your compliance or legal department's advice.

First, a great way to keep your **ad targeting compliant** is to use an ad platform where you can target and retarget within the third-party software, such as programmatic media. This way all targeting is based on third-party data and kept completely separate from your first-party data, which is kept safely separate in your HIPAA-compliant CRM.

You can also target audiences using audience lists that come from HIPAA-compliant data providers. You can create a lookalike audience that is similar to your patient base, but separate, by purchasing anonymized data. These lists can drill down to specific segments such as people who use insulin, who have heart conditions, who take a specific medication, and more.

Another important step to keep your organization protected is to keep your website's privacy policy up to date with the most current information regarding data that is tracked, third-party software that stores data, and so on.





# THE TRENDS WRAP UP

There is always something new to learn or try out in your healthcare marketing -strategy—that's what makes this industry so exciting! Are you ready to put these emerging trends to the test for your brand? If you need extra hands, creative minds to give your brand a new take or a skilled strategist to help you put all the pieces together, B&Y has got your back.

B&Y has over 30 years of experience riding the tides of healthcare change for our clients, and we've helped brands from hospitals and health systems to medical device manufacturers and ambulatory surgical centers connect with and acquire new patients.

Reach out today to **start a conversation** and see how a partnership could benefit your healthcare brand.

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