

How Smartphones Are Improving Patient Engagement

New Opportunities For Aesthetic Providers

A Symplast White Paper

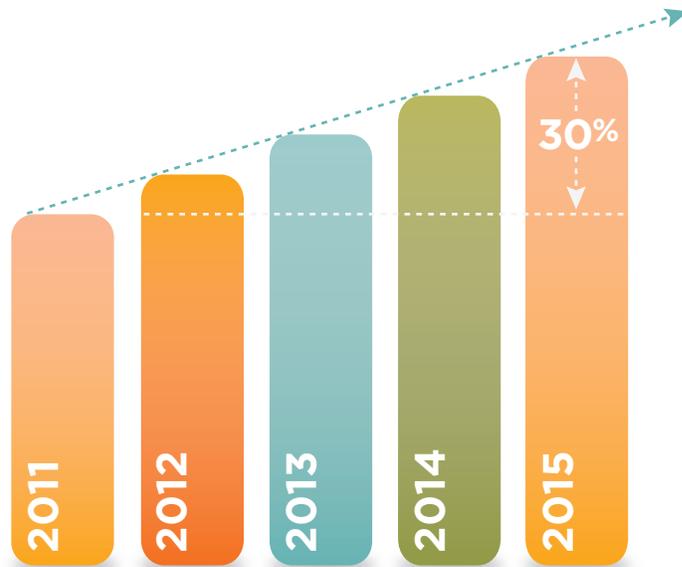


A recent article in *The Wall Street Journal* carried the intriguing headline, “The Future Of Medicine Is In Your Smartphone”¹ – and it focused on the innovative ways that healthcare consumers are using smartphones to engage with physicians (and vice versa).

Here’s the good news: everything you’ve hated about the old rules of engagement will soon be going away: no more patient portals, no more structured fields for entering patient data. The future of patient engagement is smartphone simplicity.

A recent study by McKinsey On Healthcare² found that consumers want the same things from their healthcare provider that they do from their bank or airline: great service and solutions that make life easier. In healthcare, those things will be delivered primarily by smartphone.

The Pew Research Center reports that smartphone usage in the U.S. increased nearly 30 percent between 2011 and 2015. Nearly two-thirds of all Americans own a smartphone – and 63 percent of them have used a smartphone to obtain information about a health condition.³



Smartphone ownership in the U.S. has increased by 30% just since 2011.

References

1. *The Wall Street Journal*, “The Future Of Medicine Is In Your Smartphone,” Eric J. Topol, Jan. 9, 2015.
2. McKinsey On Healthcare, 2016.
3. Pew Research Center, Apr. 1, 2015.



Because of the “selfie” phenomenon, aesthetic consumers are highly aware of their physical appearance on mobile devices and social media.

How The “Selfie” Is Transforming The Aesthetic Field

Communicating on the go with smartphones and social media is now part of the very fabric of American life. There are now more than one billion active users of Facebook worldwide – and 100 million people use Instagram each month.

According to TechInfographics.com, more than one million selfies are taken in the U.S. every day, with 56 percent of them being shared via Facebook and Instagram.⁴ More than 50% of men and 52% of women in the U.S. have already taken and shared a selfie – and the percentage is rising each year. American consumers now see more facial photographs in a month than their grandparents did in a lifetime.

A recent poll by the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery (AAFPRS) revealed that 33% of its members had received requests for procedures by patients who were sensitive about their image in social media.

Like it or not, we’re living in an era when mobile devices are shaping both the national consciousness and the way that patients interact with aesthetic physicians.

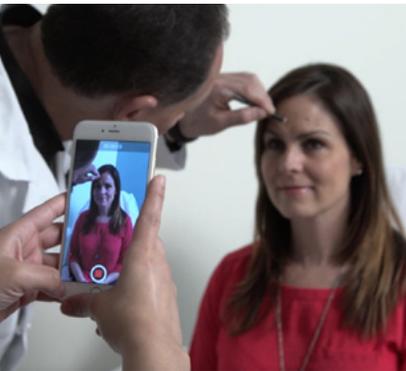
References

4. TechInfographics.com, 2015.

Benefits Of Smartphone-Delivered Medicine

In a blog for CureMD⁵, author Alex Tate highlighted the advantages of smartphone-enabled medicine:

- Ideal technology for physicians who are on the move
- Little or no upfront costs
- No hardware or software to purchase and maintain
- Better support
- Easy data recovery in case of a disaster
- Better HIPAA compliance
- Physician website can be synced to a smartphone for real-time lead-tracking, product ordering, appointment updates, etc.



What Aesthetic Consumers Want In Smartphone Solutions

Here are some of the capabilities that aesthetic consumers are now demanding in patient/provider communication:

Simplicity – In the smartphone era, no patient wants to be burdened by complex pull-down menus and log-in procedures. Consumers want an app that’s designed expressly for them, not the provider.

Multimedia images – Consumers want to harness the rich color and clarity now provided by smartphones. This is of critical importance in the aesthetic field, where the “look” of what’s communicated is just as important as the content.

Security – Advances in HIPAA-compliant smartphone messaging ensure confidentiality and security.

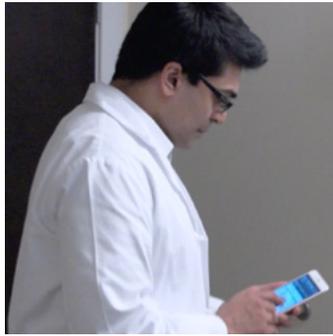
References

5. CureMD Blog, June 6, 2014.

What Aesthetic Providers Want In Smartphone Solutions

Providers, just like patients, are wanting to take advantage of smartphones' mobility and ease of use.

“Today's aesthetic practices are looking for smartphone solutions that have been developed with input from fellow plastic surgeons”



Here are some of the capabilities that are particularly important to aesthetic providers:

Intuitive workflows that mirror daily activities – Today's aesthetic practices are looking for smartphone solutions that have been developed with input from fellow plastic surgeons.

Complete mobility – Aesthetic practices now need the ability to provide care and contact 100% on mobile devices.

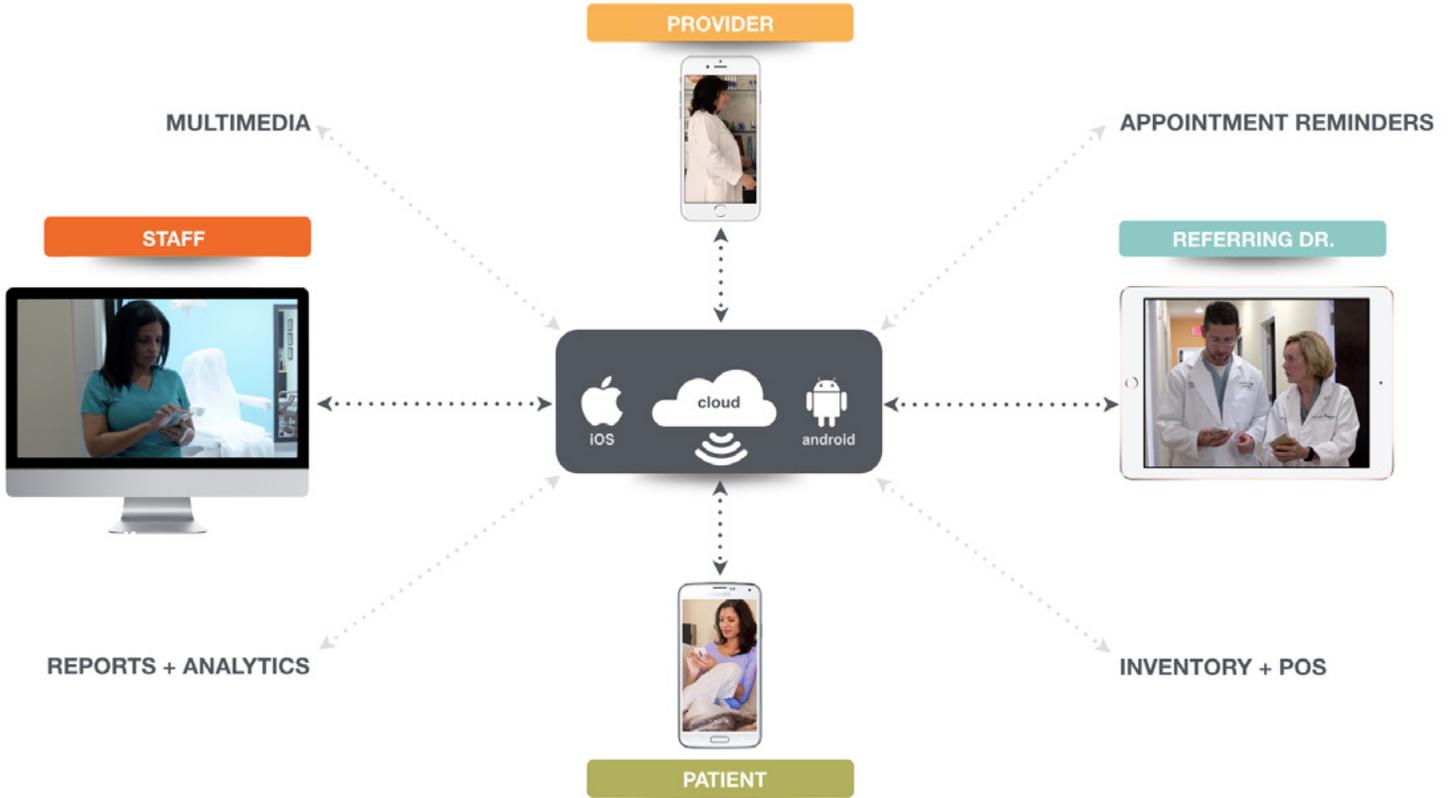
All-in-one solution – A smartphone application should integrate all the functionality that an aesthetic practice needs: practice management, secure messaging, integrated insurance billing, email marketing/ Customer Relationship Management (CRM), data analytics and more. That eliminates the cost and hassle of purchasing and integrating separate applications.

Greater productivity and revenue – A smartphone application must allow aesthetic providers to see patients faster and more effectively than before, increasing practice productivity and boosting the bottom line.

Software tailored to both clinicians and patients – Ideally, a smartphone solution should provide different apps and interfaces for patients, physicians, staff members, and referring physicians based on their unique needs.

Secure multimedia messaging – For aesthetic practices, it's essential to have HIPAA-compliant messaging plus the ability to create, store and share high-resolution graphics and video.

Robust analytics and reporting – A smartphone solution needs to be able to track true patient value, website ROI, lead generation trends, and more. The application’s financial reporting tools must be able to quickly identify revenue by patient, procedure, etc.



With smartphone-enabled medicine, solutions can be customized to the unique needs of the physician, patient, staff member and referring physician.

Harnessing The Power Of The Smartphone Era

Industry observers like Dr. Eric Topol are convinced: now is the time for aesthetic practices to adopt smartphone technology that enhances patient engagement, improves physician productivity, and increases practice revenue.

Digital Strategies for Growing Your Practice

Smartphones and optimized websites are excellent tools for growing a plastic surgery practice.

Most aesthetic providers are too busy to become experts in social media, email marketing, and website performance tracking, so it's important to find a partner with expertise in those areas.

Closing The Loop

Here's how your practice's website can integrate more effectively with your smartphone.

For starters, you must ensure that when consumers are searching for an aesthetic practice in your area, your name is at the top of the list.

There's an easy way to determine how well your website is performing: go to Moz.com and click on "Free Tools" in the upper right-hand corner. Then select "Open Site Explorer" from the SEO menu.

Type in your website URL and this free tool will let you see how it ranks in Domain Authority on a 0-to-100 scale. (In case you're wondering, Facebook gets a perfect score of 100 in this category.)

If your practice scores lower than 40, you need to speak with an SEO specialist who can make recommendations (e.g., adding keywords like "facelift" and "brow lift") so that your practice is at the top of the list when consumers search for an aesthetic provider.

Then you need to find a company well-versed in smartphone-enabled medicine so that all the customer leads/conversions, products ordered/sold, and rescheduled appointments captured on your website can be sent instantly to your smartphone.

Here are some of the ways that smartphones and patient apps can help your practice grow:

- Push notifications to former patients to highlight possible follow-on procedures
- Push notifications to current patients urging them to refer their friends
- Push notifications to patients to highlight special products that can be purchased

Thanks to social media and smartphones, patient engagement is now a coordinated, continuous process that helps attract new patients and increase your bottom line.

For additional information on how you can use smartphones to grow your practice, **contact sales@symplast.com** or our digital media partner Advice Media (**info@advicemedia.com**).

About Symplast

Founded by plastic surgeons in 2013, Symplast is the first complete, 100% mobile software solution that increases patient engagement, revenue and operating efficiency of an aesthetic practice. Fully functional on any smartphone, tablet or PC, Symplast is a secure, cloud-based ecosystem with intuitive workflows designed by plastic surgeons. For more information, contact us at sales@symplast.com or call **844.796.7527**. Or visit www.symplast.com/madeforplastics for an exclusive demo.