Situation

Serving the community of Detroit, Michigan and its suburbs, Henry Ford Health System has long focused on putting patients first. The marketing team at Henry Ford needed to ensure consumers and patients knew about the broad array of services the system provides for health and wellness, in addition to its hospital-based services. Today’s healthcare consumer expects convenience and on-demand information, and Henry Ford needed to find a way to meet the consumer where they were without investing significantly more resources.

• With 14,500 new primary care patients entering Henry Ford Medical Group annually, the team’s objectives were to:
  • Make sure those patients would use Henry Ford services for all of their needs
  • Create a relationship in which patients considered Henry Ford their primary health and wellness resource

It was critical to provide valuable content to patients and to ensure that Henry Ford’s communications were “always on,” but the marketing team didn’t have the time or resources to accomplish this without taking away from their efforts for other important projects. To solve the problem, Henry Ford Health System turned to technology.
Insights
Marketing automation can reduce manual work, but up-front planning is necessary to ensure success. Henry Ford team members worked with Healthgrades analysts to identify the likeliest immediate needs of a patient using gateway services (such as primary care, pharmacy, or eye care services) following a visit, as well as their likely needs for future services, based on intelligence supplied by the Healthgrades data models. This information was important to identify up front, because successful marketing automation requires an understanding of the patient’s pathway. This information provides insight into the types of content they are likely to consume and carefully timed behavioral triggers the automation system can use to execute ongoing communication.

Strategy
Henry Ford Health System identified the following needs:

- Use communication to develop an ongoing relationship with healthcare consumers
- Become a trusted source for healthcare information and services
- Find ways for technology to augment the health system’s resources

Solution
Turning to marketing automation to support frequent, intelligent communication, Henry Ford’s marketing team integrated primary-care patient data from the previous month’s visits into the tool. The workflow for these new patients was defined and customized based on each individual patient’s persona. Each patient received a welcome kit email, which focused on reminding them that many convenient services would let them call, click, or come in to address various needs. This let Henry Ford promote the variety of apps and other tools designed to connect patients quickly with what they needed, be it care or health information.
Marketing automation powered further customized follow-up communications based on time, patient behavior, and demographics.

Targeted patients who activated and consumed the information received access to content relating to services they were likely to need. Targets who didn’t activate were cycled into a nurturing campaign that provided information on probable relevant topics based on their persona. If, after a set number of attempts, consumers did not activate or download any of this content, they were removed from the cycle, to avoid messaging fatigue.

This “always-on,” continuous communication cycle is powered by technology — not man-hours — which frees up resources so that the marketing team can focus on other objectives.

Results

The use of marketing automation allowed Henry Ford’s team to complete a communication process that previously would have consumed multiple resources, reducing their capacity for other activities.

Tracking over the first four months revealed significant patient engagement: Initial email opens outperformed industry benchmarks, with a 25.1% open rate and a 2.51% click-through rate, suggesting that the timely follow-up and relevant content were meaningful to many patients.

Additional outreach to these patients demonstrated their desire for information on Henry Ford’s services. Pharmacy-related messages yielded a 32.2% open rate and 3,794 prescriptions filled — on average, two prescriptions for every patient targeted.

Optometric services also demonstrated tremendous open rates, with 44.8% of optometric patients consuming the information sent.

Henry Ford has also seen impressive results relating to ongoing communication and relationship goals, with messages on topics like heart health, low testosterone, and maintaining a healthy weight yielding a 20.7% open rate.

Healthgrades return-on-investment models include the use of a fully aggregated incremental value attribution model, combining investment across channels and calculating incremental campaign impact on contribution margin.

The model shows that in just four months, the use of marketing automation has generated 113 incremental patients using services within the system. Without further expansion or growth, the program is expected to secure over 300 patients. More importantly, the ongoing communication and interaction with new patients is expected to continue to drive awareness of the system’s services and position Henry Ford Health System as the go-to healthcare resource for the community.
Conclusion
Marketing automation is a valuable tool for marketers looking to provide ongoing communication along targets’ desired channels. But while marketing automation does save time downstream, it is important to note that its success will be determined by the time spent on it up front, working to understand targets, their behaviors, and appropriate content and messages. Data to refine such targeting is critical for optimizing results. Henry Ford Health System anticipates expanding the use of its marketing automation system to add new programs, content, and channels.

Measurement
The Healthgrades Measurement model is designed to identify numbers of incremental patients, volume, and financial results, rather than solely focusing on gross results to more accurately measure the campaign’s specific contribution. Determining this requires that we measure post-impression patient volume among directly targeted households and compare that to performance of a control group. Matches and confirmation of existing versus net-new patients are determined by comparing the responses and information supplied against the CRM database for a match at a household and patient level.

Measurement strategy and KPI

Key Metrics
- New patients
- Contribution margin
- ROI

Key Metrics
- Targeted impressions

Key Metrics
- Web forms
- Unique callers
- Engagement rate

Key Metrics
- CTR
- Open rate
- HRA completions

To learn more about how Healthgrades solutions can engage and align patients and physicians, call 855.665.9276 or visit healthgrades.com/hospitals