



Let's get phygital

How to engage hospital stakeholders
in the physical environment using Digital Signage

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Healthcare communications teams in hospitals, districts and clinics face an uphill battle when it comes to communicating with stakeholders, both internal and external. The pace of change, the diversity of audiences, and the volume of messages are all challenges.

The dynamic nature of the communications environment requires dynamic comms channels that can deliver messages with impact and agility.

It also requires messages to be delivered in the right place. Hospital stakeholders are highly mobile, and many are rarely or never at a desk.

This white paper explores the use of digital signage in healthcare environments: use cases, types of digital signage and how the technology works. It's an introduction, with links to deeper information if you're interested.



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THE NEED FOR DYNAMIC COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Hospitals and clinics have an incredibly broad range of stakeholders, key messages and campaigns to manage. This includes:



Internal audiences: Executives, doctors, nurses, allied health, patient support services (from clerical to cleaning staff), paramedics, volunteers



External audiences: Patients, carers, families and friends, public

The communications department has a hefty challenge. Use communications to help the organisation achieve its objectives, change behaviour and perceptions, create understanding, share success... and more.

The communication load can feel overwhelming – with a constant stream of new initiatives, new policies, new changes and new challenges.

Then, there are communications complexities, such as staff and contractors who are rarely (or never) at a computer, external audiences with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) needs, and email fatigue.

Typical comms tools or channels include email, meetings, website, factsheets and brochures, social media, video conferencing... and more.

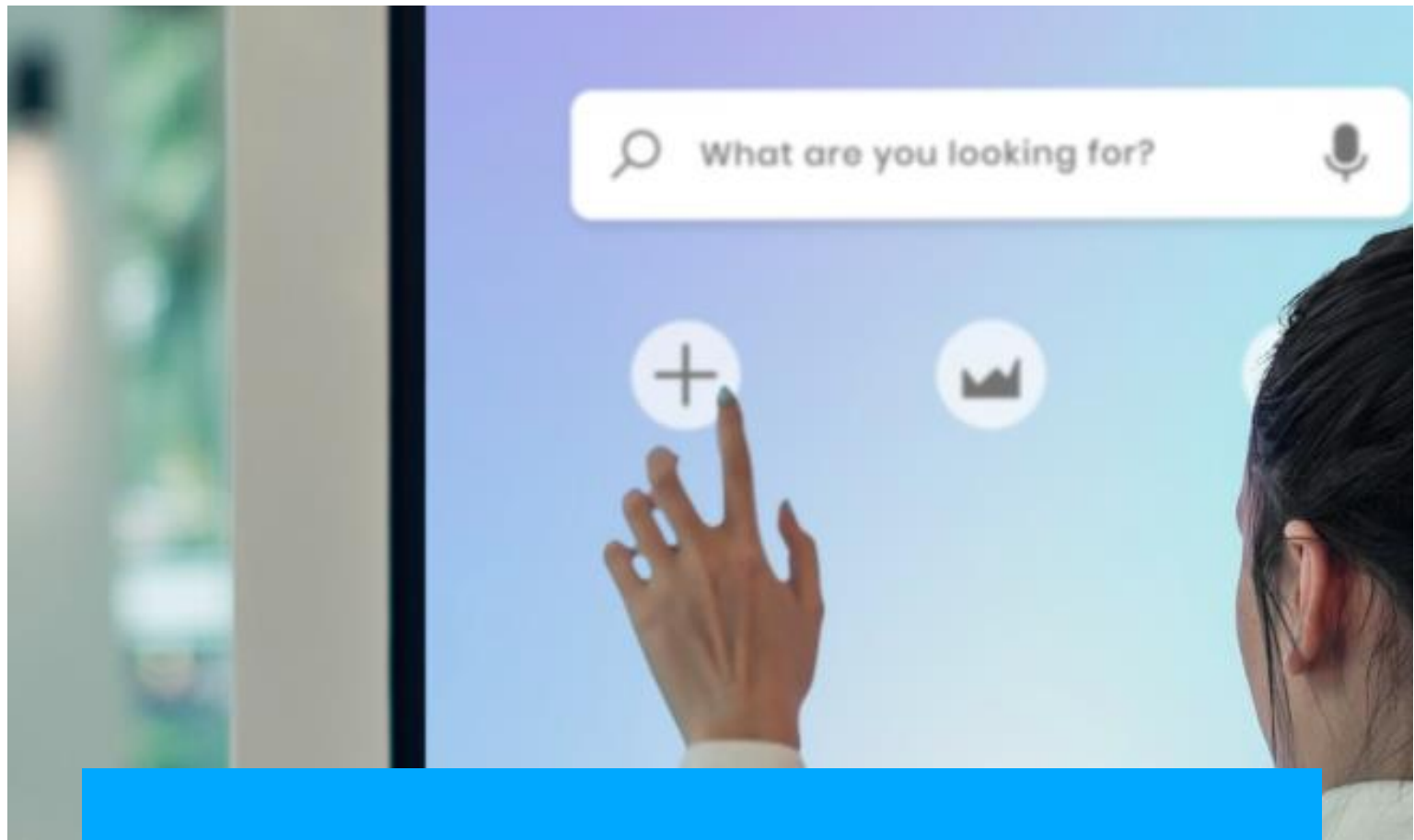
Then, there are communications complexities, such as staff and contractors who are rarely (or never) at a computer, external audiences with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) needs, and email fatigue.

Feeling tired yet? 🤖

Traditionally, posters have been part of the communication mix to catch audiences as they move about the hospital, but they have a number of drawbacks:

- Slow, expensive and unsustainable
- Rely on manual labour to hang and remove, with no way to track
- Not easy to adjust the message for different audiences
- Not visually appealing or modern in aesthetic
- Low impact and influence

That's where the idea of **phygital comes in.**



“Phygital is the concept of using technology to bridge the digital world with the physical world with the purpose of providing a unique interactive experience for the user.”

– Monash University

In simple terms, it's about using **digital communication**
in the physical environment.

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LIFT YOUR IMPACT WITH DIGITAL SIGNAGE

Healthcare comms teams need a dynamic, digital mechanism to communicate with stakeholders in the physical hospital environment: 🦋 **Digital signage.** 🦋

This is an umbrella term for all manner of digital screens that can be placed around the hospital, in both public and staff-facing areas. These can include:



DIGITAL DISPLAYS

Typically displayed on TV screens in public and staff areas



DIGITAL DIRECTORIES

Typically in building foyers and can be interactive



WAYFINDING

Typically shown on digital displays or directories, may be interactive and can extend to include an app



QUEUE CALLING DISPLAYS

Typically used in clinics to call patient when it's their turn using a number. Can also include expected wait times



CHECK-IN KIOSKS

Typically for pre-booked appointments. Mobile check-in is becoming more common



DIGITAL DONOR HONOUR BOARDS

Typically used to honour donors and showcase fundraising appeals

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According to 'Digital Signage Today', 75% of caregivers and patients who view hospital messaging on digital signage systems say that the content enhances the hospital experience and provides helpful health information. And 75% who view a digital sign in a hospital can recall at least one message.

Digital signage is **high impact**. That's why it's so popular in industries such as retail – there's proof it influences behaviour.

The same publication cites digital signage for retailers bringing about a 31.8% growth in sales volume, an increase in foot traffic by up to 24% and a 30% lift in time browsing in-store.

Similarly, in corporates, 50% of comms professionals use digital signage as a channel to lift corporate communication and employee engagement.

USE CASES FOR DIGITAL SIGNAGE

Promote key messages for internal and external stakeholders

Digital signage replaces posters to promote key messages in public and staff-facing areas. This provides a highly agile comms channel where messages can be tweaked for different audiences (such as clinical vs administration staff) and changed or updated in an instant.

Benefits:

- Efficiently deploy key messages in real time
- Reach stakeholders who are highly mobile and rarely at a desk

Help visitors find their way

Digital signage is an important part of wayfinding for a hospital campus. This can range from providing parking information, to interactive wayfinding maps, to digital directories. Data is dynamic, so can be instantly changed when there is a refurbishment or other change on campus.

Benefits:

- Reduce navigation questions for staff and late arrival to appointments
- Improve the patient experience

Streamline the wait experience in clinics

Waiting rooms provide multiple avenues for digital signage. Educational messages on digital displays keep patients informed, while calming video content help relieve anxiety. Queue calling can be displayed on digital screens and expected wait times displayed. Delays or other messages can be communicated instantly.

Benefits:

- Improve patient wait experience
- Reduce crowding and anxiety in wait rooms and the flow on effects on staff

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Support the Emergency Department experience

Nowhere is clear communication more important than ED. Digital signage can remind patients of behaviour expectations, wait times and triage processes, escalation avenues and safety messages. Calming content can also help reduce anxiety and pass the time.

Benefits:

- Reduce frustration, anxiety and miscommunication in ED
- Translate key messages to support CALD patients

Promote retail/pharmacy offers

The retail sector has used digital signage for decades, due to its proven ability to impact sales. Hospital pharmacies can use digital signage to promote campaigns, services, brands, and specials. Public health campaigns may also be shown, such as flu season updates.

Benefits:

- Lift sales revenue
- Shift stock
- Support public health campaigns

Elevate safety messages

Embedding a safety culture internally requires constant reinforcement of program messages, and digital signage is a perfect channel to catch staff as they move about the hospital. Patient safety messages are also important and can easily be changed and translated as needed.

Benefits:

- Support and reinforce safety programs
- Provide reminders where they matter

Provide emergency warnings

Digital signage can be incorporated into a hospital's building management system so that in an emergency, the appropriate message is automatically displayed on screens. After some high-profile shopping centre incidents, retailers have successfully begun doing this. Digital signage simply becomes another channel for the emergency warning intercommunication system.

Support CALD patients

Health services with high numbers of CALD patients can use digital signage to translate priority messages. For example, translations might be provided for key updates during a public health crisis or simply how to check-in for an appointment. Translations can be tailored for each hospital or even each clinic, to suit the local demographics and needs.

Display live data

Digital signage can be integrated with other systems to provide live feeds of data, such as performance data, queue calling and wait time updates, doctors on duty, social posts, or even the number of babies delivered so far this year! This approach makes digital signage a highly accurate and reliable channel of information.

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Benefits:

- Communication support in emergency situations
- Support for vulnerable visitors and patients, such as those with hearing impairments

Benefits:

- Improve healthcare access for CALD patients
- Decrease the communication load for staff

Benefits:

- Provide real-time updates to improve efficiency and communication
- Ensure digital signage is a trusted source of information

Promote cafeteria menus and special offers

Fast food outlets were among the first to use digital signage and menu boards in their outlets. That's because they were proven to lift spending and make the ordering process more dynamic and efficient. Menus can be scheduled to update at different times of day and show relevant specials. You can even match content to the weather, such as promoting hot drinks when it rains.

Benefits:

- Lift sales
- Shift stock
- Improve responsiveness to local conditions

Recognise donors

Make donor boards dynamic! Hospital foundations are increasingly looking to digital signage to recognise donors and promote fundraising campaigns. Content can be creative and personal in a way that static boards can't, for example including photographs, quotes and video. All with the aim of elevating the donation experience for hospital supporters and providing appropriate recognition for their generosity.

Benefits:

- Provide dynamic and elevated donor recognition
- Support foundation campaigns

Enhance employee engagement

Screens in staff areas such as break rooms are ideal to lift internal comms, for example recognising individual and team performance, educating about team initiatives and professional development opportunities, reinforcing organisational values, and live streaming or replaying CEO updates. It's the ideal way to reach employees who aren't often (or ever) at a desk.

Benefits:

- Support major announcements and initiatives
- Ensure non-desk staff are kept informed



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HOW DOES DIGITAL SIGNAGE WORK?

Comms professionals use cloud-based software to centrally manage and control content at any location. You can pre-schedule campaigns in advance, set timing for the content, make live updates, have integrations for live data feeds (such as dashboards or queue calling displays), and have zoned screens with a mixture of content. This might be calming videos combined with queue calling, or directories combined with key messages.

You can re-purpose content you've already created for presentations, social, online and more – the software accepts common file types.

You can also give clinics and hospital staff access to make local updates – it's up to you.

Each screen at your facilities has a small media player inserted, and this is what connects the screen to the software and allows you to control it centrally. No more USBs or manually changing content – you can literally do it in real-time and get proof of play reporting to include in your management reports.



1. UPLOAD CONTENT

Upload your content including media file types like .jpg, .png, HTML, .mp4, and more



2. SELECT PLAYERS

Add players of your choice from your network to your campaign



3. SCHEDULE

Schedule your campaign to play based on timing groups or specify timing

EXPLORING FURTHER

To take a closer look at how digital signage software works, watch a short demonstration video.

[Watch Digital Signage demo video](#)

To talk to a healthcare digital signage expert, contact us for a chat:

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