



DEFINING BEST-IN-CLASS IN DIGITAL HEALTH ARTICLE FOUR

A background image showing a hand holding a smartphone displaying a map application. The map shows a blue route on a light-colored terrain. The image is semi-transparent and serves as a background for the main text.

Do your patients know the way to their appointments? Digital wayfinding tools can guide them.

James Stanford, Chief Marketing Officer

As the size and complexity of health care expands, so does patient and employee frustration – patients are getting lost inside hospital buildings.

In fact, nearly one-third of first-time visitors to hospitals have a hard time finding their destination.¹

And it's not just patients who don't know their way around the health care campus. Approximately one quarter of hospital workers are confused about where critical locations in the hospital are found.²

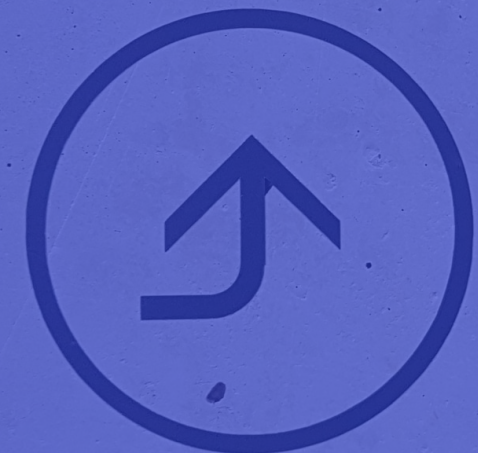
On average, in a standard hospital, nurses and doctors spend 4,500 hours annually showing patients around.³ This impacts both the patient and caregiver experience, wasting valuable time, affecting scheduling, and causing undue stress.

Navigating quickly to an appointment location is a small but essential part of the overall patient experience. It's one of those little things that add up, ultimately impacting the well-being of the hospital itself. Studies show that hospitals with better patient experience levels perform better financially than those with lower experience levels.⁴

Today's consumers are used to opening the map app on their phone and being guided to their destination, being able to choose their preferred route, and knowing where traffic snares are likely to cause delays.

And the truth is, it shouldn't be any different in the health care setting.

Fortunately, digital wayfinding solutions can help.



What is Wayfinding?

Digital wayfinding solutions are designed to improve patient experience and flow by offering interactive maps to guide them directly to their care destination. Industry leading solutions will often use a combination of a mobile experience with a “blue dot” viewable on the patient’s smartphone, a web-based platform, and digital kiosks. Imagine having Apple or Google Maps guiding you within the health system campus. That’s the experience patients, visitors, and health system staff expect today.



Most health systems already use a low-tech wayfinding system in the form of printed signage on walls, maps and directories in the lobby, or human greeters that can tell you where to go. The main issue with these approaches is that they are static and don’t stay with the patient through their journey.

Digital wayfinding solutions require Bluetooth hardware in the form of BLE beacons to be distributed across the facility footprint to ensure a seamless experience. Alternatively, some vendors also offer QR codes that can be applied to existing signage.

By implementing an effective digital wayfinding solution, health care organizations help patients prepare for their appointments, without stress and anxiety, whether navigating a sprawling hospital or multi-location system.

When patients feel at ease and understand their travel time from home to their exact appointment location within the facility, costly delays due to late arrivals or missed visits can be avoided.

Enabling digital wayfinding has several benefits for health care organizations:

- Mitigate larger, more expensive facility signage and layout issues
- Decrease the need for patients to interrupt clinicians or other staff for directions
- Increase schedule adherence and patient flow (especially during construction)
- Increase satisfaction by providing certainty to patients, visitors, and employees



Digital wayfinding benefits

Wayfinding can be used in various ways to improve the patient, visitor, and employee experience while also delivering cost benefits.



Reduce no-shows

Combining wayfinding with patient messaging to reduce no-shows and help improve schedule adherence, resulting in revenue improvement.



Schedule agility

Geolocation tools notify care teams when a patient arrives early, helping employees fill empty slots in the schedule.



Patient and employee navigation

Mapping services can be used inside and outside the facilities to make it easy for patients to get where they need to go and give new employees a clear guide as they become familiar with the campus.



Virtual tours

The ability to give patients virtual tours of your treatment centers, such as a virtual tour of the mother-baby center or the outpatient surgery center, improves patient engagement.



Operational efficiency

Traffic analytics can provide a map of the traffic bottlenecks in your facility, providing the business intelligence needed to optimize flow.

5 steps to a modern, consumer-driven wayfinding experience

1. Look for suppliers who will feed into your current digital experience
2. Identify your most troublesome locations
3. Consider additional features that could benefit your patients and employees
4. Engage stakeholders early
5. Incorporate wayfinding as part of your design when adding or changing your existing footprint

ONE

Look for suppliers who will feed into your current digital experience

Consider your existing apps, website, patient portal, etc., rather than require consumers to download a separate app. Look for a partner that will provide hardware and software as a complete solution.

TWO

Identify your most troublesome locations

Spend some time watching the existing traffic patterns in your facility. Where are the hold-ups? Where do you see patients asking for directions? How long does it take to get from one facility to another? How many appointments are missed or delayed due to patients not finding the location of their appointment? Having this information will help you prioritize the wayfinding features you need and how to best deploy them.

THREE

Consider additional features that could benefit your patients and employees

Not only can digital wayfinding solutions plot the path through your facility, but some solutions also give you the ability to make visits even more convenient by including things like:

- The ability to navigate anywhere on your campus – inside, outside, and between buildings
- Estimate wait times
- Urgent care bookings
- Messaging
- Integration with patient portal and apps

FOUR

Engage stakeholders early

Deploying wayfinding is a collaborative project that takes a cross-functional approach. Engagement from facilities, operations, design/construction, information technology, and marketing is critical to your success.

- **Success Plan.** Identify objectives and goals, determine ROI measures.
- **Kick-off.** Introduce stakeholders, define roles and responsibilities, collaborate to develop a timeline with milestones.
- **Healthcheck.** Monthly Success Plan review with stakeholders.
- **QBR.** Quarterly review of usage insights and trends.

FIVE

Incorporate wayfinding as part of your design when adding or changing your existing footprint

Not only should you plan wayfinding routes and ways to use wayfinding tools in new design, but it's also essential to consider the best ways to route patients while your facility is undergoing construction, especially if detours or alternate routes are needed. Look for a digital wayfinding solution that will help you do just that.

Navigating through a big medical campus can be frustrating and overwhelming. Summa Health has changed that, improving the overall experience by helping patients find their way around the Akron health facility using Summa Way Finder. Patients can access the wayfinding solution via the Summa Health website, downloading the app, or via convenient kiosks located throughout the campus.

With Summa Way Finder, patients can plan their visit even before they leave home, getting door-to-door directions, information on the best place to park based on their appointment location, and step-by-step guidance to their appointment destination within the facility. With the app, they can even save the appointment as a favorite, making return visits easy. Summa Health attributes its wayfinding solution in helping to improve patient satisfaction and reduce missed appointments, all in just a few short months. The president of the hospital said it was especially important to help patients and families as they were opening a new patient tower.⁵

Digital wayfinding partners with robust navigational solutions:

At Panda Health, we partner with organizations that provide robust solutions designed to meet health care organizations' unique needs. To help address today's wayfinding challenges, Panda identified two companies that are leading the health care navigational solutions charge with their strong digital wayfinding offerings:

CARTOGRAM

Cartogram combines the mapping and routing customization and integrations that healthcare needs with the Google Maps user experience that patients already know and love. Cartogram offers indoor and outdoor wayfinding software exclusively to healthcare clients, including mapping and content creation, hardware deployment, and end-to-end implementation. Cartogram's proprietary algorithms use hybrid GPS and BLE embedded within an app using real-time turn-by-turn blue dot navigation. Plus, seamless integration with Epic's MyChart, Cerner, and every EHR provider comes standard with Cartogram software to deliver a pre-built wayfinding experience. Enhance the experience of every person that walks through your hospital's front door on iOS, Android, web, chatbot, kiosk, digital signage, SMS, and QR code with Cartogram.

PURPLE

Purple's digital wayfinding platform allows visitors to navigate through complex spaces quickly and with ease, creating the optimal navigation experience. Using our mobile app, digital kiosks, or web-based application, hospitals can provide visitors with blue-dot navigation, interactive maps, route planning and location-based messaging, delivering a world-class navigation experience for all visitors, whilst increasing safety and saving on operational costs. Purpose built for healthcare institutions 11 years ago the solution typically requires 85% less hardware than alternatives and integrates with third-party platforms or apps through open APIs, a mobile SDK and on the Epic AppOrchard.

Access to Best-in-Class Digital Health Partners at Speed

The Panda Health team continuously monitors the market for digital health technologies through a proven process that evaluates technology needs and then partners health care providers with the most viable capabilities.

Panda Health can help your organization find best-in-class technology that empowers your patients with robust, yet easy to use digital wayfinding solutions. If you are a health care organization looking to elevate and accelerate your digital strategy—or a digital health company with best-in-class technology—reach out to one of our experts.

REFERENCES

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³Zimring C. The Costs of Confusion: Non-monetary and Monetary Costs of the Emory University Hospital Wayfinding System. Georgia Institute of Technology; Atlanta, GA, USA: 1990. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4287692/#B10-behavsci-04-00423>

⁴Deloitte: The value of patient experience: Hospitals with better patient-reported experience perform better financially. 2016 <https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/us/Documents/life-sciences-health-care/us-dchs-the-value-of-patient-experience.pdf>

⁵<https://www.beaconjournal.com/news/20190204/gps-style-system-available-to-help-patients-visitors-navigate-summas-akron-city-hospital-campus>