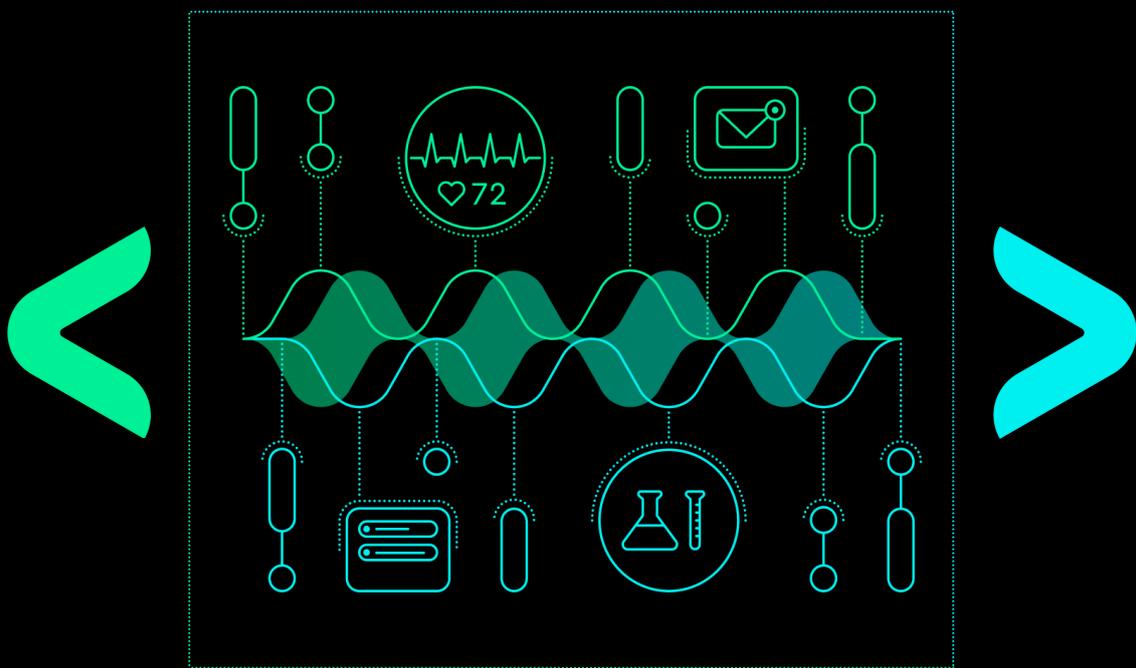


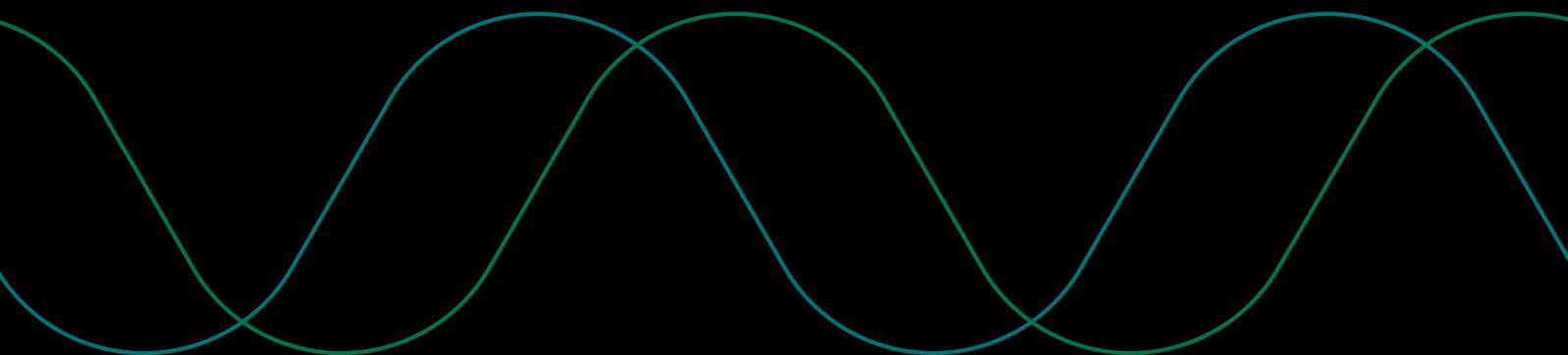
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# The rise of Healthcare Digital Platforms



Author

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There is no doubt about it: Digitalization has transformed our day-to-day lives. Hardly an hour goes by when we do not go online to arrange a vacation with booking.com or order some new product from Amazon. Our regular, everyday activities have to a large extent shifted onto digital platforms.

We all know what "digital platforms" are in practice, but how can we best define their role and function? Broadly speaking, digital platforms bring together customer groups with similar interests, using network technologies and often data pools to provide superior services to customers, such as a wider choice of service providers. Already, they encompass practically all areas of the economy.

The **healthcare market is no exception**. Covid-19 is one of the many factors accelerating the development and acceptance of digital healthcare. The pandemic has created new demand from health consumers, particularly for remote services, and greater acceptance of such services in general. There is little doubt among experts that platforms will significantly transform the healthcare sector in the coming years. Industry platforms (i.e health insurances) already integrate healthcare services and different technologies to provide a **customized, end-to-end solution for users and patients**. Applying new business models enables an improved customer experience with easy access to different services and treatments, greater efficiency, and – in theory, at least – improved outcomes.

A wide range of platforms currently occupies the healthcare space, ranging from "pure data platforms" to "integrated meta-platforms".

### **First up is the pure data platform**

These platforms create value out of collecting and analyzing large amounts of data, which is then used to improve diagnoses and generate personalized treatment plans, as well as better and more tailored products and services, ultimately leading to better outcomes. Pure data platforms also enhance patient engagement.

**Platforms with vertical integration** generally focus either on a specific indication, such as cancer or diabetes or on a specific treatment setting.

**Platforms with horizontal integration** do not focus on specific indications but integrate different steps along the value chain or patient journey. Quite often, they connect players from different parts of the healthcare value chain, such as pharmaceutical companies with pharmacies, or telemedicine providers with hospitals. In this way, they support collaboration across disciplines and specialties. Some also operate across international borders.

**Integrated meta-platforms** operate on an even larger scale. They interlink most of the players in a specific healthcare system and are both vertically and horizontally integrated. Some integrated meta-platforms go even further, encompassing a country's entire public health system.

No matter what type of platform you will encompass, all these platforms will be successfully adopted if they are **flexible and scalable**, data can be securely transferred enabling integration of different providers and analog services.

Most important adoption will also depend on the ability of the platform to provide an omnichannel experience to end customers.

Indeed, a very future likely scenario is the development of patient-centered healthcare built around collaborative ecosystems with different entry points, depending upon the individual's needs (prevention, diagnosis, treatment).

Users – both healthy individuals and those requiring treatment – will be able to access a combination of analog and digital services, from consultations and fitness programs to physiotherapy sessions. In this scenario, individual **data will be accessible and enriched in real-time** by users and healthcare providers in order to create increased customer value and reach experience.

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