The old way vs. the digital way: A side-by-side deep dive

Not so long ago, providing excellent care in a friendly atmosphere was enough to create a recurring patient — sometimes even for life. People are after a first-class patient experience, and practices must **evolve their technology** to keep pace.

According to Tebra's fourth annual [Patient Perspectives report](#), patients want more ways to do things online – and 65% of them are willing to switch providers if their preferences aren't met.[1] Meanwhile, a study by the American Medical Association found that physicians in favor of digital health tools have grown from 85% in 2016 to 93% in 2022.[2]

Here's why don't want to get left behind.

The patient experience, digitized

Choosing a provider	
THE OLD WAY	**THE DIGITAL WAY**
Search options are limited to word-of-mouth referrals and insurance databases. The patient gets the name of a provider, but struggles to find any more information. **90%** of patients evaluate their doctors online.[3]	Within minutes, the patient finds a provider online with an easy-to-navigate website detailing their credentials and experience, and dozens of glowing Google reviews. **77%** of patients search online to find a provider.[1]

Booking an appointment	
THE OLD WAY	**THE DIGITAL WAY**
The only way to book an appointment is by phone. The patient has a free moment on their lunch break – but they're put on hold and sent to voicemail.	The practice's website directs them to a user-friendly digital booking platform where they can view, select, and confirm appointments – no phone call necessary.

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[1] [Tebra, Patient Perspective Survey 2023](#)
[2] [AMA, Digital Health Care 2022 study findings](#)
[3] [Tebra | Manage your Reputation](#)

60% of patients reported that they'll hang up after holding for even 1 minute.[4]

68%
of patients say they're more likely to choose medical providers that offer the ability to book, change, or cancel appointments online.[1]

Waiting to be seen

The patient has to arrive 15 minutes early to fill out intake paperwork. On average, patients in the U.S. will wait another 18+ minutes to see a doctor.

87% of doctors have received negative feedback regarding chronic long wait times.[5]

The patient is sent digital intake forms before their appointment, allowing for a secure, stress-free check-in process. A digital kiosk in the waiting room frees staff to focus on the patient.

Digital patient intake can save **6-12 minutes** of staff time per patient visit.[6]

Accessing health records

The patient has questions about a lab result and needs to share medical records with a specialist. They play phone tag with their doctor to ask any follow-up questions.

22% of patients would leave their provider to get access to health records.[1]

A digital patient portal allows the patient to message their doctor, view treatment plans and lab results, and send prescription requests.

Nearly 1/3
of patients prefer going online to a patient portal to get answers to questions.[1]

Paying for care

Months after their visit, the patient receives a bill in the mail. It's been long enough that they forgot about the incoming expense they put off payment.

63% of providers take 30+ days to collect after a patient encounter.[7]

Since the patient's doctor uses an efficient billing portal that expedites insurance claims and reduces denials, the patient receives an easy-to-read digital statement with the option to pay online – driving faster collections.

85% of consumers prefer an electronic payment method for medical bills.[7]

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[4] Arise, Customer Service Frustration Series: Phone Hold Times
[5] Software Advice, 2023 Patient Wait Times Survey
[6] How Digital Patient Intake Can Improve Patient Experience
[7] Tebra | Get paid faster

How to create a smooth experience for patients and providers

1. **Adopt a patient-centered approach**
   Consider accessible technology that allows patients to become more engaged with their health at the individual level and empowers them to actively collaborate in their treatment plans.

2. **Assess your practice's current needs**
   Identify workflows that can be improved or streamlined in a way that aligns with your practice's mission, such as easier ways to book appointments or patient communications. Then, make a wish list for technology investments.

3. **Consider interoperability**
   This is a big one. Future-proof your practice by ensuring that any new solutions will integrate seamlessly with your existing digital tools, ensuring data is able to flow without restrictions from one system to the next. [Interoperability](#) is important to consider for a smooth data exchange and improved efficiency.