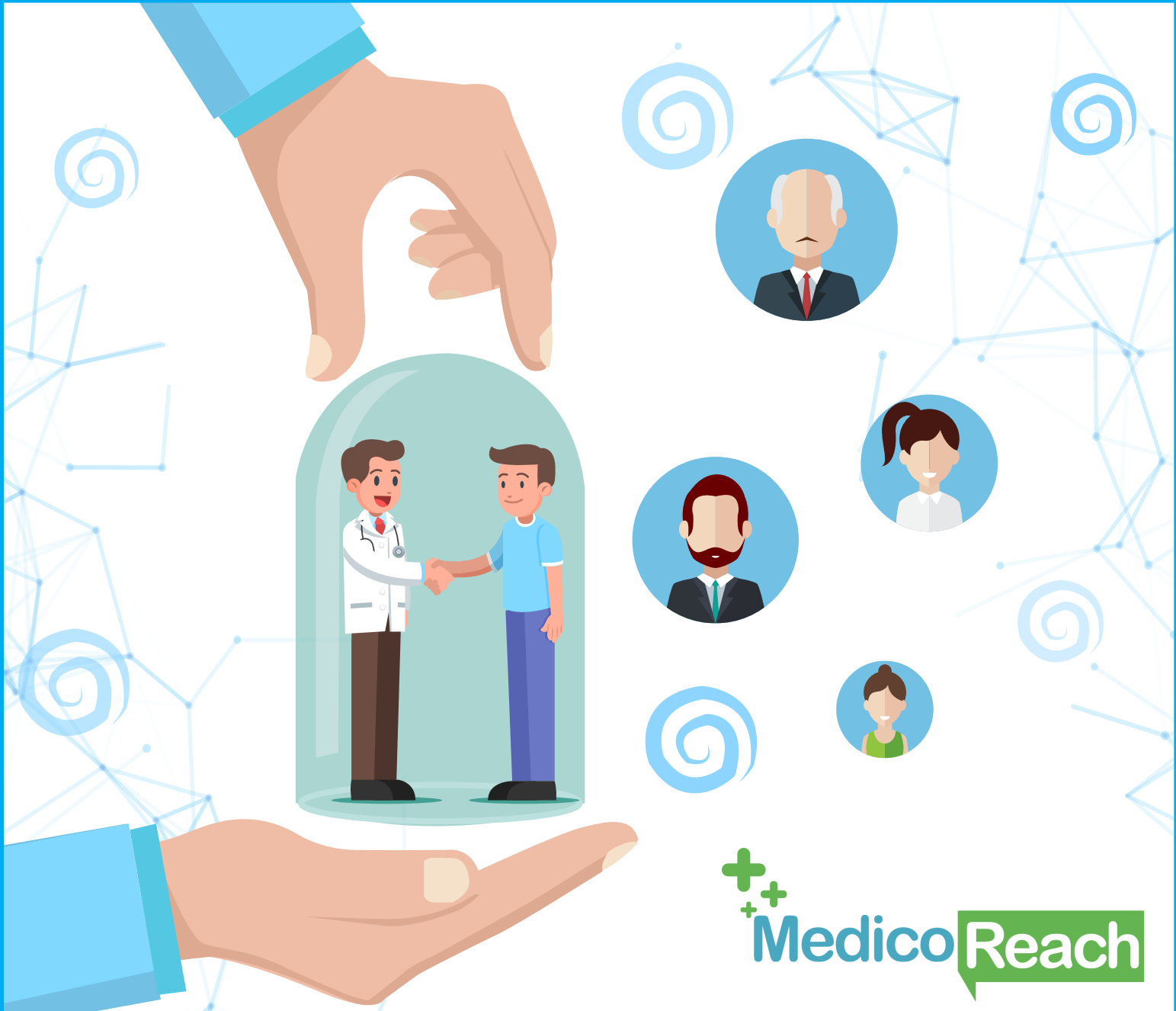


HOW

TO RETAIN PATIENTS & BUILD LOYALTY IN DIGITAL AGE

STRATEGIES FOR MEDICAL PRACTICES TO FOLLOW



According to the latest findings of the Harvard Business Review, increasing customer retention by five percent can alone increase profit by 25 to 95 percent. These stats are proof of the fact that retaining existing customers is indeed a necessity for any business and healthcare being no different in that matter. Moreover, today's patients have become discerning as they have multiple healthcare options to choose from with regards to any insurance program, treatment, or diagnostic services. With many other brands offering the same healthcare products and services, patients can easily switch over to your competitors. Here comes the need to have a loyal customer base who despite occasional poor experience, stays dedicated towards a particular brand.

It would be foolish to lose such loyal customers while being busy in gaining new customers whose loyalty and association isn't that strong. Hence, healthcare organizations must take a proactive approach to strengthen the relationship with existing patients, provide them a positive experience, and keep them engaged with excellent services every now and then.

CHALLENGES THAT HINDERS PATIENT ENGAGEMENT AND RETENTION PROCESS



Patients who are critically ill are the difficult ones to engage as they lack motivation or self-efficacy.



Getting approval from the authorities and regulatory bodies for creating useful apps may take longer time and resource.



As more and more medical data is created, it becomes difficult to ensure data security and privacy.



As providers are reluctant to share patient data, getting a comprehensive view of a patient profile is challenging. Hence, most patients and providers have access to fragmented health data only.



Insufficient insights from past patient engagement efforts about which strategies are working and which are not. As a result, the reason for failures is still unclear to many.

5 EFFECTIVE WAYS TO IMPROVE PATIENT LOYALTY

A loyal customer is the one who shows exuberant devotion towards a company's products or services, selecting one brand over the others. Brand advocates are an asset of any business. Even in the healthcare industry, loyalty is a priority, mainly because there are many options and choices for the patients. But still, when they decide to stick on to one particular healthcare provider, it is a huge achievement for the brand.

But the journey to win customer loyalty isn't easy. Healthcare organizations need to provide exceptional patients experience, better engage with the patients, address their health needs on time, offer them affordable care, and provide the best quality care facilities to win the trust of patients. Exceeding customer expectations is the key to motivate them to stay loyal to your healthcare brand.

Here are some useful ways to improve the loyalty of your patients:



Be Committed to Privacy

Privacy in healthcare has always been a concern. With the increasing number of security breaches and sensitive medical data thefts, patients feel insecure and hesitant to share their data with providers. This is where healthcare organizations can work to ensure complete data privacy and security to patients, putting an end to all patient worries and concerns regarding privacy. If you can handle delicate medical issues and topics like privacy efficiently, you can make your patients feel respected and valued, which in return, help in their retention. Show your customers how committed your healthcare organization is towards privacy so that they feel comfortable.



Provide Faster Treatments

There are many other providers who offer the same healthcare service or product which your healthcare organization is offering. If you want your patients to be loyal to your healthcare brand, then you must give them an exceptional experience that your competitors can't. One of the areas that you can turn into your advantage is the treatment time. Without compromising service quality, if you can offer faster treatment and other healthcare services to patients, they are not going to go anywhere. In today's fast-moving world, people want speedier service, especially when it's about their health. Providing elevated speed of service and acknowledgment, you can earn patient appreciation and long-term loyalty.

Did You Know?

Building a long-term relationship with a new customer is 16 times more costly than cultivating the loyalty of an existing customer.



Use Social Media to Engage

Social media platforms are a great medium to connect, share, and network with your patients. Platforms like Facebook and Twitter enable physicians, doctors, and others to show their personal side and bond with patients to understand their health needs better. Your customers will show loyalty only when they feel helping hand all the time, and to do so, social media is perhaps the best channel to stay connected.

Healthcare organizations can engage with their patients through regular interactions on social channels. With relevant and informative health-related posts on social media, you can connect with the audience in a meaningful way. It will enable you to address patient complaints, inquiries, and concerns proactively. Engaging with the patients on a personal level establishes a sense of security and trust in their minds about the brand they are interacting with.



Keep Patients Informed

Hiding any important information from patients may create a sense of distrust and make your customer interaction unpleasant. If the patient finds out that you are hiding information, then they will likely lose trust in your healthcare organization. They may feel left out, confused and in worst cases mislead. Keeping things transparent with your patient is the key to win their trust. They should also know about the biological complexities that their body may be going through, then only they will follow what you say to get cured faster.



Nurture at Personal Level

Patients are looking for personal experiences where their individual needs are heard and see while discussing their health problems. However, engaging with patients at a personal level may not be a feasible idea for a large healthcare organization where staff handles countless appointments in a day. It may be difficult, but if achieved, it can make a positive impact on the life of patients.

Listen to patients, look into their eyes while talking, and be there to address their unique needs whenever they want your assistance and support.

#Tips

on How to Use Your Staff to Keep Patients Loyal



Ask your staff to attend patient calls instead of letting them go to voicemail.

Don't forget to call patients back in case they call during non-working hours.

Offer exceptional customer service with great hospitality.

Instruct your staff to always treat patients with respect.

Train your staff to handle upset patients with compassion.

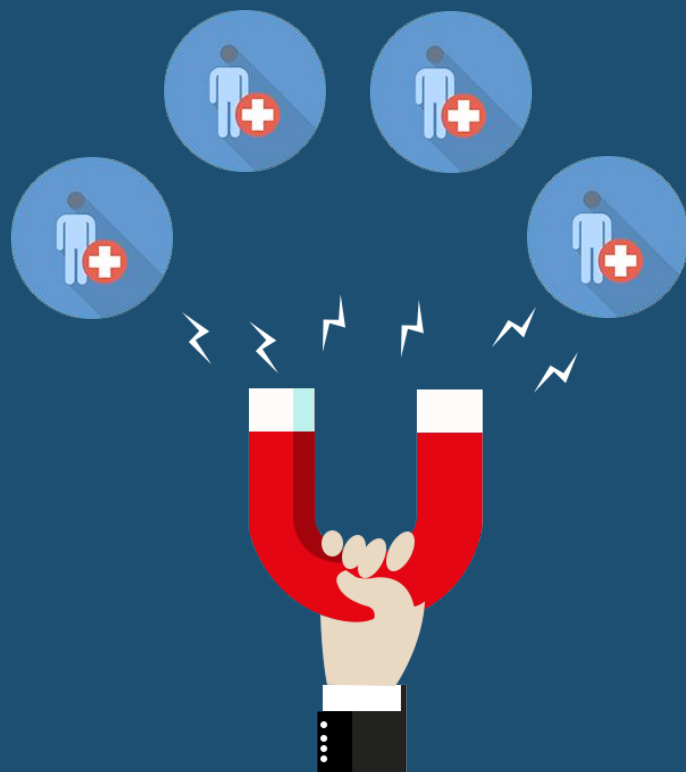
Handle negative feedbacks and reviews sensitively

5 PATIENT RETENTION STRATEGIES FOR DIGITAL HEALTHCARE MARKETERS

Most of the medical practices, hospitals, and diagnostic imaging centers are keen on acquiring new patients. All their strategies and efforts are directed towards attracting and engaging new patients to grow and expand their business. However, in doing so, what they miss out is the need to retain existing patients.

Failing to nurture your existing patients can harm your reputation, and you may end up missing on reliable advocates for your business. Along with getting new customers, healthcare organizations must not forget to focus on patient retention to prevent losing them to competitors.

Follow the five patient retention strategies that are highly implementable in the digital age.



DESIGN MULTI-CHANNEL ENGAGEMENT CAMPAIGNS

Customer or say patient preferences keep changing. In this digital world, where multiple options for receiving communication are available to patients, being prepared to engage via any channel of their choice is a must. Each patient has different choices on when, where, and how they want healthcare brands to engage with them. If you fail to cater to their convenience, then they are likely to go to your competitor, and you end up failing to retain your customers. That is why marketing teams must adopt multi-channel engagement strategies and develop campaigns accordingly. So that as a brand, you can be exactly at the time and the platform where your patient wants you to be.

Healthcare marketers can make use of patient data insights and leverage detailed customer profile analysis to understand communication preferences so that they can offer proactive engagement to the patients or healthcare customers.

The four steps on how healthcare brands can use multi-channel campaigns to drive patient retention:

CONSOLIDATE YOUR DATA

Healthcare organizations can maintain a comprehensive database comprising all patient and customer information across channels.



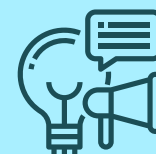
TARGET THE RIGHT CUSTOMER

Approach the right patients and target them based on the relevance of their healthcare needs in the backdrop of the products your brand offers.



MAKE USE OF THE RIGHT CHANNELS

Consider patient preferences while planning on how you can engage with them through your healthcare campaigns.



DO PATIENT JOURNEY MAPPING

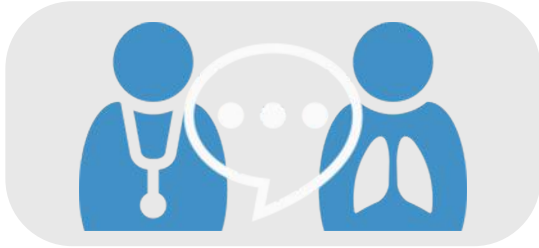
Medical marketers should map the patient's journey to set the roadmap for patient engagement. It will help boost loyalty and elevate patient experiences.



PERSONALIZE ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS

Personalized interactions help in fostering patient loyalty and improves patient satisfaction with your healthcare products and services. Sending a personalized campaign, appointment reminders, and providing them one-to-one assistance during a medical emergency are some of the ways to personalize your engagement with the patient. Hence, healthcare organizations must embrace a personalized approach while engaging with the customer. This will help in reducing missed appointments, encourage on-time payments, and lower readmission rates

Here are a few tactics to personalize your patient interaction for maximum success of your retention strategy:



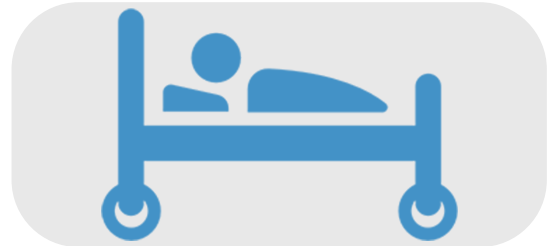
Communicate with patients via the channel of their preference to offer a seamless experience.



Maintain consistent and clear communication with patients across all channels.



Train your call center agents to respond quickly to patient issues and inquiries.



Leverage patient insights to understand what patients want and address them accordingly

Did You Know?

31% of the cases, customers switch brand because they find a new company with better pricing as per Verint's customer retention statistics.

ADD CONVENIENCE WITH TECHNOLOGICAL INTERVENTION

Today's patients are accustomed to technology. More than visiting their primary physician, patients prefer personalized and immediate access to healthcare facilities at the convenience of fingertips. With technological and digital intervention, the way patients are availing healthcare services is also changing. Instead of going to the clinic in-person, patients prefer booking doctor appointments online, check reviews, and search for their healthcare queries.

Millennial patients even don't consider primary care physician as their first option. Instead, they look for telemedicine options. This growing trend is indicative of the fact that when it comes to selecting healthcare options, patients of all ages, especially millennials, take decisions based on convenience.

Expectations of patients are high and to live up to it, here are steps to follow to keep patients happy and offer them convenient experience:

Establish an online presence with your healthcare website and ensure all the relevant information your customers need are readily available.

Anticipate patient's healthcare needs with the help of data insights derived using machine learning and predictive analytics.

Integrate virtual care system into your health system to offer remote care to patients anytime and from anywhere.



Here is the list of healthcare technologies that can help in patient engagement and retention:



Telehealth

Technology that includes the use of webcam and web hosting platform to offer virtual care from anywhere.



mHealth

Mobile health apps give patients quick access to their healthcare information.



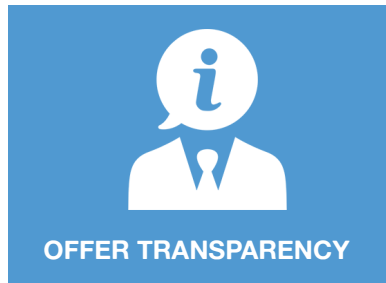
Wearable Technology

Use of wearable health devices like the Fitbit and Apple Watch to track patient health metrics.

PROVIDING QUALITY SERVICE

Cross-departmental cooperation and collaboration are required to provide better healthcare services to patients. It is through quality service that healthcare organizations and medical practices retain their customers.

To improve the quality of service, here are the three keys that healthcare organizations must implement:



Provide patients all the necessary information they should know to make informed decisions. Give them control of their well-being and health. Maintaining a transparent system will help win patient trust and loyalty.

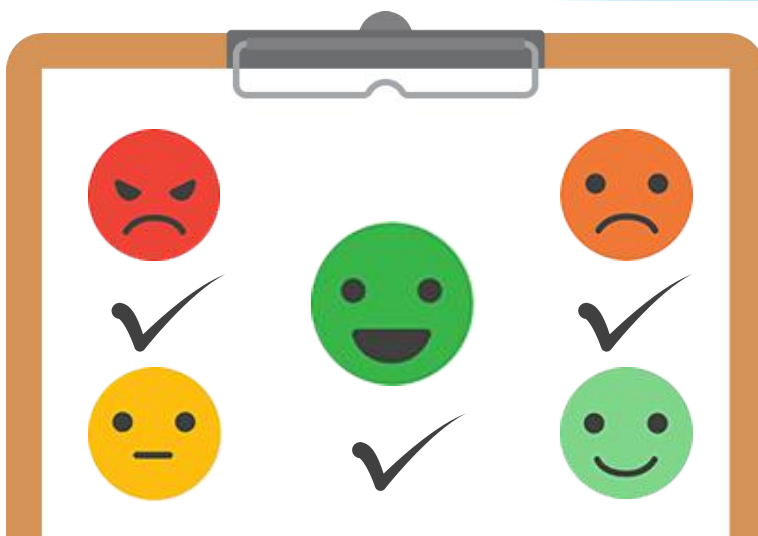


Healthcare organizations must ensure that patients get timely appointments and need not have to wait unnecessarily. Even while running a campaign, the marketing team must check if dates for the same is available.



If it requires to go the extra mile for positive patient experience, don't hesitate. Small gestures like advance appointment scheduling assistance, appointment confirmations, etc., are some of the things you can do to make patients feel good.

CONDUCT PATIENT FEEDBACK SURVEYS



The most important and essential strategy to retain patients is to listen to their opinions, reviews, and feedback. To know how patients feel about your healthcare organization or products and services, you can conduct feedback surveys to gain insights.

Take patient feedbacks into consideration and analyze the data to know where you need to improve and what you are doing well. It will give a customer's perspective and allow you to progress further if you start working on resolving issues pointed out by the patients.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Patient retention and loyalty should be the top priority for all healthcare organizations. No matter to whatever extent technology has depersonalized various aspects of healthcare, the successful organizations have been those who has been at par in providing excellent patient experience. Hence, healthcare brands must focus on proactively engaging with the patients to offer them a satisfactory and quality healthcare services.

Attracting new patients may seem lucrative, but nothing can replace the significance of having a loyal customer who will act as your brand advocate and promote your healthcare offerings to others. Moreover, it costs five times more to acquire a new patient than retaining the current one. Hence, the value a loyal customer has is incredible and cannot be measured.

ABOUT US



300, E Royal Lane, Suite 127, Irving, TX 75039

MedicoReach has been into business as a reliable healthcare marketing database provider for quite some time now. Over and over again, we have shown our excellence in terms of offering the best quality data to support online and offline campaigns of healthcare organizations. In addition to accurate and verified B2B healthcare data, we are also a repository of informative content that offers better insights into the medical industry.



www.medicoreach.com



sales@medicoreach.com



1-888-664-9690

