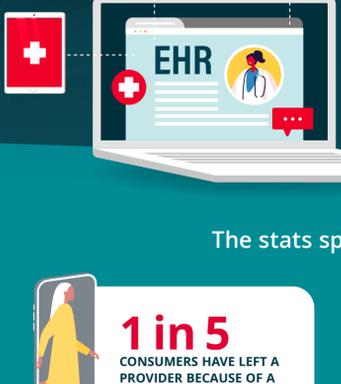


Build vs. Partner:

How to Make the Right Choice When Developing for Patient Engagement



Electronic health records (EHRs) are a mainstay in today's healthcare industry. Over the years, EHRs have evolved from being purely patient management systems to incorporating more patient engagement features that align with modern consumer expectations for digital capabilities, ease of access, convenience, and transparency.

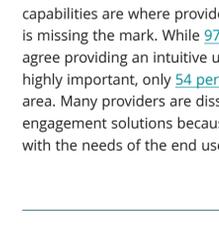
The stats speak for themselves

1 in 5 CONSUMERS HAVE LEFT A PROVIDER BECAUSE OF A POOR DIGITAL EXPERIENCE

AND

49% NEARLY HALF ARE FRUSTRATED WITH THEIR PROVIDER'S LACK OF DIGITAL ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESSES

How Most EHR Patient Engagement Solutions Miss the Mark



Amid the **rise of healthcare consumerism**, EHR vendors need to build their technology with both consumer needs and provider initiatives for patient engagement in mind. And although many EHR vendors have tried to address patient engagement with their own patient portals, most are still missing the mark.

Despite many vendors' best efforts to enhance their technological offerings, **40 percent of primary care providers** believe there are more challenges with EHRs than benefits. In fact, some of the most important EHR capabilities are where providers feel the technology is missing the mark. While **97 percent of providers** agree providing an intuitive user experience (UX) is highly important, only **54 percent** are satisfied in this area. Many providers are dissatisfied with EHR patient engagement solutions because they're not designed with the needs of the end user—the **patient**—in mind.

- 40 percent** of primary care providers believe there are more challenges with EHRs than benefits
- 97 percent** of providers agree providing an intuitive user experience (UX) is highly important
- 54 percent** are satisfied in user experience (UX)

That means offering:

- A user-friendly digital experience
- Convenient 24/7 mobile access
- Cost and data transparency
- Flexible self-service options
- Features that empower patients

A Step-by-Step Comparison of the Build vs. Partner Process

As an EHR vendor seeking to upgrade your products, you have two options when it comes to addressing patient engagement solutions—either build them in-house or partner with a patient engagement software company.

The Building Process

- Market, product, and design research:** What technologies are patients asking for, and how are current solutions lacking? What technologies will foster desired use for patients? What type of patient engagement features will best serve the patients, while also accomplishing provider goals?
- Define your vision for the new product:** How will your new EHR product look and function? What new patient engagement features will be included?
- Develop user stories:** This step is critical for ensuring a solid, fitting digital experience that patients will take part in and appreciate.
- Define the scope with your development team:** Before you begin the development phase, discuss and define the scope of the project with your developers to manage expectations and get everyone on the same page.
- Conduct product development:** Now you're (finally) ready to begin building!
- Perform quality assurance testing:** Before you share your enhanced product with the world, perform quality assurance (QA) testing to work out any kinks.
- Train employees on how to market the new product:** The next step is to train your internal team on how to sell and market the new product.
- Test with a small group of customers:** This is the "soft launch" phase, during which you'll test your product out with a small group to collect feedback.
- Roll out to all customers:** After a lengthy, intensive building process, you're ready to roll out your new EHR product to all customers.
- Rinse and repeat annually:** Each year, assess how user needs and habits have changed, and evolve your product to align with the changing market.

Building: The Resources

What resources will you need to bring your product to life (and to market)?

- Staff to develop product:** It takes at least **30 development resources** to build a patient engagement solution.
- A substantial budget:** It can cost anywhere between **\$5.6 and \$9.8 million** to develop a minimally viable patient engagement platform.
- Data requirements:** Meeting data center storage, data processing and security, and technology requirements results in **\$1.9 - \$2.7 million a year**.

Building: The Timeline

It takes around **2 years** to develop a minimum viable product—of course, modern healthcare consumers demand more than the minimum though. Keep in mind that adding native mobile apps will increase both the cost and timeline.

Benefits to Building

You'll have complete autonomy of the product and intellectual property (IP).
You can assure end users that the delivered product will be integrated well with their associated EHR and practice management solutions.

Building Limitations

- Core competence:** Your end users selected you primarily for your EHR and/or practice management system. Devoting resources to new product development comes at a direct cost to your primary products, as those resources could be used to enhance and evolve them.
- Slow rate of completion:** The development timeline is long—especially for just a minimum viable product, which won't offer the best user experience.
- Initial and ongoing costs:** The initial and ongoing investment is significant.
- Continual innovation:** You'll have to continually innovate your patient engagement offerings in addition to your core product.

The Partner Process

- Vet potential patient engagement technology partners:** Weigh your options to find a patient engagement partner that's well-suited for your company.
- Determine if a partner's solutions meet internal criteria:** Evaluate patient engagement solutions to ensure they meet your internal criteria.
- Kick off implementation with the technology partner:** Time to get started!
- Integrate with your technology partner's API:** The best patient engagement technology companies will offer multiple solutions via a single integration, saving you time and money down the road.
- Train employees on how to use, market, and sell:** The best technology partners provide pre-created marketing materials to help with training/sales.

Partnering: The Resources

- Integration takes only **1-2 developers**, who act as a liaison between the EHR organization and technology partner and assist with the integration.
- Partnering with Intelichart cuts costs in half, while yielding a **superior product** with more financial upside when compared to an internal development effort.

Partnering: The Timeline

Integration and QA take approximately **12 weeks**. The best partners offer a platform with solutions that only require a single API enabling all solutions, meaning development only needs to happen once. A separate integration per solution is not required.

Benefits to Partnering

- Superior product:** Partnering means you'll gain a product with years of successful usage, as opposed to what could be developed internally.
- Economies of scale:** Expand and enhance your EHR product without increasing the associated costs.
- More frequent enhancements:** Enjoy more frequent enhancements to patient engagement solutions, minus the hassle of continuous innovation.
- Quality of product:** Offer providers a top-quality product with robust patient engagement solutions—with very little cost or risk to your business.
- Cost-effectiveness:** The investment is a no-brainer, with a low monthly fee and no extensive development costs to worry about.
- Resource optimization:** Stay focused on your primary product offering.
- Core competencies:** Lean on the expertise of a partner who specializes in patient engagement technologies.
- Speed to market:** Move to market more quickly with a single API set providing access to multiple solutions.
- Ongoing support:** Gain peace of mind with ongoing customer and technical support when (if) you need it.

Questions to Ask When Deciding to Build vs. Partner

- ✓ How satisfied are our customers with our current engagement solutions?
- ✓ Do we have the internal expertise and market familiarity to build a justifiable product within a reasonable timeframe and budget?
- ✓ What is going to be the annual recurring costs to support this effort?
- ✓ Do we need to make small modifications to our existing product, or start out from scratch?
- ✓ How quickly do we need our EHR enhancements to go live?
- ✓ Do we have internal resources available to continuously innovate over time?
- ✓ What do we want our customers to get out of these enhancements?
- ✓ **Final question:** If we find a partner that delivers a market-leading product, has dozens of happy and successful partners and thousands of successful end-user organizations, and will cap our financial spend so partnering and using their platform will cost us less than building it internally, do we really need to keep pondering this decision? *Because the answer is simple.*