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9 months later

Navigating the Future of Healthcare: Digital Health Growth and Implementation for Pharma

WHITE PAPER



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A New Healthcare Operating System Emerges



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A structural transformation is reshaping healthcare systems. Digital health stands as the operational architecture for clinical performance, commercial reach, and system-wide intelligence. This evolution stems from a powerful convergence of factors: rising demographic pressure, exponential data growth, digitally fluent patients, and agile clinical workflows. Together, they create a new baseline for scalable, precision-driven care.

An ageing population drives demand for high-frequency, long-duration interventions. Systems scale when they process complexity through dynamic infrastructure. Remote diagnostics, real-time monitoring, and patient-specific tools now define the operational threshold for sustainable care delivery.

Healthcare professionals engage in augmented environments where digital platforms enhance speed, safety, and situational awareness. Patients interact with digital health apps through intuitive, personalised, and responsive interfaces that reinforce education and engagement. Expectation now reflects the logic of consumer-grade technology—clarity, control, and continuity.

Data accelerates this shift. Healthcare already generates 30% of global data and expands faster than any other sector, with a projected 36% compound annual growth rate through 2025[1]. These flows structure decisions, reveal behavioural insights, and power predictive infrastructure.

Organisations gain strategic leverage when they embed this intelligence across clinical, operational, and economic systems.

Digital health functions as a distributed foundation. It integrates therapeutic precision, regulatory rigour, and go-to-market alignment. Strong systems align ventures by therapeutic area, each contributing modular capabilities—from diagnostics and behaviour change to enablement and monetisation. This coordinated approach reinforces outcomes and delivers measurable impact at scale. More importantly, digital health acts as a catalyst, elevating healthcare from a product-based model to a service-layer offering. By unlocking continuous engagement, adaptive delivery, and value-aligned economics, the industry is positioned for sustained transformation.

1. IDC, "Data Age 2025: The Digitization of the World," sponsored by Seagate, 2021.

Healthcare data will surpass crypto and blockchain volume in the next few years.



The secret sauce

Taking it the time to align strategic imperatives

One of the common mistakes is rushing in three months with an idea or a partnership to learn and fail quickly.

However, what people often overlook is the strategic intent behind managing the partnership in the initial phase. What are we trying to gain? What does good look like? What are the criteria to scale or kill the pilot?

More often than not, an innovation lab or incubator will seize an opportunity to partner because both parties are present; however, modelling the business impact for the pharma company creates a significantly different expectation.

Even if you're goal is clear, what's not very clear is how to proceed. Procurement vs. compliance, many departments would likely operate your partnership in a different way than expected, and for good reasons.

This is why taking the time to align on the outcome is crucial in healthcare, as digital health will require a multifactorial approach to scale it properly in an organisation.

9 months later: a clear path to success

What if you could launch a proper innovation within a budget year?

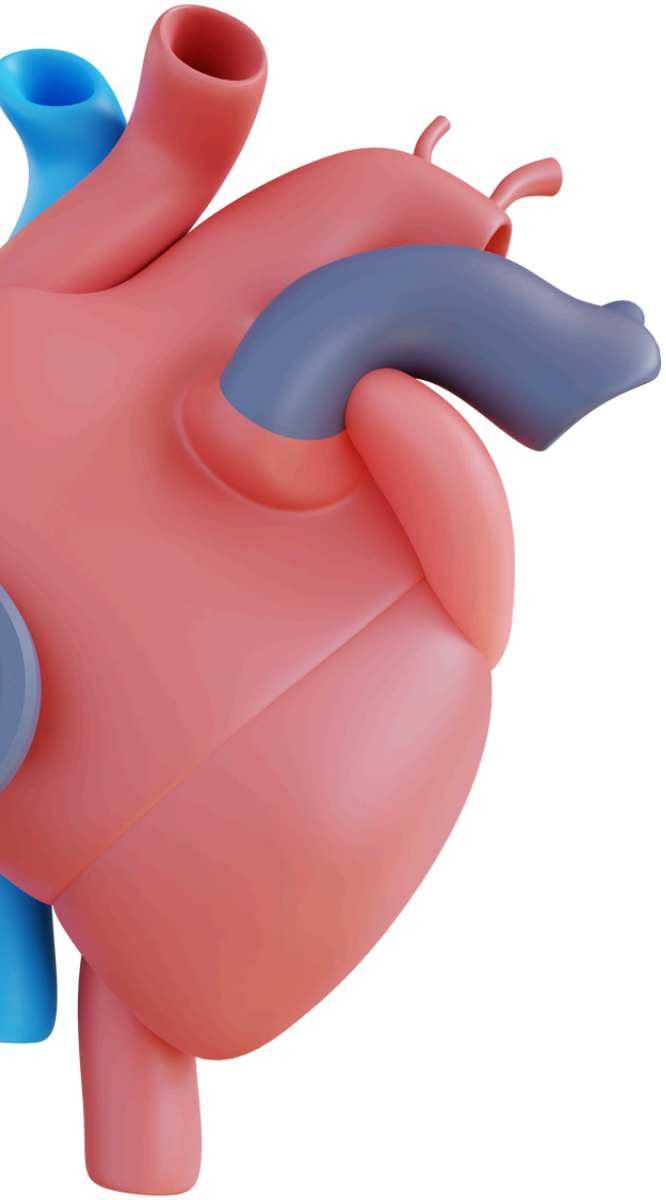
That's a win for most budget champions. Starting in February and presenting results in October is usually a regular flow in pharmaceutical companies.

With a project charter that defines it as 9 months in the future, imagine starting the year with a clear report on where to play and win for your commercial franchise or therapeutic area. That report will highlight 30 startups that are aligned in your value chain and can bring differentiation or value to RWD, R&D or scientific affairs teams.

Moreover, the same research will provide strategic and operational recommendations on where to scale and why, highlighting risks and how to mitigate them, as well as the optimal business models for each region to ensure a smooth transition.

Once in, the 30 startups can work in your offices or in a given place where your staff can participate and work on a thesis linked to a clear commercial or scientific outcome. Once identified, three startups will be selected to run an MVP. The product can be connected to adherence, diagnosis or a precision medicine bundle. At the end of the 3 months, one startup takes the win to develop a market-ready program in a region for piloting the idea. The startups, if successful, will get 3-year commercial contracts. For the company, the OPEX investment is turned into shares at a preferred rate to secure the partnership.





The future is data-driven and AI first

Is this excarcbeted with AI and Data stealing the show in digital health?

With more funding going to AI and Data, digital health is more than ever in need of the industry to build strong evidence and clear business cases.

While the pharma industry works in monolythcal siloes and their data is frozen, the startup ecosystem can heat these value glaciers and make the data liquid again for better interoperability.

This is a hand-to-hand process, and our approach can make the difference in building even stronger ecosystems.

We also see that the common denominator for success is to structure relationships per TAs (therapeutic areas). Doing so helps build clear clinical pathways, impact, and can open new relationships with patients, advocacy groups, and HCP societies.

Time. It takes time in the healthcare industry to build a meaningful and scalable impact. But doing it wrong or rushing it means also re-inventing the wheel and we might create the same siloes, this time, in a digital form.

About 9ml

9 Months Later, is your incubation and acceleration framework, enabling innovation teams to connect with startups, academia and governmental agencies.

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